

## Preliminary Results from 2018-2019 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 17-18	Average Pelt Price 18-19	% Price Change from prior year	2017-18 Harvest	2018-19 Harvest <sup>1</sup>
Beaver	\$9.29	\$9.02	-3%	12,899	10,291
Mink	\$5.24	\$6.51	24%	181	175
Muskrat	\$2.92	\$3.68	26%	4,235	1,723
Nutria	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,199	1,232
Otter	\$20.78	\$24.38	17%	1,702	2,011
Bobcat	\$31.71	\$29.54	-7%	1,096	1,161
Coyote	\$13.44	\$19.93	48%	9,077	7,638
Gray Fox	\$9.87	\$11.62	18%	3,478	2,403
Red Fox	\$6.35	\$11.68	84%	2,165	2,235
Opossum	\$1.00	\$1.14	14%	8,829	8,354
Raccoon	\$3.18	\$4.08	28%	11,766	10,911
Skunk	\$5.21	\$3.12	-40%	653	691
Weasel	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	6

<sup>1</sup>Preliminary estimate. Final 2018-19 harvest statistics will be in the 2020 Spring Furbearer Newsletter.

## See us at the NC Trappers Association Convention!

Come visit the NC Wildlife Resources Commission at various events to get information on furbearer species, regulations, fox laws, research, our furbearer cooperator projects, and much, much more!



The Furbearer team will be at the **2019 NC Trappers Convention**

**When:** September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, Building opens at 7:00 a.m.

**Where:** Smithfield Livestock Auction Arena, 526 County Home Rd., Smithfield NC 27577

For more information: [www.nctrapper.org/2019-convention](http://www.nctrapper.org/2019-convention)



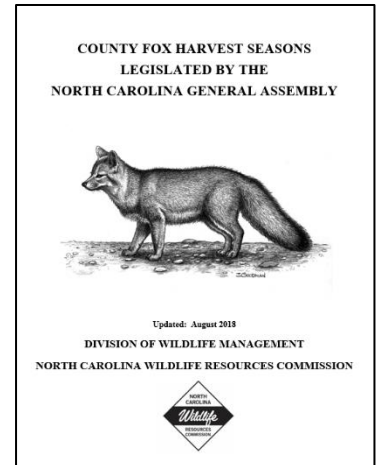
This is one of the largest state trapper's conventions in the southeast and is open to the public! In addition to our educational table, there will be trapping demonstrations, fur skinning demonstrations, trapping supply vendors, games for kids, and trap setting contests for youths and adults!



## New counties opened to fox trapping seasons

During the 2019 NC General Assembly Legislative Long Session, **4 more counties were opened up to fox trapping**, with exemptions from fox tagging requirements. **The new counties are Caldwell, Cleveland, Cumberland, and Yancey counties.**

There are now 55 counties with fox trapping seasons in North Carolina. Outside these 55 counties, you cannot trap foxes during the regulated trapping season and any fox captured must be released in those 45 counties without a fox trapping season.

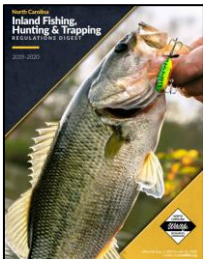


For more information on fox hunting and trapping seasons, including county-specific restrictions and season dates please go to: [ncwildlife.org/foxseasons](http://ncwildlife.org/foxseasons)

*Hard copies of the county fox season booklet will be distributed at the NC Wildlife Resources Commission table during the NC Trappers Association Convention (see page 1).*

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## Local Laws on Trapping



This is a reminder to always check the local law section (page 90) of the North Carolina Inland Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping Regulations Digest. This section provides county-by-county listing of acts that are prohibited by local legislation passed by the General Assembly. The electronic digest can be found at [ncwildlife.org/trapping/laws-safety](http://ncwildlife.org/trapping/laws-safety) or call 888-248-6834 to request a hard-copy.

There are 6 counties with local laws that restrict trapping activity. The following is unlawful in the counties indicated:

1. **Brunswick:** Set or possess a trap or snare on another's land not under written lease. Set a leghold steel trap between March 1 and Jan. 1 or the last day of deer season, whichever is later.
2. **Camden:** Set a Conibear-type 330 or 220 trap or a No. 2 leghold steel trap, except in water where beaver or otter may be lawfully taken.
3. **Columbus:** Set a steel trap between March 1 – January 1.
4. **Cumberland:** Use or set any steel jaw leg hold on another's person's land, except a person trapping beaver or muskrat during the open season on the lands of a landowner to whom such animals have become nuisances and with whom he has a written contract to do such trapping. *Note: The county attorney's office is reviewing this local law.*
5. **Dare:** Use any trap that has a jaw spread that exceeds 7½ inches until after Jan. 2 of each year or the last day of deer hunting season, which is later.
6. **Gates:** Take any game or furbearer by trapping on another person's land between the end of trapping season and Jan. 2.

## House Bill 597: Changes that Affect Trappers

The N.C. General Assembly recently passed [legislation](#) to modify the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's (Commission) license structure and fees. As a result, there are significant changes the Commission must make to its license sales system to accommodate. For your convenience, we have listed below the changes that relate to trapping:

### **Game Lands License**

Effective Sept. 1, 2019, all trapping licenses will include the access and use of game lands. Valid trapping license holders will no longer have to purchase a separate Game Land license to trap on game lands.

### **Trap Tags**

Effective Oct. 1, 2019, the Commission will issue each trapper a Trapper Identification Number (TIN) at the time they purchase or renew their trapping license. This number will be printed on their license.

Either the TIN and Commission telephone number (800-662-7137) or the trapper's name and address can be used on trap tags.

If a trapper places a trap on the property of another, the Commission is required to disclose the identity of the trapper to the landowner where the trap is located at the landowner's request.



Option 1: Trapper's name and address



Option 2: Trapper Identification Number (TIN) and Commission telephone number (800-662-7137).

### **Resident Lifetime Trapping License**

Effective Jan. 1, 2020, North Carolina residents will be able to purchase a Lifetime Trapping License. The cost will be \$300 and all proceeds from the sale of this license will go to the Wildlife Endowment Fund.

### **Wildlife Control Agent License**

Effective in 2020\*, any individual who engages in wildlife damage control or wildlife removal activities, including bat eviction, for compensation, including reimbursement for the cost of materials, must first procure a wildlife control agent license. This will be an annual license issued by the Commission for \$50. *This license will not be required for licensed trappers taking wild animals during the established trapping season for that species.*

\*At the time of publication, the effective date for this license item was not established.

We thank you in advance for your patience while we work to implement these changes.



## Tagging Requirements



Hunters and trappers have up to 30 days after the close of the season to tag bobcat, foxes and otters. However, there are 25 counties in which trappers and hunters are exempt from fox tagging requirements.

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>, 2020!**

To order your tags, call 888-248-6834.

## Trapper Educational Opportunities

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the North Carolina Trappers Association, offers free Trapper Education Courses. Courses are often offered throughout the year in several wildlife districts. In addition to learning trapping regulations, and the basics of trapping techniques, fur handling, and safety, this course qualifies for reciprocity with other states that have mandatory trapper education in order to purchase a trapping license.

There is **one more trapper education course being offered this year:**

When: October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Reidsville Training Center, Reidsville, NC 27320

To see what courses are available and to sign up, go to [ncwildlife.org/trappered](http://ncwildlife.org/trappered) and click "Basic Trapper Education Courses" tab. There you will find a link to sign up. Courses are often added throughout the year, especially in spring and summer. Courses are based on availability of our volunteer trapper educational instructors.



## Advanced Trapping Workshops

The North Carolina Trappers Association offers advanced hands-on trapping workshops that also qualify for WDCA recertification. So far, two advanced workshops are scheduled for 2020, so start planning now! To learn more and for instructions on signing up for either workshop, go to [nctrapper.org/advanced-classes](http://nctrapper.org/advanced-classes)

Advanced Hands-On Wildlife Damage Management Workshop in 2020.  
You will learn about:

- Animal biology/behavior
- Trap types
- Investigations/Inspections
- Understanding signs/habitats
- Lures/baits/urines-when/why
- Prevent/exclusion techniques
- Non-lethal techniques
- WDCA regulations
- Local laws/ordinance
- Dos and Don'ts



**When:** Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Where:** McNeely Pest Control, 3831 Reynolda Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27106

**Instructors:** Scott McNeely, Frank Fowler, Robert Newsome

**Questions:** Scott McNeely, [smcneely@mcneelypest.com](mailto:smcneely@mcneelypest.com) or 336-692-4200

Advanced Hands-On Coyote Trapping Workshop in 2020. You will learn about:



- Coyote biology/behavior
- Traps/anchors/pan covers
- Dirthole variations
- Understanding signs/habitats
- Laws and regulations
- Weather/wind – Dos/Don'ts
- The when and why of:
  - Flat/post sets
  - Blind/multiple sets
  - Lures/baits/urines

**When:** Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Where:** Franklin County, 1 Allen's Lane, Youngsville, NC 27596

**Instructors:** Todd Menke and Jimmy Pierce

**Questions:** Todd Menke, [minkster1971@gmail.com](mailto:minkster1971@gmail.com) or 919-885-6187





# Skulls and Carcasses Wanted



The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Furbearer Team is interested in collecting the following:

**Bobcat Skulls**

**Otter Skulls**

**Spotted Skunk Carcasses**

This year we will be shipping coordinators pre-paid envelopes to mail in bobcat and otter samples instead of coordinating in-person pick-ups. The canine tooth will be used to look at the age structure of the harvest.



Additionally, we're hoping to obtain carcasses of spotted skunks to collect locations and tissue samples, including genetic samples, to increase our knowledge of this elusive furbearer species. Please contact Casey Dukes (information below) to submit a carcass.

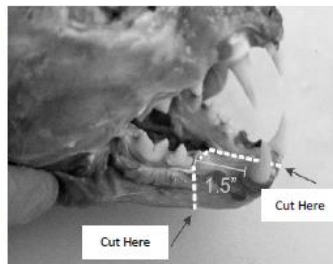
Projects such as these are important, as they help us monitor populations and improve our knowledge of North Carolina furbearers. We feel this information will help us maintain trapping for future generations.

**In return for your cooperation, you will receive a furbearer cooperator patch and the age of submitted animals. Thank you in advance!**

## NCWRC – BOBCAT & OTTER JAW SAMPLE ENVELOPE

1. **USE ONLY ONE (1) ENVELOPE PER ANIMAL.** Only submit animals trapped during the regulated trapping season (no road killed or hunted animals please). If you need additional envelopes, please call 919-609-7226.

2. We need the two (2) bottom canines from each animal; cut the jaw bone with loppers or hacksaw between the lower canines and 1.5 inches back from canine (see photo). Be careful not to cut too close to the canine tooth, so it is not damaged. The root of the tooth is needed to determine age of the animal. **DO NOT** attempt to pull the canine tooth from the jaw because it will break in half.



3. Clean away as much flesh as possible from the sample to avoid spoilage. **Allow the jaw section to completely dry** before enclosing the sample within this pre-paid sample envelope and mail.

7-DIGIT WRC CUSTOMER # (found on your license, if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE HARVESTED: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY OF HARVEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if exact date unknown, please provide month and year)

SPECIES (Check one): ☐ BOBCAT ☐ RIVER OTTER

SEX OF ANIMAL\* (Check one): ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐ UNKNOWN

\*Note - The sex of otters and bobcats can be difficult to determine. If testicles are not visible, make an incision in the abdomen of the carcass and examine for presence of uterus and ovaries, which can be found behind the bladder and below the kidneys.

**You will receive a cooperator patch and age report for your harvested animals.**

**NEW for 2019-2020:**

Cut and dry the portion of the lower jaw containing the canine tooth. Follow instructions on pre-paid envelope to ship.

For envelopes, contact:

Casey Dukes

Surveys and Research Biologist

919-609-7226

[casey.dukes@ncwildlife.org](mailto:casey.dukes@ncwildlife.org)

For more information visit:

[ncwildlife.org/furcooperator](http://ncwildlife.org/furcooperator)

### Bobcat Sex and Age Ratio Data

Starting with the 2013-14 season, North Carolina started collecting bobcat skulls or lower jaw bones from licensed trappers to determine the sex and age ratio of the harvest. Our sampling objective is 10-15% of the trapper harvest for 5 consecutive years. Due to low pelt prices and the voluntary nature of the program, we have not yet achieved collecting 10% of the harvest. Since the 2013-14 season, we have collected 183 skulls; during the 2018-19 season, we collected 47 skulls. The majority of the harvest is of 1-year old bobcats (32%), followed by 2-year old bobcats (25%). The sex ratio of the harvest is slightly biased towards male bobcats (55%).



Age class of sampled bobcat from licensed trappers from 2013-14 season through 2018-19 season.

Bobcat					
Age Class	M	F	U	Total Sampled	% Age class
0	4	10	7	21	11%
1	20	20	18	58	32%
2	27	10	9	46	25%
3	11	6	5	22	12%
4	8	4	0	12	7%
5	4	5	0	9	5%
6	1	6	0	7	4%
7	1	3	0	4	2%
8+	2	0	2	4	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>183</b>	
<b>Sex ratio</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>			



### River Otter Sex and Age Ratio Data

River otter skulls are also collected to gather data on the age structure and sex ratio of harvested otters. Since the 2010-11 season, we have collected and aged 1,128 skulls; during the 2018-19 season we collected 174 skulls. The majority of the harvest is of 1-year old otters (41%), followed by 2-year old otters (18%). The sex ratio of the harvest is biased towards male otters (65%).

Age class of sampled river otters from licensed trappers from 2013-14 season through 2018-19 season.

River Otter					
Age Class	M	F	U	Total Sampled	% Age class
0	90	88	11	189	17%
1	295	135	29	459	41%
2	122	65	14	201	18%
3	69	29	4	102	9%
4	28	22	8	58	5%
5	29	14	2	45	4%
6	26	7	2	35	3%
7	11	4	1	16	1%
8	14	7	2	23	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1,128</b>	
<b>Sex Ratio</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>35%</b>			

## Selling your Furs

To find where you can sell your fur, we have a "[Selling Fur](#)" section on our website. It has information on local fur dealers, fur pick-up schedules & locations, and fur auctions. This information is updated monthly from November 2019 through February 2020 at [ncwildlife.org/sellingfur](http://ncwildlife.org/sellingfur)



Tom Tyree with NAFA has pick-up sites, including the Marshall Fur sale in March.



Trappers waiting to sell their fur to Groenewold Fur & Wool Co., which has pick-up sites throughout North Carolina every March.



NC fur buyer, Kevin Myers, inspects otter pelts at Marshall in March.

## 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. Public hearings start at 7:00 p.m.

Proposed regulations are posted on our website, <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Proposed-Regulations/proposed-regulations>, 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 7, 2020	4	Dublin	Bladen Community College
January 8, 2020	5	Graham	Old Alamance County Courthouse
January 9, 2020	6	Albemarle	Stanly County Agri-Civic Center
January 14, 2020	9	Sylva	Southwestern Community College
January 15, 2020	8	Morganton	Western Piedmont Community College
January 16, 2020	7	Elkin	Elkin High School
January 21, 2020	1	Edenton	Chowan County Public Safety Center
January 22, 2020	2	Kenansville	Duplin County Agricultural Center
January 23, 2020	3	Rocky Mount	Nash Community College



## Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Trapping BMPs are carefully researched **recommendations** designed to ensure animals are **humanely captured**. Developed as part of the **largest trap research effort** ever conducted, BMPs feature the **latest scientific information** about trapping techniques and equipment, along with practical advice from *experienced trappers* and wildlife biologists.



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.

The BMPs 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!

Trapping BMPs exist for 22 species of furbearers:  
[furbearermanagement.com](http://furbearermanagement.com)

To make it easy to find a BMP-approved trap, this website has a trap search portal, where you can search for BMP-approved traps by trap-type (e.g., foothold, bodygrip), species, or trap brand.

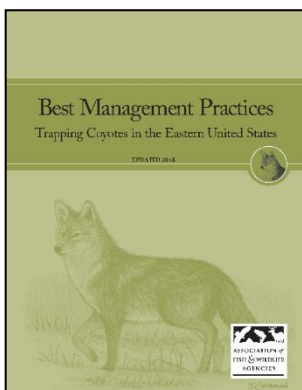
### BMP Trap & Species Search Portal

The database below provides information on traps and species that meet the **Best Management Practices** criteria. Specific traps, trap type, and species can be searched in the database.

To only view the results of a specific trap, trap type, or species, type the name into the search bar below. You can select which fields to search (trap, trap type, or species) in the drop down menu next to the search icon to further filter your results.

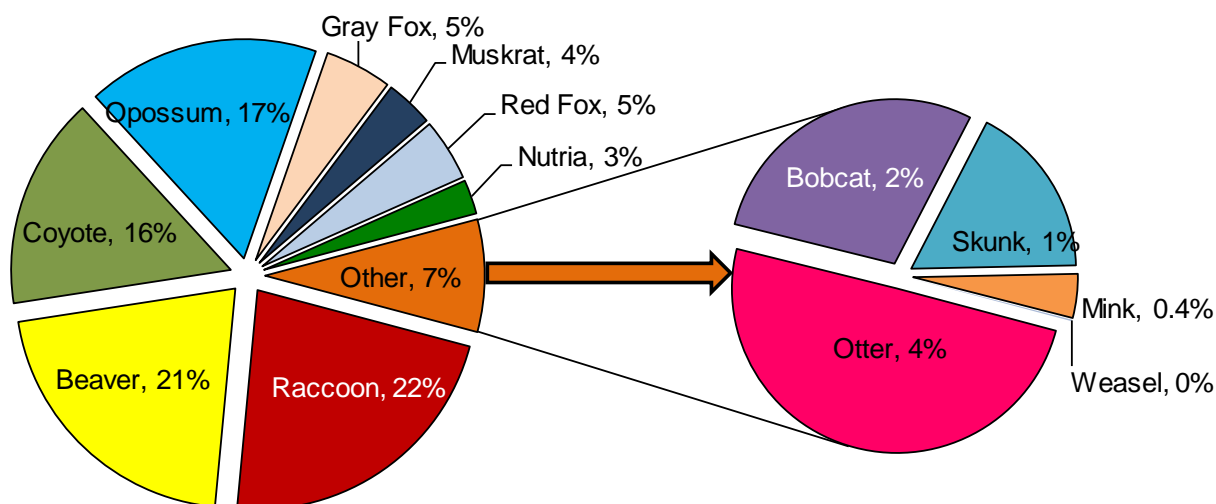
- ▶ [Search by Trap](#)
- ▶ [Search by Trap Type](#)
- ▶ [Search by Species](#)

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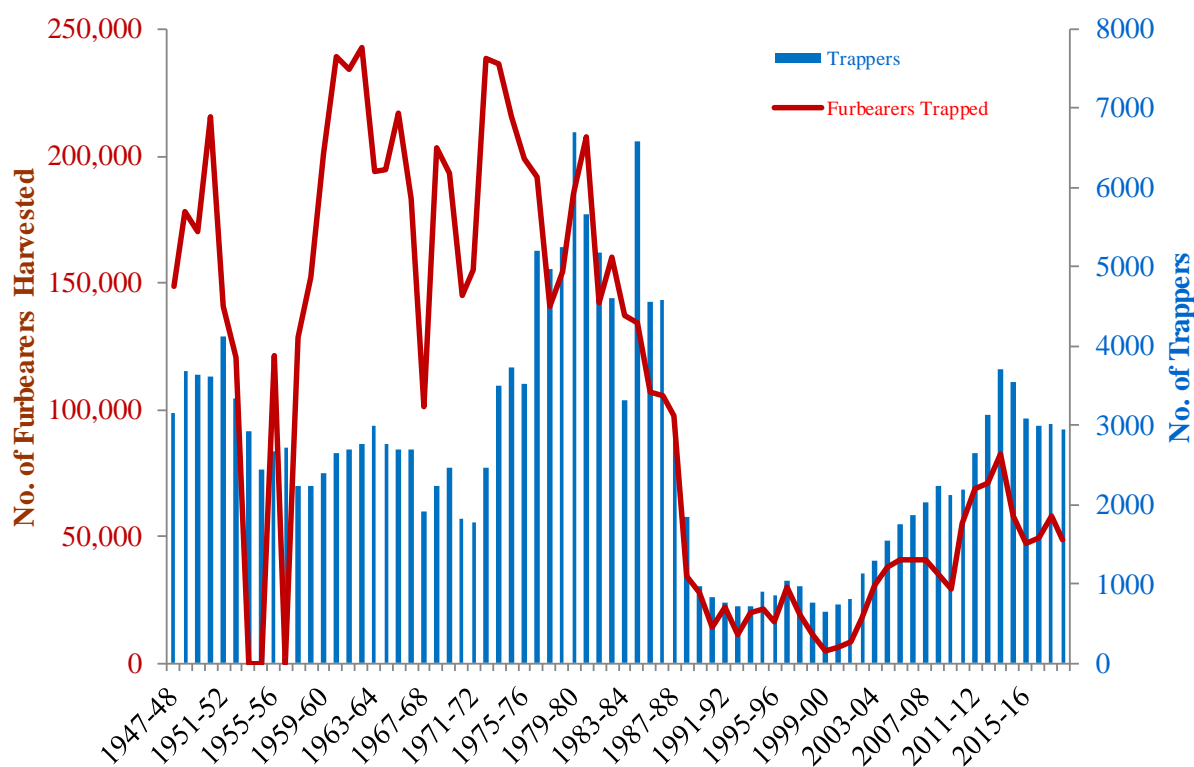


Trapping BMPs, combined with Trapper Education Programs, are intended to maintain the integrity of furbearer management programs throughout the nation and to sustain trapping methods now and in the future.

## Composition of the 2018-19 Furbearer Harvest



## Number of Licensed Trappers and Number of Harvested Furbearers

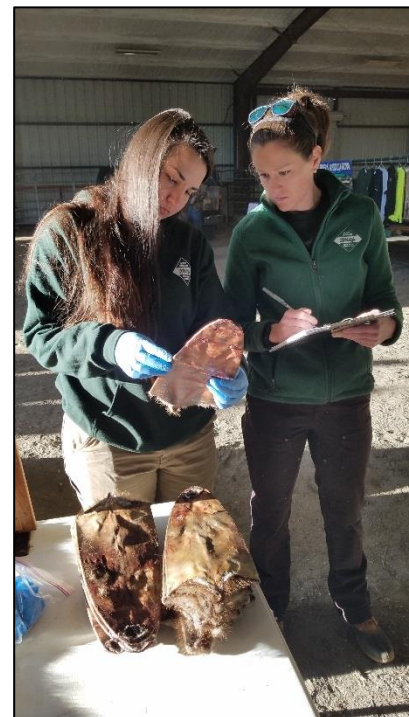


During the 2018-19 season, there were 2,958 licensed trappers, a 2% decline in license sales compared to the 2017-18 season. An estimated 48,831 furbearers were harvested, a 16% decline from the previous season. This was largely driven by declines in the harvest of beaver, muskrat, coyote, gray fox, and raccoon as a result of low pelt prices.

## Muskrat Sex and Age Ratio

Due to concerns about regional muskrat populations, several southeastern, northeastern and Canadian furbearer biologists have started monitoring muskrat populations in cooperation with licensed trappers. Efforts involve monitoring the age and sex ratio of harvested muskrats, as this may indicate population declines. The age ratio of muskrats can be an important index of population productivity. For example, a high proportion of adults could indicate poor reproduction.

Starting in 2011, North Carolina joined regional efforts by attending fur sales and working with North Carolina fur dealers. During the 2018-19 season, we sampled 540 muskrats, a decline from the 2017-18 season. The ratio of juveniles to adults, and juveniles to adult females was the lowest since this survey was initiated. While could reflect poor reproduction, it may also reflect that 45% of pelts from sampled muskrats were too prime to determine age. We will continue to monitor the age and sex ratio of the harvest and identify whether additional research is needed to monitor the status of muskrat populations.



### 2018-19 Ratios (n=540)

Adult	1.06 male to female
Juvenile	0.94 male to female
Juvenile vs. Adult	0.44 juveniles to adults
Juvenile vs. Ad. Female	0.91 juv. to ad. female

Category	Ratios								
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Adult Male/Female	1.5	3.64	1.11	1.91	1.34	1.11	1.22	0.80	1.06
Juvenile Male/Female	0.96	1.3	1.38	1.93	1.14	1.58	1.11	2.27	0.94
Juvenile/Adult	2.12	2.4	1.48	2.66	1.04	2.10	1.80	1.15	0.44
Juvenile/Adult Female	5.3	11.36	3.16	7.73	2.43	4.61	4.01	2.08	0.91
Sample size (n)	82	199	928	133	2,627	319	2,505	1,407	540



## Trapping Season Reminder!!

A uniform statewide trapping season was established for all 100 counties from November 1 through last day of February. This season applies to the upcoming 2019-2020 trapping season.

## Your Furbearer Team!

We are here to serve the wildlife resource and you! Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions, comments, or to participate in our cooperator programs!



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Ashley Hobbs  
Asst. Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist (temp)  
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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  
(888) 248-6834

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

Wildlife Management Division  
(919) 707-0050

Wildlife Helpline  
(866) 318-2401

