

The Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment offered the following substitute to HB 927:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 3 and Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 27 of the Official Code
2 of Georgia Annotated, relating to hunting and noncommercial fishing, respectively, so as to
3 revise provisions relating to hunting and fishing; to extend an exception for the use of air
4 guns to hunt wildlife; to authorize fluorescent pink hunting outer garments; to revise
5 provisions concerning the taking of catfish by bow and arrow; to provide for related matters;
6 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
10 hunting, is amended in Code Section 27-3-4, relating to legal weapons for hunting wildlife
11 generally, use of silencers and suppressors prohibited, and penalty for violations, by revising
12 paragraph (9) of subsection (a) as follows:

13 "(9) For purposes of this subsection, the term 'air gun' means any pistol, handgun, or
14 shoulder-held device, each of not less than 0.30 caliber, or air bow that propels a
15 projectile in the form of a slug, shot, or arrow equipped with a broadhead utilizing
16 unignited compressed air or gas. Air guns are legal weapons for hunting big game only

17 during primitive weapon hunts, primitive weapon seasons, and firearm seasons. This
18 paragraph shall stand repealed effective July 1, ~~2025~~ 2028, unless continued in effect by
19 the General Assembly prior to that date. At its ~~2025~~ 2028 regular session, the General
20 Assembly shall review this paragraph to determine whether it should be continued in
21 effect."

22 **SECTION 2.**

23 Said article is further amended in Code Section 27-3-24, relating to restrictions on hunting
24 feral hogs, by revising subsection (a) as follows:

25 "(a) It shall be unlawful to hunt, or engage in the hunting of, feral hogs:

26 (1) Upon the lands of another or enter upon the lands of another in pursuit of feral hogs
27 without first obtaining permission from the landowner or lessee of such land or the lessee
28 of the game rights of such land;

29 (2) Upon any land which is posted without having the permission required by
30 paragraph (1) of this subsection in writing and carried upon the person; or

31 (3) During the firearms deer season unless the hunter and each person accompanying the
32 hunter are wearing a total of at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent orange or
33 fluorescent pink material as an outer garment and such material or garment is worn above
34 the waistline, and may include a head covering."

35 **SECTION 3.**

36 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 27-3-25, relating to hunting bears
37 and required outer garments, as follows:

38 "27-3-25.

39 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt bears or for any person to accompany another
40 person hunting bears unless each person shall wear a total of at least 500 square inches of
41 daylight fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink material as an outer garment during

42 firearms and primitive weapons seasons. Such clothing must be worn above the waistline
43 and may include a head covering."

44 **SECTION 4.**

45 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 27-3-40, relating to required
46 clothing, as follows:

47 "27-3-40.

48 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt deer or for any person to accompany another
49 person hunting deer during the firearms deer season unless each person shall wear a total
50 of at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink material as
51 an outer garment. Such clothing must be worn above the waistline and may include a head
52 covering."

53 **SECTION 5.**

54 Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
55 noncommercial fishing, is amended in Code Section 27-4-34, relating to fishing with bow
56 and arrow, by revising subsection (d) as follows:

57 "(d) It shall be unlawful to take ~~channel catfish and flathead~~ any catfish species ~~anywhere~~
58 ~~in the Savannah River, including its tributaries and impoundments within the Savannah~~
59 ~~River Basin, from the waters of the state~~ by means of bow and arrow, except under the
60 following conditions:

61 (1) Each person using a bow and arrow shall have on his or her person a valid state
62 resident or nonresident fishing license;

63 (2) All arrows used pursuant to this subsection must be equipped with barbs or contain
64 devices on the point to act as a harpoon for recovering fish and must be attached to the
65 person or bow by a rope, line, or cord sufficient for recovering the arrow and channel
66 catfish or flathead catfish;

- 67 (3) Arrows with poisonous or exploding heads are illegal;
- 68 (4) It shall be unlawful to discharge arrows into waters nearer than 150 feet to anyone
- 69 engaged in any other means of recreation; and
- 70 (5) The taking of ~~channel catfish and flathead~~ any catfish species ~~in the Savannah River,~~
- 71 ~~including its tributaries and impoundments within the Savannah River Basin,~~ from the
- 72 waters of the state by bow and arrow shall be legal at any time of the day and at night by
- 73 the use of a light."

74 **SECTION 6.**

75 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.