



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.

New! More trapping information now available on-line!

In an effort to better inform trappers, a new web page has been added to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission website, www.ncwildlife.org. On this web page you will find information on:

- Trapping Regulations
- Trapper Education Opportunities
- Selling your Fur
- Surveys and Reports
- Furbearer Management and Furbearer Species Information
- Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Monitoring Furbearer Populations

In order for the NCWRC to continue to monitor the furbearer harvest, we have created a voluntary trapper harvest mail survey. Since the 2002-2003 trapping season, the harvest mail survey has been sent to all licensed trappers to obtain estimates of total statewide furbearer harvest by species. These surveys ask for harvest, the number of days trapped and the number of traps set per day; this information is then used to calculate annual catch-per-unit effort for each species.

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 mail harvest survey, please take the time to fill it out as accurately as possible and return it promptly. These surveys also provide you with the opportunity to make comments or ask questions of our furbearer biologist.

Thank you for your participation!



Voluntary Trapper Harvest Mail Survey

The NCWRC has conducted the trapper harvest mail survey since the 2002-2003 trapping season. The reported harvest from these surveys has ranged 2.6 to 4.4 times higher than the number of furbearers purchased by North Carolina's licensed fur dealers (Table 1). This difference between the surveys and the fur dealer reports reflects the growing number of licensed trappers who are marketing their pelts to auction houses or selling live foxes and coyotes to North Carolina licensed pens.

Table 1. Harvest comparison of North Carolina Fur Dealer Reports and total harvest reported on the Trapper Harvest Mail Survey, 2002-03 through 2007-08.

| | Furbearer Harvest | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 |
| Fur Dealer Reports | 5,859 | 7,169 | 11,170 | 12,059 | 9,261 | 8,297 |
| Trapper Harvest Mail Survey | 15,247 | 27,428 | 31,955 | 35,333 | 36,269 | 36,859 |







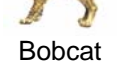




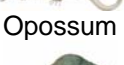

The response rate for the trapper harvest mail survey has varied over the years, but has steadily increased since 2002-2003 (Table 2). The response rate for the 2007-2008 mail survey was 61%, of which 33% of respondents reported that they did not trap during the trapping season.

Table 2. Data from the trapper harvest mail survey, 2002-03 through 2007-08.

| Survey Year | # of licensed trappers | Response Rate | % respondents who did not trap |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 2002-03 | 811 | 39% | 34% |
| 2003-04 | 1,173 | 54% | 23% |
| 2004-05 | 1,211 | 50% | 23% |
| 2005-06 | 1,317 | 58% | 19% |
| 2006-07 | 1,326 | 63% | 27% |
| 2007-08 | 1,494 | 61% | 33% |

The 2007-08 furbearer harvest level was similar to that seen during the 2006-2007 trapping season. While there continues to be a decline in the harvest of beaver and otter, several other furbearer species experienced an increase in harvest. Of note, the gray fox harvest increased 84%, the red fox harvest increased 70%, and the coyote harvest increased 69%. Table 3 on the following page presents data obtained from the past five trapping seasons.

Table 3. Estimated furbearer harvest from trapper harvest mail surveys and licensed fur dealer reports from 2002-03 through 2006-07.

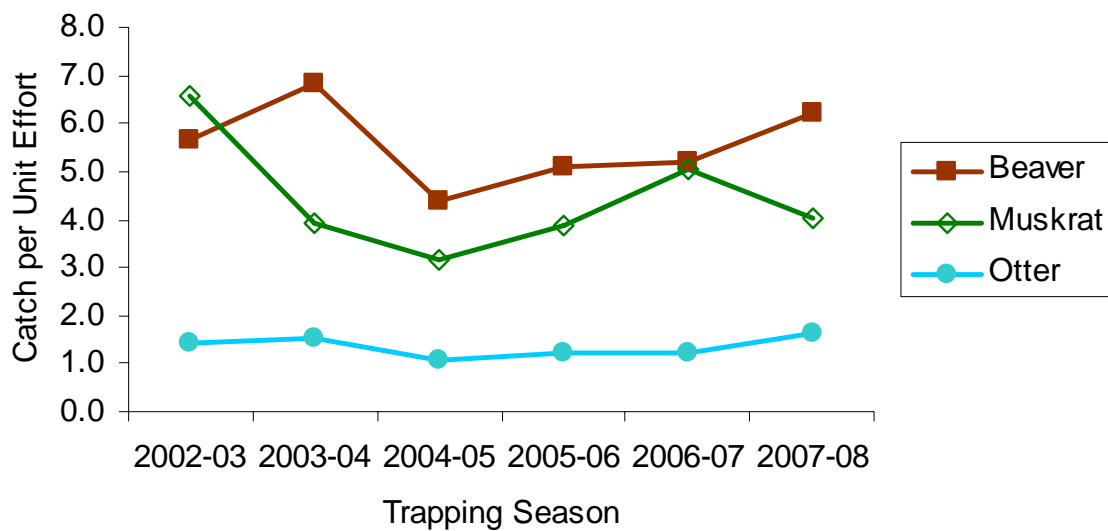
| Species | 2003-2004 | | 2004-2005 | | 2005-2006 | | 2006-2007 | | 2007-2008 | |
|--|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Harvest | Prices | Harvest | Prices | Harvest | Prices | Harvest | Prices | Harvest | Prices |
|  Beaver | 11,531 | \$8.75 | 11,968 | \$8.13 | 13,097 | \$7.00 | 11,458 | \$11.00 | 9,919 | \$16.25 |
|  Mink | 181 | \$7.37 | 327 | \$7.09 | 432 | \$8.93 | 328 | \$8.21 | 331 | \$9.30 |
|  Muskrat | 3,972 | \$2.36 | 5,722 | \$2.34 | 6,440 | \$2.45 | 7,412 | \$3.77 | 3,543 | \$3.15 |
|  Nutria | 1,090 | \$2.17 | 1,867 | \$2.25 | 3,115 | \$1.25 | 3,720 | N/A | 2,436 | \$2.13 |
|  Otter | 2,235 | \$85.40 | 3,104 | \$83.75 | 3,675 | \$92.39 | 1,751 | \$33.13 | 1,457 | \$23.25 |
|  Bobcat | 440 | \$24.60 | 678 | \$18.50 | 690 | \$20.14 | 791 | \$23.43 | 1,045 | \$28.12 |
|  Coyote | 325 | N/A | 593 | N/A | 567 | \$12.25 | 847 | \$11.00 | 1,434 | \$18.12 |
|  Gray Fox | 2,831 | \$13.30 | 2,770 | \$10.00 | 2,392 | \$10.00 | 3,020 | \$25.83 | 5,560 | \$26.46 |
|  Red Fox | 587 | \$16.20 | 631 | \$13.00 | 613 | \$13.67 | 695 | \$13.00 | 1,180 | \$14.83 |
|  Opossum | 2,371 | \$1.00 | 3,457 | \$1.00 | 4,101 | \$1.00 | 4,317 | \$1.69 | 6,393 | \$2.55 |
|  Raccoon | 5,103 | \$5.65 | 6,156 | \$5.96 | 5,281 | \$5.00 | 5,967 | \$6.56 | 6,712 | \$10.75 |
|  Skunk | N/A | \$1.00 | 226 | \$1.00 | 172 | \$2.00 | 186 | N/A | 641 | N/A |
|  Weasel | 11 | \$1.00 | 13 | \$1.00 | 33 | \$1.00 | 33 | N/A | 0 | \$6.12 |
| TOTAL | 30,677 | | 37,512 | | 40,608 | | 40,525 | | 40,651 | |

Trapper Effort (catch per unit effort)

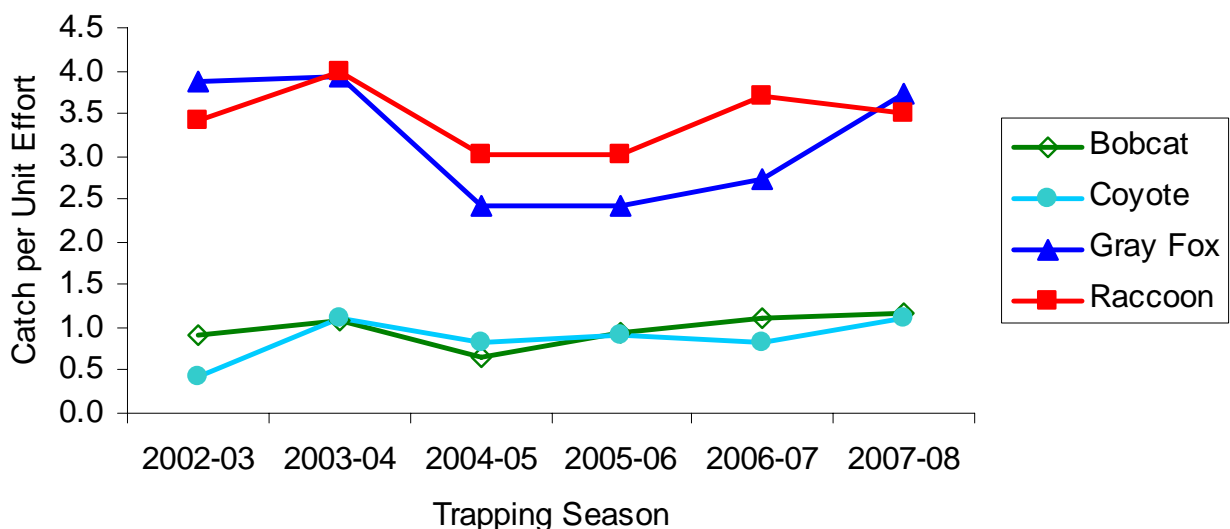
The NCWRC is able to monitor trapper effort by comparing harvest levels to the number of trap nights (*# traps set per day x # days the traps are set*). This is called “catch per unit effort” and the information is provided by licensed trappers through the voluntary mail survey. Below are results for selected species.

Note: The higher the “catch per unit effort” number, the more successful trappers were in harvesting the species.

Catch per unit effort for Aquatic Furbearers



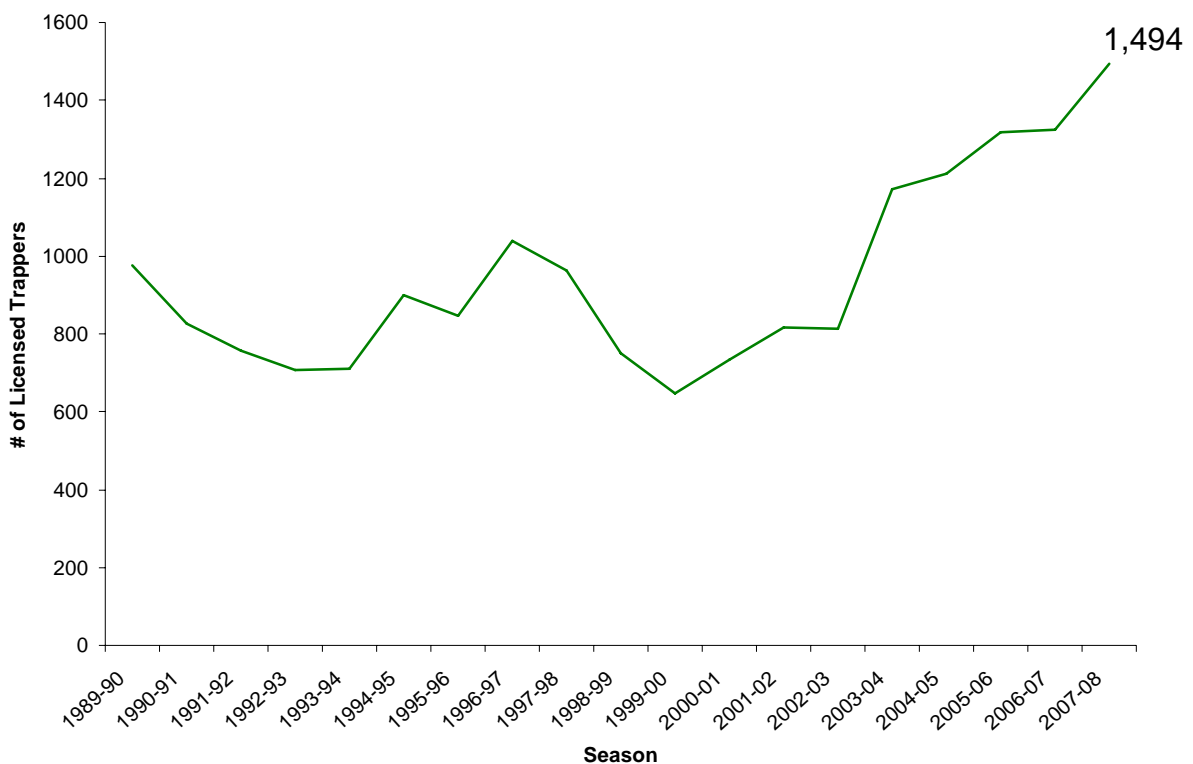
Catch per unit effort for Terrestrial Furbearers



2007-2008 reported harvest from respondents to the voluntary trapper mail survey.

| | Furbearer Management Region | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| | Mountain | Piedmont | Coastal Plains |
| Beaver | 454 | 2,725 | 5,576 |
| Mink | 88 | 60 | 152 |
| Muskrat | 434 | 891 | 1,880 |
| Nutria | 0 | 101 | 2,335 |
| Otter | 50 | 276 | 803 |
| Bobcat | 63 | 195 | 660 |
| Coyote | 354 | 547 | 529 |
| Gray Fox | 50 | 2,103 | 2,940 |
| Red Fox | 49 | 524 | 605 |
| Opossum | 224 | 1540 | 4,612 |
| Raccoon | 335 | 1,825 | 3,193 |
| Weasel | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Skunk | 76 | 395 | 155 |
| # Trappers | 68 | 223 | 323 |

Total number of trapping licenses sold from 1989-2008.



Trapper Education Opportunities

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) has started to offer free Trapper Education Courses. NCWRC plans to offer courses throughout the year in several wildlife districts.

For more information on future trapper education courses contact:

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

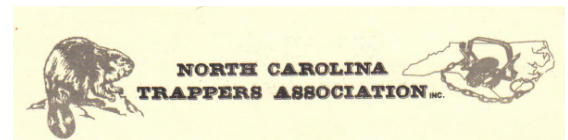


Or visit our website at: http://www.ncwildlife.org/fs_index_08_education.htm

The North Carolina Trappers Association (NCTA) offers advanced trapper educational opportunities for both new and experienced trappers.

For more information contact:

Todd Menke, NCTA Education Coordinator
 2663 Tar River Rd.
 Creedmoor, NC 27522
 E-mail: minkster@netzero.net Phone: (919) 528-9063



2009 National Trappers Association (NTA) Southeast Convention

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission will have a table and display at the NTA Southeast Regional Convention. The North Carolina Trappers Association (NCTA) is sponsoring this event.

This event is scheduled to be held in Williamston, NC on May 1-3, 2009. Williamston is located about half way between the capital city of Raleigh, NC and the OuterBanks of North Carolina.

For more information, including a schedule of events, go to the official website at: <http://www.2009ntaseregional.com/>

General Admission - \$10.00 for ages 12 and up for the whole show.
 Free for children under 12.

Schedule:

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------|--|
| Wednesday | April 29 th | | Site opens to campers |
| Thursday | April 30 th | | Tailgaters may begin to arrive |
| Thursday | April 30 th | 5:30 – 7:00 pm | Welcome reception at host hotel, Holiday Inn |
| Friday | May 1 | 8 am – 6 pm | Gates open |
| Saturday | May 2 | 8 am – 6 pm | Gates open |
| Sunday | May 3 | 8 am – 12 pm | Gates open |