



Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of the North Carolina Furbearer Management Newsletter!

The information in this newsletter has been provided through the cooperative efforts of North Carolina's licensed trappers and licensed fur dealers. The information they provide helps the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) monitor furbearer harvest levels and track trends in the furbearer populations.

Information on Fox Trapping in NC

The most common comment we receive on our trapper harvest survey is:

“Why can't I trap foxes in my county?” or
“Please open up fox trapping in my county.”



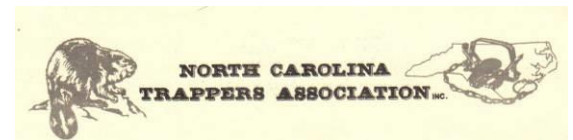
Currently, our agency has no authority to allow fox trapping in a county.

Only the General Assembly has the authority to allow fox trapping in a county through passage of a local law.

There are 22 local fox trapping seasons in 38 North Carolina counties (see page 4). For information on current fox hunting and trapping seasons in North Carolina go to: <http://www.ncwildlife.org/Trapping/> and download our publication on fox hunting and trapping seasons.

Trapper Education Opportunities

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



A 3-day Advanced Trapper Educational Course is also offered. The next advanced course is May 16-18, 2014 at the Millstone 4-H camp near Ellerbee, NC.

For more information on trapper education courses contact:

Todd Menke, NCTA Education Coordinator
2663 Tar River Rd.

Creedmoor, NC 27522

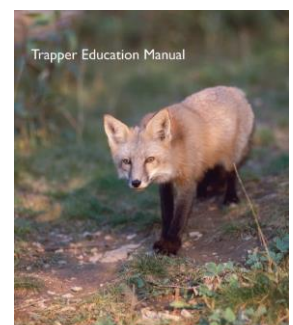
E-mail: minkster@netzero.net

Phone: (919) 528-9063

You can also download a [Trapper Educational Manual](#) on the website!

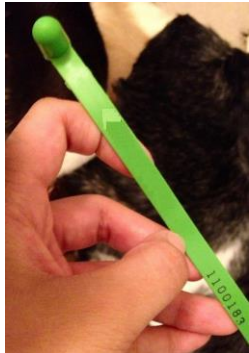
<http://www.ncwildlife.org/Trapping/LearnResources.aspx>

and click on “Trapper Education”



Frequently Asked Questions

- ☒ Where can I find information on selling furs in North Carolina?
 - We have a “Selling Fur” section on our website. It has information on fur dealers, fur pick-ups, and fur auctions.
 - Go to www.ncwildlife.org/trapping and click on the “Learn/Resources” link, then click on “Selling Fur”



- ☒ When do I need fox tags?
 - State law requires that fox tags must be affixed on the carcass or pelt of any fox taken within North Carolina before buying, selling, bartering, trading or otherwise transferring possession or ownership of the fox.
 - Call 888-248-6834 to purchase tags by telephone.
 - Exemptions to fox tags:
 - Live foxes that are being sold to a licensed fox hunting preserve do not need fox tags.
 - You are exempt from fox tags in these counties/areas:

▪ Beaufort	▪ Johnson
▪ Chowan	▪ Rockingham
▪ Davidson	▪ Stokes
▪ Hyde	▪ Winston-Salem

The Wildlife Damage Control Agent (WDCA) Program

The WDCA program allows trained and certified individuals to issue wildlife depredation permits to landowners with wildlife damage problems.

Depredation permits are needed to trap and lethally control wildlife outside the regulated trapping season. Certified WDCAs are authorized to issue permits for controlling certain wildlife species that are causing property damage.



Training:

In order to become a WDCA, an individual must complete a certification course covering laws, rules, health considerations, and humane handling techniques. In addition, the individual must pass a written examination. Agents are subject to background checks prior to certification.

Here is the 2-day certification workshop schedule for 2014:

- February 26-27 (full)
- April 11-12 (full)
- June 11-12 (open)
- October 8-9 (open)

Contact us at 919-707-0061 to sign up!



Photo Credit: AAAnimal Control

Monitoring Furbearer Populations

In order for the NCWRC to monitor the furbearer harvest, we have created a confidential voluntary trapper harvest mail survey. Using information from the surveys, coupled with reports from licensed fur dealers, the NCWRC can monitor trends in trapper harvest and effort, which often mirrors trends in the furbearer population. The data gained from these surveys also helps us make management decisions and address questions we receive from sportsmen, the media and the general public.

How you can help!

If you receive a furbearer harvest survey in the mail, please take the time to fill it out as accurately as possible and return it promptly.



Please return the survey!

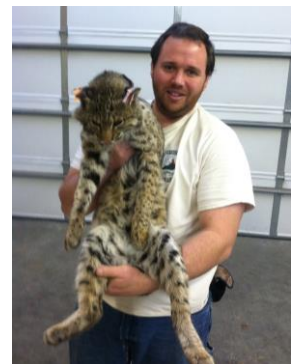
Landowner Assistance List

These surveys also provide you with the opportunity to sign up to be on the landowner assistance list, which connects landowners needing help with trappers during the trapping season.

New Furbearer/Black Bear Technician!

The furbearer program would like to introduce our new wildlife technician, Charlie Sanders, who will join the NCWRC in May 2014. He will be dedicated to the furbearer and black bear program!

Charlie has been a North Carolina fur trapper for many years, and, as part of his undergraduate research at NCSU, collected 400+ river otter carcasses from cooperating trappers. He has been working in Kentucky trapping bobcats for a research project.



This position will allow us to increase our efforts to monitor furbearers, including:

- Collection of river otter carcasses
 - We were unable to collect carcasses during the 2013-14 trapping season. But we plan on collecting carcasses for the 2014-2015 trapping season.
- Surveys for the Eastern Spotted Skunk
 - Also known as the "Civet Cat"
- Collection of foxes and raccoons for disease studies.
- Other furbearer research....



Voluntary Trapper Harvest Mail Survey Results

The response rate for the 2012-2013 mail survey was 54%, of which 49% of respondents reported that they did not trap during the trapping season (Table 1).

Table 1. Data from the trapper harvest mail survey, 2002-03 through 2012-13.

Survey Year	# of licensed trappers	Response Rate	% respondents who did not trap
2003-04	1,286	54%	23%
2004-05	1,547	50%	23%
2005-06	1,744	58%	19%
2006-07	1,867	63%	27%
2007-08	2,027	61%	33%
2008-09	2,233	59%	32%
2009-10	2,120	60%	44%
2010-11	2,186	57%	36%
2011-12	2,638	54%	37%
2012-13	3,125	54%	49%

The 2012-13 furbearer harvest level was higher than that seen during the prior trapping season, primarily due to increased pelt prices. The table on the following page presents data obtained from the past six trapping seasons.

North Carolina Muskrat Study

Starting in 2011, North Carolina joined regional efforts to monitor muskrat populations by attending fur sales and working with North Carolina fur dealers and licensed trappers. Efforts involve monitoring the age and sex ratio of harvested muskrats, as this may indicate population declines. We will need multiple years of data before we can start to detect trends in the muskrat population. Please stayed tuned for results!














During the 2012-13 trapping season, 59% of muskrats sampled by NCWRC were male and 50% of the sampled harvest were juveniles.

March 2013 (928 pelts examined)

	Ratio	
Adult	1.11 male to female	(162/146)
Juvenile	1.38 male to female	(267/194)
Juvenile vs. Adult	1.48 juveniles to adults	(461/311)
Juvenile vs. Ad. Female	3.16 juv. to ad. female	(461/146)



Table 2. Reported trapper harvest from the survey responses and average pelt prices derived from fur dealers and fur auction reports.

Species	2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-2013	
	Harvest	Prices	Harvest	Prices	Harvest	Prices	Harvest	Prices	Harvest	Prices	Harvest	Prices
 Beaver	9,919	\$16.25	8,370	\$8.80	7,469	\$8.39	9,389	\$13.45	10,358	\$18.17	10,815	\$24.22
 Mink	331	\$9.30	193	\$5.87	193	\$8.95	248	\$15.82	279	\$18.29	298	\$17.90
 Muskrat	3,543	\$3.15	2,724	\$2.45	2,079	\$4.42	4,229	\$9.87	4,476	\$7.73	8,383	\$12.45
 Nutria	2,436	\$2.13	2,173	\$0.61	1,510	N/A	1,224	\$1.50	1,516	N/A	1,932	N/A
 Otter	1,457	\$23.25	1,341	\$26.21	1,322	\$34.48	1,905	\$78.34	2,542	\$56.71	2,676*	\$92.48
 Bobcat	1,045	\$28.12	993	\$19.01	803	\$22.14	993	\$50.90	981	\$55.99	1,194	\$67.57
 Coyote	1,434	\$18.12	1,747	\$8.94	2,091	\$7.45	2,843	\$11.37	3,458	\$13.77	3,858	\$19.95
 Gray Fox	5,560	\$26.46	4,212	\$16.00	3,313	\$13.53	3,995	\$15.70	4,677	\$24.37	4,430	\$32.20
 Red Fox	1,180	\$14.83	838	\$9.60	769	\$12.96	872	\$21.06	1,080	\$37.20	1,126	\$49.39
 Opossum	6,393	\$2.55	4,481	\$1.53	3,841	\$0.98	5,216	\$0.61	6,080	\$0.75	7,819	\$3.08
 Raccoon	6,712	\$10.75	7,307	\$5.73	5,442	\$6.23	7,568	\$6.90	10,172	\$6.70	11,346	\$12.83
 Skunk	641	N/A	354	\$2.77	324	\$1.11	411	\$1.04	500	\$1.26	499	\$3.56
 Weasel	0	\$6.12	0	N/A	1	\$1.50	25	N/A	2	N/A	1	N/A
TOTAL	40,651		34,733		29,157		38,918		44,586		54,377	

*2012-13 estimated otter harvest based on number of CITES otter tags sold during the 2012-2013 furbearer trapping season.

North Carolina Hunter Harvest Survey

The NCWRC conducts a mail survey of licensed hunters to estimate the numbers of hunters for specific game species, hunter effort and hunter harvest. Starting with the 2005-06 survey, hunters were asked if they hunted coyotes and for the 2010-11 survey, we started to ask about bobcat hunter harvest.

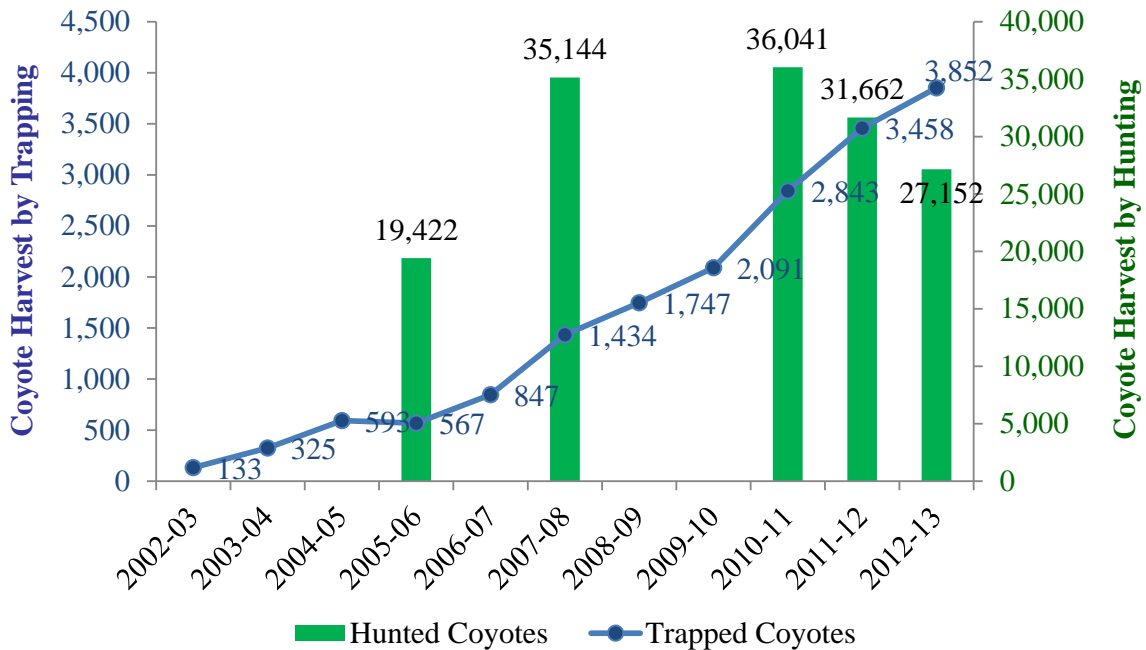


Figure 1. Estimated harvest of coyotes by hunters (green bars) and trappers (blue line).

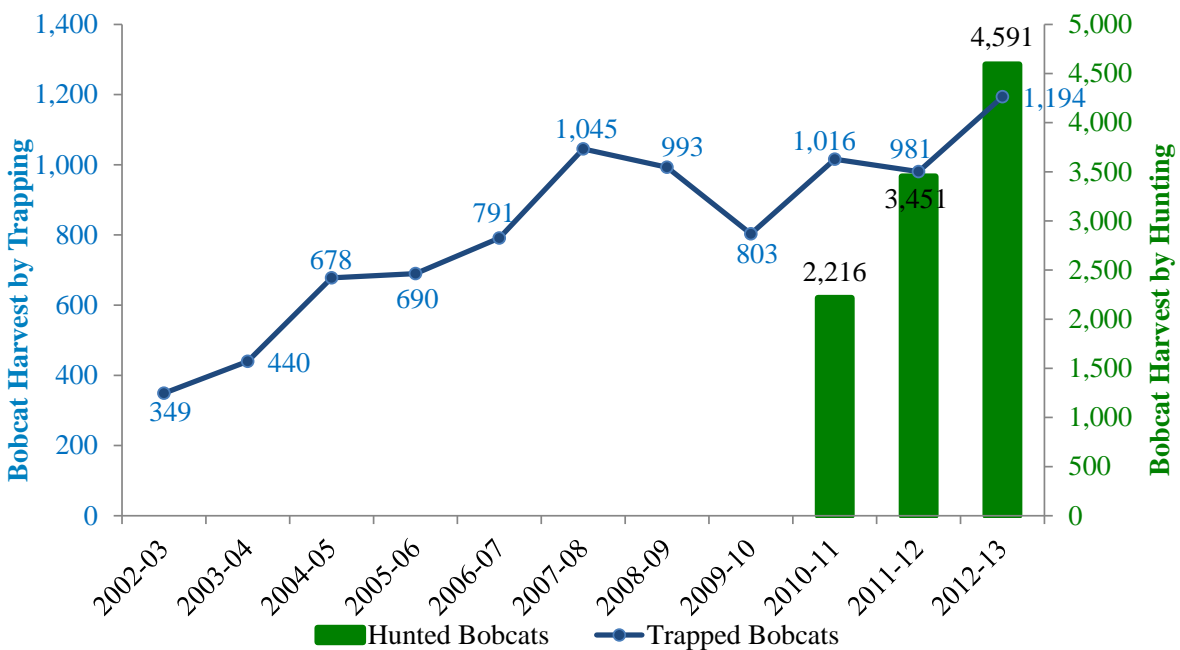


Figure 2. Estimated harvest of bobcats by hunters (green bars) and trappers (blue line).

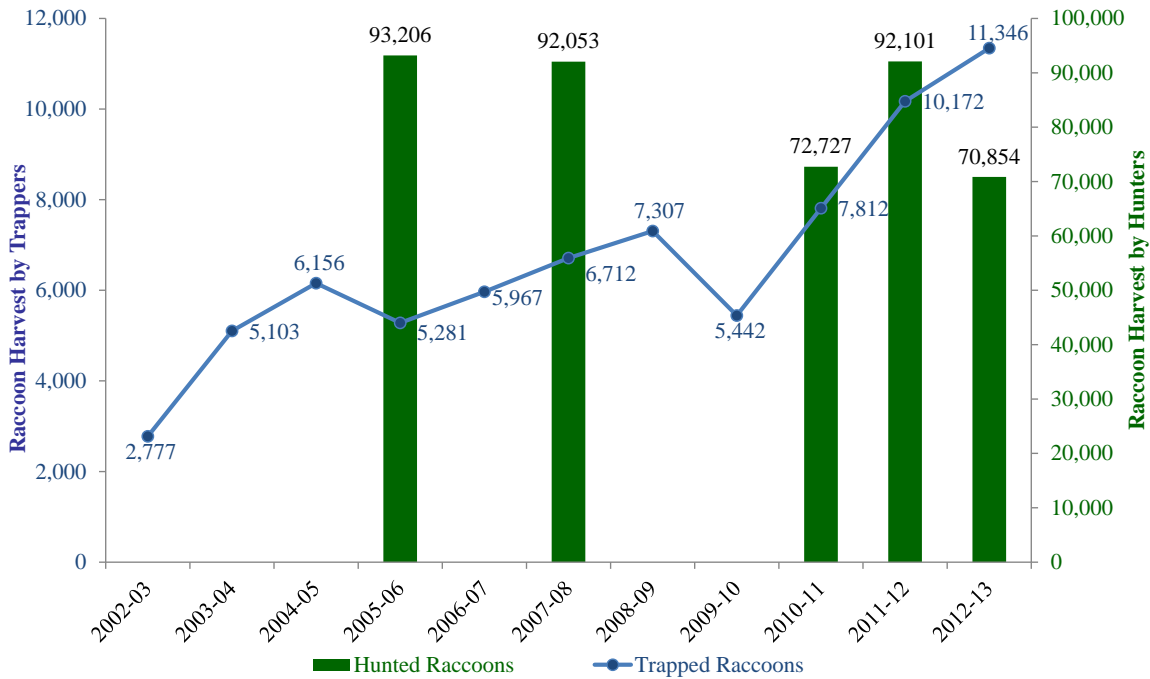


Figure 3. Estimated harvest of raccoons by hunters (green bars) and trappers (blue line).

2012-2013 Trapping License Sales

The map below shows the number of residents, by county, who purchased a trapping license. The highest number of licensed trappers resided in Johnston and Columbus counties (94 trappers in each county), followed by Beaufort County (83 trappers) and Wake County (80 trappers). The lowest number of licensed trappers resided in Clay and Polk counties (4 trappers in each county).

