

# North Carolina Furbearer Management Newsletter



## Average Pelt Price Results from 2014-2015 Furbearer Trapping Season

Information on average pelt prices is estimated by using information provided by North Carolina Fur Dealers, fur auctions, and NAFA auction results.

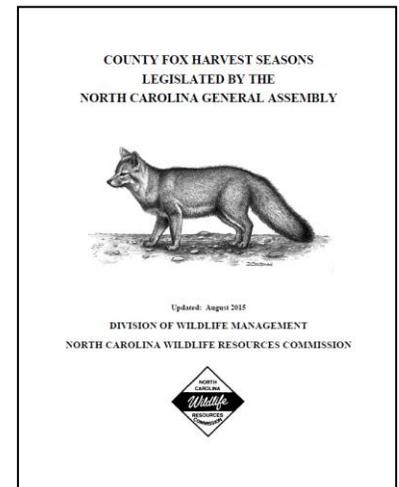
Species	Average Pelt Price 13-14	Average Pelt Price 14-15	% Change from prior year
Beaver	\$12.64	\$9.82	-22%
Mink	\$15.38	\$8.06	-48%
Muskrat	\$10.36	\$4.48	-57%
Nutria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Otter	\$56.09	\$35.07	-37%
Bobcat	\$66.00	\$41.39	-37%
Coyote	\$16.42	\$8.27	-50%
Gray Fox	\$22.79	\$15.74	-31%
Red Fox	\$27.91	\$15.70	-44%
Opossum	\$1.31	\$1.49	14%
Raccoon	\$8.50	\$3.86	-55%
Skunk	\$3.48	\$3.80	9%
Weasel	\$0.40	\$0.25	-38%

## New Fox Trapping Seasons

As most of you know, only the General Assembly, not the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, has the authority to allow fox trapping in a county through passage of a local law.

During the 2015 session of the North Carolina General Assembly, a local law was passed that opened up 3 counties to fox trapping. These counties are:

- Cherokee County
- New Hanover County
- Wilkes County



There are now 41 counties with fox trapping seasons & 85 counties with fox hunting seasons. For information on current fox hunting and trapping seasons in North Carolina go to: <http://www.ncwildlife.org/foxseasons> and download our publication on fox hunting and trapping seasons.

## New Tagging Requirements

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission approved a regulation change that extended the amount of time hunters and trappers have to tag bobcats, foxes, and otters.

Starting with the 2015-16 trapping season, hunters and trappers now have up to 30 days after the close of the season to tag bobcat, foxes and otters.

In addition, we clarified how long after the season we will mail tags to you. No tags will be shipped from the Wildlife Resources Commission 23 consecutive days after the close of the season.

The last day to have tags mailed to you is **March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016!**  
To order your tags, call 888-248-6834.



## Selling your Furs

While the number of local fur buyers has declined over the past 20 years, there has actually been an increase in where you can sell your fur and where you can have it picked up for shipment to the fur auction houses!

☒ To find where you can sell your fur, we have a “Selling Fur” section on our website. It has information on fur dealers, fur pick-up schedules & locations, and fur auctions.

➤ Go to [www.ncwildlife.org/sellingfur](http://www.ncwildlife.org/sellingfur)



Fur buyers inspect furs at the Wytheville Fur Sale in March 2014.



NAFA has a pick-up site at the Marshall Fur sale. These furs are bagged and ready for shipment.



NC fur buyer, Kevin Myers, inspects otter pelts at the Marshall Fur Sale in March 2015.

## Public Hearings Scheduled!

The Commission has been charged with managing North Carolina’s wildlife resources since 1947. Setting forth rules is one means by which we manage those resources and we rely on the public’s cooperation and assistance in this endeavor. Thus, we urge you to participate in these public hearings.

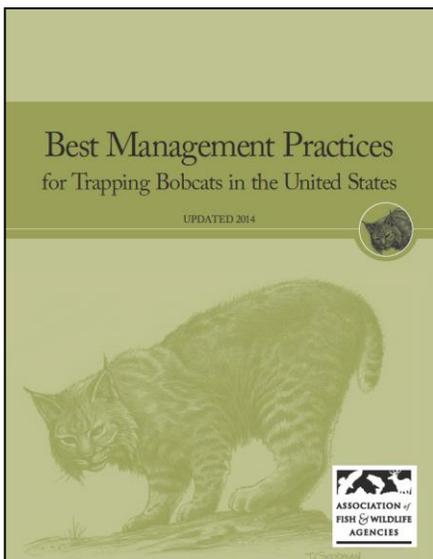


NCWRC public hearing in District 9.

Proposed regulations are posted on our website, [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org), in January. If you can’t make the public hearing, you can submit comments on the website or e-mail your comments on proposed regulations to: [regulations@ncwildlife.org](mailto:regulations@ncwildlife.org)

Date	District	City	Location
January 5, 2016	4	Dublin	Bladen Community College
January 6, 2016	5	Graham	Southern Alamance High School
January 7, 2016	6	Norwood	South Stanly High School
January 12, 2016	9	Clyde	Haywood Community College
January 13, 2016	8	Morganton	Western Piedmont Community College
January 14, 2016	7	Elkin	Elkin High School
January 19, 2016	1	Edenton	Swain Auditorium
January 20, 2016	2	New Bern	Craven Community College
January 21, 2016	3	Rocky Mount	Nash Community College

## Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)



The purpose of the trapping BMPs process is to scientifically evaluate traps and trapping systems for capturing furbearers.

BMPs are intended to inform people about traps and trapping systems considered to be state-of-the-art in animal welfare, efficiency, selectivity, and practicality. And the BMPs explain how some existing traps can be modified (where necessary) to enhance animal welfare.

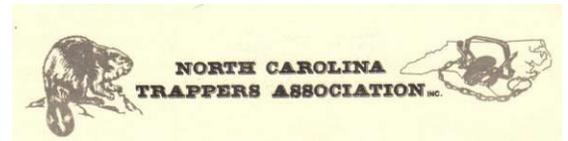
The BMP publications serve as a guide to inform trappers about trap-types they should consider using for capturing a specific furbearer, including bobcats, coyotes, beaver and raccoons!

All furbearers in North Carolina now have their own BMP document, which can be found at: [www.ncwildlife.org/bmp](http://www.ncwildlife.org/bmp)

## Trapper Educational Opportunities

The North Carolina Trappers Association, in cooperation with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, offers free Trapper Education Courses. Courses are often offered throughout the year in several wildlife districts.

To find a trapper educational course in your area, go to [www.ncwildlife.org/trappered](http://www.ncwildlife.org/trappered)



A 3-day Trappers College is also offered every year! The next Trappers College is April 8-10, 2016 at the Eastern 4-H Center near Columbia, NC in Tyrrell County. This trapping training workshop is primarily field oriented and most of the time is spent in the field setting traps, learning about traps and equipment, learning about habitat, animal habits, and considerations that will help to improve your catches. Additionally, there is time spent addressing trap modification, fur handling, and animal damage control.

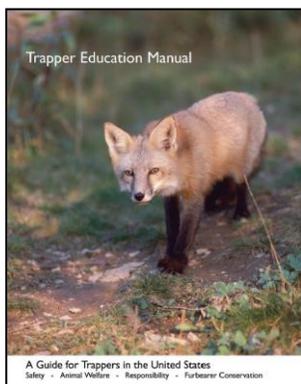


Trapper educational instructor, Todd Menke, sharing tips and tricks for fox trapping at a Trappers College.

***The deadline to register is December 1, 2015!***

For more information on the Trappers College and other trapper education courses contact:

Todd Menke, NCTA Education Coordinator  
 E-mail: [minkster1971@gmail.com](mailto:minkster1971@gmail.com)  
 Phone: (919) 528-9063



**\*\*You can also download a [Trapper Educational Manual](http://www.ncwildlife.org/trappered) on the website!\*\***

<http://www.ncwildlife.org/trappered>  
 and click on "Trapper Education Material" tab

Please consider becoming a Furbearer Cooperator by providing us your Otter Carcasses and Bobcat Skulls

**Why do we need otter carcasses?**

During the 1990's, licensed trappers assisted the NCWRC in successfully restoring river otters to western North Carolina. However, no studies have been conducted to measure certain population parameters of the restored mountain population and the established populations in the coast and piedmont.

Today, the NCWRC and North Carolina State University (NCSU) are conducting a study of reproductive parameters and age structure on the otter populations across North Carolina.

We also hope to be able to use the age and sex information to estimate the otter population in North Carolina.



**How many otters do you need?**

In order to be able to estimate the population, we estimate we will need 600 carcasses, ideally 200 from each furbearer region.



**Why do we need bobcat skulls?**

We actually need the bobcat skull, lower jaw, or lower canine, so that we can age the bobcat.

The data we collect from this project will be beneficial in determining the sex and age distribution of bobcats in N.C. and help us estimate the population. Projects such as these are important, as they help us monitor bobcat populations and improve our knowledge of N.C. furbearers

**How many bobcats do you need?** In order to be able to estimate the population, we estimate we will need 300 bobcats, ideally 100 from each furbearer region.

*We feel information from both these projects will help us maintain trapping for future generations!*

**Contacts for this project are:**

Gerianne Albers  
 Bobcat Skull Collection  
 (919) 698-4655  
[geriann.albers@ncwildlife.org](mailto:geriann.albers@ncwildlife.org)

Charles Sanders  
 Otter Collection  
 (919) 896-9519  
[cwsander@ncsu.edu](mailto:cwsander@ncsu.edu)

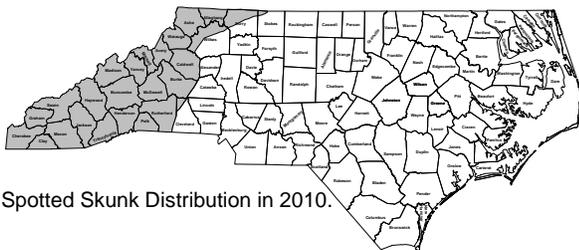
Have you seen a Spotted Skunk? We would like to know!

There is little known about the Eastern Spotted Skunk in North Carolina, including its current population status and current distribution.



Our furbearer team will be starting a survey for spotted skunk in winter 2015. This survey will join other states in the southeast that are making efforts to learn more about this unique animal. The spotted skunk even has a blog: <http://easternspottedskunk.blogspot.com/>

If you think you harvested an Eastern Spotted Skunk in western North Carolina, please let us know about it! It is legal to harvest an Eastern Spotted Skunk. But we hear very few reports about Eastern Spotted Skunks and we are interested in their current distribution.



The Eastern Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale putorius*) is one of two species of skunk that inhabit North Carolina. The Eastern Spotted Skunk inhabits western North Carolina (see map) and is a small, slender animal weighing about 1-4 pound. It is smaller than the more common Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*). The Spotted Skunk's fur is jet black with 4 to 6 horizontal white stripes on the neck and shoulders (see pictures).

The main way to tell the difference between a Spotted Skunk and a Striped Skunk is that the head of the Striped Skunk possesses a white inverted triangular patch above the nose (see arrow in picture below).



If you think you harvested a spotted skunk in western Carolina, please contact the Furbearer Biologist:

Colleen Olfenbuttel  
Furbearer Biologist

E-mail address: [colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org](mailto:colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org)  
Phone: (919) 920-6302

## NCWRC Outreach

Come visit the NCWRC Furbearer Team (Colleen Olfenbuttel, Geriann Albers and Charlie Sanders) at various events to get information on furbearer species, regulations, fox laws, research, our cooperative projects, and much, much more! Below is the list of events we will be at:

1. 2015 NC Trappers Convention, September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>  
Smithfield Livestock Auction Arena  
526 County Home Rd., Smithfield NC 27577

This is one of the largest state trapper's conventions in the southeast and is open and free to the public! In addition to our educational table, there will be trapping demonstrations, fur skinning demonstrations, trapping supply vendors, games for kids, and trap setting contests for youths and adults!

For more information: [www.nctrapper.org](http://www.nctrapper.org) and click on "Events"



2. The 2015 Mountain Rendezvous, October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>  
Elliott Family Farm  
356 London Rd., Lawndale, NC 28090  
For more information: David Allen, 704-689-5264, [chiseltooth08@yahoo.com](mailto:chiseltooth08@yahoo.com)



The Mountain Rendezvous is a family event and is open to the public. Charlie Sanders (NCWRC) will be at the rendezvous to talk about our Otter Cooperative Project and how you can help!

There will be trapping demonstrations, with emphasis on various species of predators. There will also be trap supply vendors.

3. The Dixie Deer Classic , March 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
NC State Fairgrounds  
1025 Blue Ridge Rd., Raleigh, NC 27607  
<http://www.dixiedeerclassic.org/>

The Classic isn't just about deer! Come by our table in the Exposition Center to learn more about hunting and trapping furbearer species, such as coyotes and bobcats.



## New Assistant Furbearer/Black Bear Biologist!

The furbearer program would like to introduce our new assistant furbearer/black bear biologist (Bio I), Geriann Albers, who will join the NCWRC in September 2015. She will be dedicated to the furbearer program!

Geriann is coming to our agency from Wisconsin, where she served as their Assistant Furbearer Specialist. She was also the Statewide Coordinator of the Wisconsin Cooperative Trapper Education Program and supported over 185 volunteer trapper education instructors from the Wisconsin Trappers Association.



She received her bachelor's degree at the University of Illinois and her master's degree at West Virginia University, where she analyzed coyote diets for her thesis. We are very excited she is joining our team and she has told me that she can't wait to start working with North Carolina's furbearers and sportsmen, including trappers!

Geriann's position will allow us to continue our efforts to monitor furbearers, including:

- Collection of bobcat skulls
- Camera surveys of foxes
- Surveys for the Eastern Spotted Skunk
  - Also known as the "Civet Cat"
- Spotlight surveys for aquatic furbearers (nutria, mink).
- Other furbearer research....

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### Phone numbers of interest

Big Game Harvest Reporting  
 (800) I-GOT-ONE  
 (800) 446-8663

Violations Reporting  
 (800) 662-7137  
 (919) 707-0040 (in Raleigh area)  
 (800)662-7137 (TTY machine for people  
 with hearing disabilities)

Regulation Information  
 (919) 707-0030

License Information  
 (919) 707-0391

License Purchases by credit card  
 (888) 2HUNTFISH  
 (888) 248-6834

Wildlife Management Division  
 (919) 707-0050