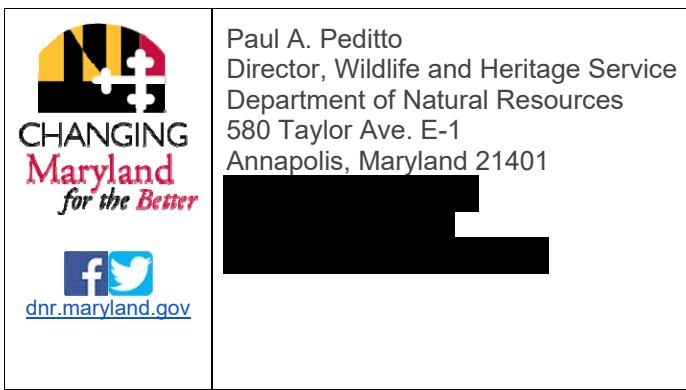


Shalin Gala

From: Paul Peditto -DNR- [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Shriya Swaminathan
Subject: Re: For Director Peditto, from PETA — re scientific collecting permit

Shriya,
The current permit does not allow the research project to kill birds in MD.

Thank you,
Paul



[Click here](#) to complete a three question customer experience survey.

On Tue, May 24, 2022 at 10:28 AM Shriya Swaminathan <shriyas@peta.org> wrote:
Dear Director Peditto,

I'm writing to follow up on your reply, below, dated May 11, in which you stated that you are "working with the permittee" regarding our request for clarification. Specifically, we had asked if there are any exceptions to the statutory prohibition on the killing of wildlife covered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) "Scientific Collecting" permit that would allow for such killing of wildlife by permittee Shreesh Mysore, of Johns Hopkins University (JHU), during his invasive and deadly brain experiments on barn owls.

We appreciate that you are investigating this important matter. However, we are concerned that "working with the permittee" may again result in no stringent action taken against Mysore and/or JHU for apparent violations of law. This was the outcome when the MD DNR corroborated our prior complaint regarding Mysore, who we pointed out had failed to obtain mandatory permits to legally possess barn owls from 2015 to 2018 for use in his experiments. In response to our complaint regarding that matter, the agency only sent Mysore a [warning letter](#), stating that "he will need to renew the permit annually and that operating under an inactive permit is a violation and subject to potential enforcement action and foreclosure of the research project."

It is incumbent on the MD DNR to levy all appropriate penalties against Mysore and JHU—including foreclosure of the research project—for what appears to be yet another permit violation by Mysore. The permitting provisions for scientific collection are not optional—in this case, they are basic legal prerequisites for keeping these owls, who would otherwise be protected under the law, confined to use in invasive brain experiments at JHU. Mysore’s repeated apparent failure to satisfy the requirements of Maryland’s wildlife regulations strongly counsels against allowing him and JHU to engage in the continued possession of barn owls and other protected animals.

As such, if confirmed that Mysore has been, and/or is, again in violation of the conditions of his MD DNR permit—this time by killing owls as a part of his experiments, despite the state law against this practice by MD DNR permittees—we urge your agency to levy all appropriate penalties against Mysore and JHU, foreclose his research project, and deny all future permits for Mysore to possess these animals.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. We look forward to hearing from you by May 31, 2022.

Sincerely yours,
Shriya

Shriya Swaminathan

Research Associate
Laboratory Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
501 Front Street Norfolk, VA 23510

| www.peta.org



From: Paul Peditto -DNR- [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:15 AM
To: Shriya Swaminathan <shriyas@peta.org>
Subject: Re: For Director Peditto, from PETA — re scientific collecting permit

We are working with the permittee at this time. Please give us a few weeks to finalize. Thank you

On Wed, May 11, 2022 at 10:13 AM Shriya Swaminathan <shriyas@peta.org> wrote:
Dear Director Peditto,

I am writing to follow up with you on the status of your investigation into PETA’s concerns related to any and all exceptions to the statutory prohibition on the killing of wildlife covered by the MD DNR’s “Scientific Collecting” permit that would allow for the killing of owls being experimented on by Johns Hopkins University experimenter Shreesh Mysore.

Can you please provide an update on this important issue?

Thank you for your time.

Best,
Shriya

Shriya Swaminathan

Research Associate
Laboratory Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
[501 Front Street Norfolk, VA 23510](http://www.peta.org)



[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | www.peta.org



From: Paul Peditto -DNR-[REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022 3:41 PM
To: Shriya Swaminathan <shriyas@peta.org>
Subject: Re: For Director Peditto, from PETA — re scientific collecting permit

Hello Shriya,
I will look into this as soon as possible but know that we are in the tail-end of our legislative session and that requires my constant attention. I am also involved in an active case that forces me to travel a bit. Nonetheless, I will get back to you soon and thank you in advance for your patience.

Take care,
Paul

 <p>CHANGING Maryland for the Better</p>  <p>dnr.maryland.gov</p>	<p>Paul A. Peditto Director, Wildlife and Heritage Service Department of Natural Resources 580 Taylor Ave., E-1 Annapolis, Maryland 21401</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
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[Click here](#) to complete a three question customer experience survey.

On Fri, Apr 1, 2022 at 1:55 PM Shriya Swaminathan <shriyas@peta.org> wrote:

April 1, 2022

Paul Peditto
Director
Wildlife and Heritage Services
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Dear Director Peditto,

Thank you in advance for your time. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally—to request clarification regarding certain conditions pertaining to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) “Scientific Collecting” permit.

As you know, MD DNR's Wildlife and Heritage Services issued a [“Scientific Collecting” permit](#) to Johns Hopkins University (JHU) assistant professor Shreesh Mysore for his invasive brain experiments on barn owls. According to the “Special Conditions” section in Mysore's permit, Mysore states, “At the end of the study, birds may be euthanized”

However, the [MD DNR website](#) and [Maryland Code, Natural Resources § 10-909\(e\)\(1\)](#) explicitly states that “[t]he permit becomes void on proof that the permittee has . . . [c]aptured or killed any wildlife.” Likewise, the [MD DNR website says](#), “The permit becomes void on proof that the permit holder captured or killed any wildlife.” “Wildlife” is (1) defined as “every living creature, not human, wild by nature, endowed with sensation and power of voluntary motion,” and (2) “includes mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles which [sic] spend a majority of their life cycle on land or any part, egg, offspring, or dead body of any of them.” [Md. Code, Nat. Res. § 10-101\(dd\)](#). By this statutory definition, the owls who are used in Mysore's experiments qualify as “wildlife,” yet they are killed upon completion of the experiments in apparent contravention of [Maryland Code, Natural Resources § 10-909\(e\)\(1\)](#).

Given the above, can you please clarify if there are any exceptions to the statutory prohibition on the killing of wildlife covered by the MD DNR's “Scientific Collecting” permit that would allow for such killing of wildlife—in this case, the owls experimented on by Mysore?

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Shriya

Shriya Swaminathan
Research Associate
Laboratory Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
[501 Front Street Norfolk, VA 23510](#)

| [www.peta.org](#)



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Sent from Gmail on my iPhone. Pardon brevity and typos.