

Tennessee Cave Law

11-5-108. Vandalism of caves or caverns.

(a) It is an offense for any person, without the prior permission of the owner, to knowingly:

(1) Break, break off, crack, carve upon, write or otherwise mark upon, or in any manner destroy, mutilate, injure, deface, mar or harm any natural material found within any cave or cavern, such as stalactites, stalagmites, helictites, anthodites, gypsum flowers or needles, flowstone, draperies, columns or other similar crystalline material formations;

(2) Kill, harm or disturb any plant, animal or artifact found therein;

(3) Disturb or alter the natural condition of such cave or cavern; or

(4) Break, force, tamper with, remove, or otherwise disturb a lock, gate, door or other structure or obstruction designed to prevent entrance to a cave or cavern, whether or not entrance is actually gained.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the owner of property from performing on such owner's property any of the acts set forth in subsection (a).

(c) An act constituting a violation of this section is to be valued according to the provisions of § 39-11-106 and punished as theft under § 39-14-103.

[Acts 1991, ch. 62, § 1.]