

Poaching In Alberta

Poaching is a serious problem, poachers steal our heritage from all of us.

Turning a blind eye will not make this problem go away, but it is important to know how to take appropriate action should you encounter poaching activities.

Here is a list of things to do when encountering resource violators:

- Report the violation by calling Report-A-Poacher at 1-800-642-3800.
- Calls will be forwarded to an officer generally within 15 minutes after the call is received.
- If the violators are charged you may be eligible for a reward.
- Callers may remain anonymous however often small but important information is forgotten or lost during the transition.
- If you provide your name and a contact number we can contact you and get additional information if required.
- Your call will be returned and you will be advised of the results of the investigation.
- You will not be forced to testify in court.
- Your identity will not be revealed to anyone.
- If you do not have immediate access to a telephone (most often this is the case) it is

important that the information be received about the violation.

- Record the date, time, place, description of the violators, vehicle license number and access location used by the violators if possible.
- This information is important to help plan patrols by identifying problem times and locations.
- This intelligence information can be reported by calling the local Natural Resources Service Office
- If officers do not know where the violations are occurring they cannot catch the violators.

Things not to do:

- Tell the violator that you are going to report them, they will believe you and will have left the scene before officers can respond.
- Get into confrontations with resource abusers.

Things to look out for.

- People keeping illegal fish.
- People using bait.
- People fishing late at night.
- Evidence of people illegally fishing (bait containers or forked sticks stuck

in the ground, fire pits).

- Often violators resort to fishing at night to avoid being detected by enforcement officers.

The penalties for fisheries violations were substantially increased in 1998.

The penalty for fishing with prohibited bait is \$200.

People keeping illegal fish can be fined up to \$100 per fish.

Enforcement Officers have been sending repeat violators to court where they have been receiving higher fines and license suspensions.

Report Poaching

It happens more often than many of us think - the illegal killing or taking of wildlife.

Not only does poaching rob legitimate sportsmen during the legal seasons, it also wreaks havoc on the natural populations across Alberta.

The Alberta Conservation Association's Report A Poacher program provides Albertans with the opportunity to report suspected violations using a toll-free number, 1-800-642-3800, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Fishing or hunting out of season, night hunting, exceeding bag limits, illegal sale of fish and wildlife and deposit of harmful substances in lakes and rivers are violations that seriously affect fish and wildlife in Alberta.

All can be reported.

If you see or know of a violation, you should record all information, including:

- date, time and location
- vehicle license number and a description of the vehicle,
- description of the person(s) involved, and
- details of the violation.

If the information provided concerns a resource violation and results in the laying of a charge, the reporter may be eligible for a reward.

While the number of animals killed by poachers every year varies, estimates indicate that poachers take about as much fish and game as legitimate sportsmen do during the legal seasons.

Poachers take animals for a variety of reasons.

The hides, skins and other parts may be used for clothing, food, folk medicine, jewelry, and trophies.

Some animals are captured alive and used in the pet, falconry, or live trophy animal trade.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD), who investigates each report, receive about 3,432 reports each year.

In 2007, more than 3,000 calls resulted in 1,391 charges and warnings across the province.