



Some of the information in this letter 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 monitor furbearer harvest levels and track trends in the population.

## Fox Hunting and Trapping Opportunities

Currently, only the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) holds the authority to allow fox trapping within a county. During the 2011 Legislative Session, the NCGA approved four local laws regarding fox trapping:



1. A new fox hunting and trapping season in Alleghany County.
2. A new fox trapping season in Surry County.
3. The fox trapping seasons were changed in Chowan and Rockingham counties.

There are fox trapping seasons in 38 North Carolina counties. For information on current fox hunting and trapping seasons in North Carolina go to: <http://www.ncwildlife.org/Trapping/> and click on "Trapping Regulations"

## The Wildlife Damage Control Agent (WDCA) Program

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

Depredation permits are needed to trap, transport or lethally control wildlife outside the regulated trapping season. Certified WDCA's are authorized to issue permits for controlling certain wildlife species that are causing property damage.



WDCA's are allowed to investigate the complaint, issue a depredation permit, and trap or remove the offending wildlife immediately.

### 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.

Agents must maintain a current knowledge of laws, rules and techniques of wildlife damage control and must renew their agent status every three years. Renewal involves another examination to demonstrate that the agent has maintained adequate knowledge of all rules and regulations

Course sites and times vary depending on the demand. Contact NCWRC at 919-707-0060 for upcoming training/testing sites and times.



Photo Credit: AAAnimal Control

## River Otter Research: How you can help!

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 in the otter populations across North Carolina.

### 2009-10 Collection Results:

Total otters sampled: 74	Average Age: 2 yrs (range: 0-11 years)
Total females: 20	9% of samples caught in December
• ~35% of females were pregnant	34% of samples caught in January
• ~10% of females had never bred	57% of samples caught in February
Total males: 54	
Average weight: 19.6 lbs	
Average Nose→Tail length: 43 in	Average Nose→Rump length: 26.5 in

Identifiable foods consisted of fish, crayfish, and an occasional amphibian (no small mammals or birds were identified)

We are continuing this study throughout the 2011-12 trapping season. Therefore, we are asking for your help in providing otter carcasses so that we can collect the necessary biological samples (e.g., reproductive tract and teeth) for this important research to continue.

To find out how to assist, please contact NCSU student, Charles Sanders, at:

E-mail address: [cwsander@ncsu.edu](mailto:cwsander@ncsu.edu)

Phone: (919) 896-9519

## North Carolina Muskrat Study

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.

Starting in 2011, North Carolina joined regional efforts by attending the Virginia State Fur Auction, where several North Carolina trappers sold their muskrat furs. We plan on attending the auction in 2012 and we will also be contacting North Carolina fur dealers to ask for their assistance in our efforts.

### March 2011 Fur Auction – Fishersville, VA (82 pelts examined)

	Ratio	
Adult	1.50 male to female	(15/10)
Juvenile	0.96 male to female	(26/27)
Juvenile vs. Adult	2.12 juveniles to adults	(53/25)
Juvenile vs. Ad. Female	5.30 juv. to ad. female	(53/10)



## Season Results from 2010-2011 Furbearer Trapping Season

Information on the harvest of furbearer species taken comes from the voluntary mail survey of licensed trappers and information provided by licensed fur dealers.

### Reported Furbearer Trapper Harvest, Average Pelt Prices and Value

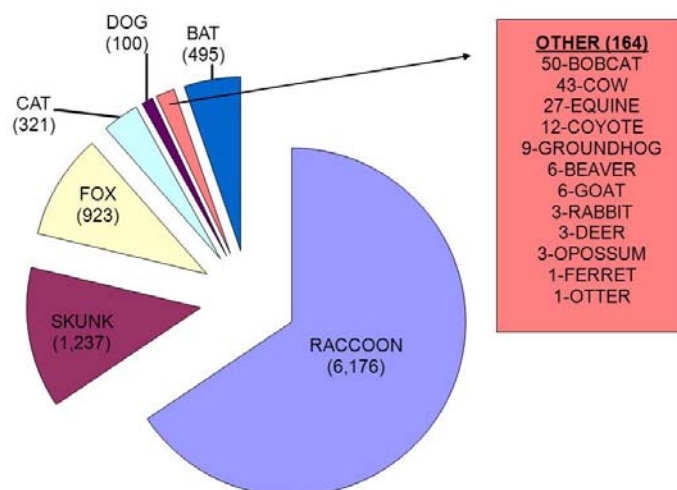
Species	Harvest 09-10	Harvest 10-11 <sup>1</sup>	% Change from prior year	Average Pelt Price <sup>2</sup>	Value
Beaver	7,468	9,389	26%	\$13.45	\$126,282
Mink	193	248	28%	\$15.82	\$3,923
Muskrat	2,079	4,229	103%	\$9.87	\$41,740
Nutria	1,510	1,224	-19%	\$1.50	\$1,836
Otter	1,322	1,905	44%	\$78.34	\$149,238
Bobcat	803	993	24%	\$50.90	\$50,544
Coyote	2,091	2,843	36%	\$11.37	\$32,325
Gray Fox	3,313	3,995	21%	\$15.70	\$62,722
Red Fox	769	872	13%	\$21.06	\$18,364
Opossum	3,841	5,216	36%	\$0.61	\$3,182
Raccoon	5,442	7,568	39%	\$6.90	\$52,219
Skunk	324	411	27%	\$1.04	\$427
Weasel	1	25	2400%	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>29,156</b>	<b>38,918</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>\$542,802</b>

<sup>1</sup> Updated as of September 2011. Final harvest figures may change as more trapper surveys are received.

<sup>2</sup> Average pelt price is estimated by using information provided by North Carolina Fur Dealers, fur auctions, and NAFA auction results.

### Rabies information

There were 341 furbearers, comprising of bobcat, fox, raccoon and skunk, which tested positive for rabies in 2010. This was 15% decline in the number of rabies-positive furbearers than during the prior reporting year.



Species Composition of North Carolina Rabies Cases, Excluding Bats 1990-2010

## Trapper Education Opportunities

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) offers free Trapper Education Courses.

For more information on future trapper education courses contact:

David Denton  
Phone: (252) 482-7105  
E-mail: [d1huntersafety@inteliport.com](mailto:d1huntersafety@inteliport.com)



Or visit our website at: <http://www.ncwildlife.org/trapping> and click on "Trapper Education Opportunities"

### Websites of interest

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

<http://www.ncwildlife.org/>

North Carolina Trappers Association

<http://www.nctrappers.com/>

National Trappers Association

<http://www.nationaltrappers.com/>

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Furbearer Resources

<http://www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer.html>

Conserve Wildlife

<http://www.conservewildlife.org/>

Furbearers Unlimited

<http://www.furbearers.org/>

Fur Takers of America

<http://www.furtakersofamerica.com/>

Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management

<http://icwdm.org/>

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services Rabies Information

<http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/vet.html>

### 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

Created and Edited by:  
Colleen Olfenbuttel  
Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist  
Surveys and Research Program  
Division of Wildlife Management  
N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission  
1701 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1701  
[colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org](mailto:colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org)

