

**TOWN OF DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA
ORDINANCE NO. 112**

**AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE FEEDING AND HANDLING OF WILDLIFE;
PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

WHEREAS, the Town of Dauphin Island is home to diverse and sensitive wildlife populations, including federally protected sea turtles, migratory shorebirds, and other native species; and

WHEREAS, the Town holds title to certain conservation lands on the West End of Dauphin Island acquired with RESTORE Act and NRDA settlement funds, which are subject to restrictive covenants requiring compliance with the Dauphin Island West End Bird Conservation and Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, that Management Plan identifies certain predator species as significant threats to the successful nesting and survival of protected birds and sea turtles, and requires the Town to coordinate with state and federal agencies on predator management; and

WHEREAS, intentional feeding, baiting, or administration of medicine to wildlife has been shown to alter natural behavior, increase human-wildlife conflicts, undermine non-lethal deterrent strategies such as taste aversion, and heighten risks to public health and safety by increasing the spread of diseases such as rabies, mange, and parasites; and

WHEREAS, wildlife experts have cautioned that feeding wildlife habituates animals to humans, increases the risk of dangerous encounters, and may result in the destruction of animals that become nuisance or health risks; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes that certain vegetation management practices, such as planting native vegetation or allowing natural growth to occur seasonally, may incidentally provide food sources or habitat for wildlife and are beneficial to ecological balance when responsibly managed; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that regulating the feeding and handling of wildlife is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors, to preserve federally and state-protected species, and to maintain compliance with the Town's conservation obligations.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby ORDAINED by the TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF DAUPHIN ISLAND, as follows:

SECTION 1. Definitions

- (a) **Wildlife:** Any undomesticated mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, or other wild animal, whether native or non-native, including but not limited to foxes, nutria, coyotes, bobcats,

raccoons, alligators, opossums, turtles, and feral or free-roaming domestic cats not under the immediate control of a person.

(b) **Feed/Feeding:** To place, deposit, give, expose, distribute, or scatter any food, drink, attractant, medicine, or other substance in a manner that tends to lure, attract, or entice wildlife. For purposes of this Ordinance, “feeding” does not include the routine discard of bycatch during fishing operations or the routine discharge of waste or fish byproducts from fish processing plants or other platforms if the discharge is otherwise legal and is incidental to operation of the activity.

(c) **Person:** Any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or other entity.

SECTION 2. Prohibited Conduct

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly or intentionally feed, bait, or in any manner provide or make available food, drink, attractants, or medicine to wildlife within the corporate limits of the Town.
- (b) It shall be unlawful for any person to place or maintain food, drink, attractants, or medicine in a manner that creates the likelihood of attracting wildlife.
- (c) It shall be unlawful for any person to attempt to treat or medicate any wildlife.

SECTION 3. Exceptions

This Ordinance shall not apply to:

1. Activities conducted by or under the direction of the Town, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, or any other state or federal agency with authority over wildlife management.
2. Licensed wildlife rehabilitators acting within the scope of their permits.
3. Ordinary and customary feeding of songbirds or hummingbirds through sanitary feeders maintained in a clean condition.
4. Incidental provision of food sources through native plantings, pollinator gardens, or other ecologically beneficial landscaping practices that are not intended to attract or concentrate wildlife.
5. Managed feeding of feral cat colonies conducted pursuant to a trap-neuter-return program approved by the Town or in coordination with an established animal welfare organization, provided that the program is designed to humanely reduce the feral cat population over time and does not create conditions that attract other wildlife or endanger protected wildlife.

SECTION 4. Penalties

- (a) Any person violating this Ordinance shall be guilty of a municipal offense, punishable by a fine not exceeding \$500.00 and/or imprisonment not exceeding six (6) months, as provided by law.
- (b) Each act constituting a violation, and each day on which a violation occurs or continues, shall constitute a separate offense.

SECTION 5. Severability

If any provision of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

SECTION 6. Effective Date

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and publication as required by law.

**ADOPTED by the TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF DAUPHIN ISLAND,
ALABAMA, on this the 15 day of December, 2025.**

ATTEST:

Wanda Sandagger
Wanda Sandagger, Town Clerk

Jeff Collier, Mayor