

TRAPPING HARVEST STATISTICS

Division of Fish and Wildlife
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2014 TRAPPER HARVEST SURVEY

Margaret Dexter, Wildlife Research Unit

INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) annually conducts a mail survey of licensed trappers. Annual harvest estimates from the survey data are used to help assess and set trapping regulations and season structure. Beginning in 2000, survey cards were sent to all trappers with a valid mailing address. Information concerning registered harvest (fisher, marten, bobcat, and otter) is obtained from mandatory registration of these animals. Details regarding methods and results can be found in the Registered Furbearer Harvest report on the DNR website.

METHODS

The sampling frame consisted of all individuals with active MNDNR trapping licenses (all types) listed in the Electronic License System (ELS) database in late February 2015. There were 9,540 active trapping licenses in the ELS database, which consisted of 7,239 Resident Regular Trappers, 489 Resident Junior Trappers, 1,259 Resident Senior Trappers, 542 “active” Lifetime Trappers, and 11 Nonresident (MN landowners) license holders. License type was reclassified as “adult” (regular, lifetime, and non-resident) or “youth” for analysis purposes.

The MNDNR Trapper Harvest Survey is a census but the response rate is <100% (mean = 71%, range: 56–79%). Thus, uncertainty in harvest estimates is strictly a function of non-response (missing data) rather than random sampling. However, if non-response (unit and item) is completely random then data from respondents can be treated as a random sample, which is how the Trapper Harvest Survey has been analyzed historically. The critical assumption is that non-response is completely random (e.g., if you repeated the survey, non-respondents would be a random subset of licensed trappers). For consistency with previous analyses, the response data was treated as a random sample.

A postcard survey (Figure 1) was sent to all trapping license holders with a valid mailing address at the close of the license year. Trappers that returned the survey questionnaire within three weeks were marked returned and eliminated from follow-up mailings. A single follow-up mailing was sent to non-respondents. Returned questionnaires were checked for completeness, consistency, and biological practicability. Cards were marked with numeric county codes corresponding to the trapper’s written information. Data from each usable card was converted to an electronic database. Dual key-entry and quality control checks were used to minimize transcription errors. Data was tabulated using Viking Data Entry VDE+ software and statistically analyzed using R programming language (R version 3.1.2 (2014-10-31); R Development Core Team [RDCT] 2014) to summarize responses.

RESULTS

We mailed out 9,540 surveys, 106 surveys were undeliverable and 5,245 were returned for an adjusted response rate of 55.6%. Seventy two percent of respondents (adults = 72%, youth = 77%) reported setting traps for at least one species (Table 1, Figure 2). Historic trapper estimates are presented in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
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 Wildlife Research Unit
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Dear Trapper:

You are being asked as a trapping license buyer to assist us in evaluating the 2014-2015 trapping season (**March 2014-February 2015**). For Spring Beaver, please report only animals taken between March 2014 and April 2014. We need this information to estimate the season's harvest and to help set future furbearer trapping seasons. Similar to past years we are also asking for the **average number of traps you set per day** for each species. If a trap is set for multiple species, count the trap for both species when answering the question. For example, if you ran 20 mink/coon traps each day, enter 20 traps/day for both mink and coon.

YOUR RESPONSE IS NEEDED EVEN IF YOU DID NOT SET TRAPS THIS YEAR.

Please fill out the attached questionnaire and mail as soon as possible. No envelope or stamp is necessary; just tear along the perforation and drop into a mailbox.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Ed Boggess, Director
 Division of Fish and Wildlife
 Department of Natural Resources

2014 Trapper Report

- Did you set traps / snares in Minnesota during the 2014-2015 trapping season?
 No Yes (Please check one)
- Indicate your harvest, the number of days you trapped for each species, the average number of traps you had set PER DAY for each species, and the county in which you trapped **most** for each species. Report only animals **YOU personally** trapped in Minnesota. Animals taken by hunting should **NOT** be reported here.



Species Trapped	Number YOU Trapped All Season	# Days Trapped All Season	Average # Traps/Snares Set Per Day	County You Trapped In Most
Muskrat	80			
Mink	32			
Gray Fox	96			
Striped skunk	34			
Coyote (brush wolf)	97			
Beaver (Mar-April '14)	81			
Beaver (Oct '14-Feb '15)	82			
Pine marten	37			
Otter	38			
Fisher	36			
Badger	35			
Long-tailed weasel	31			
Short-tailed weasel	30			
Opossum	10			
Bobcat	98			
Raccoon	94			
Red Fox	95			



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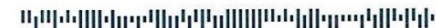


Figure 1. Trapper survey card 2014.

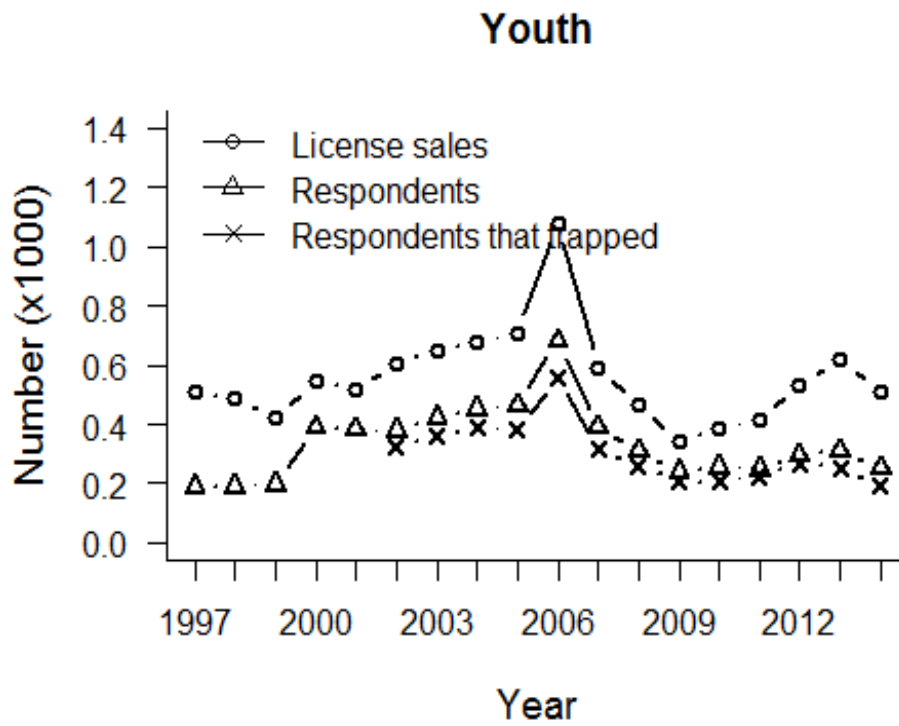
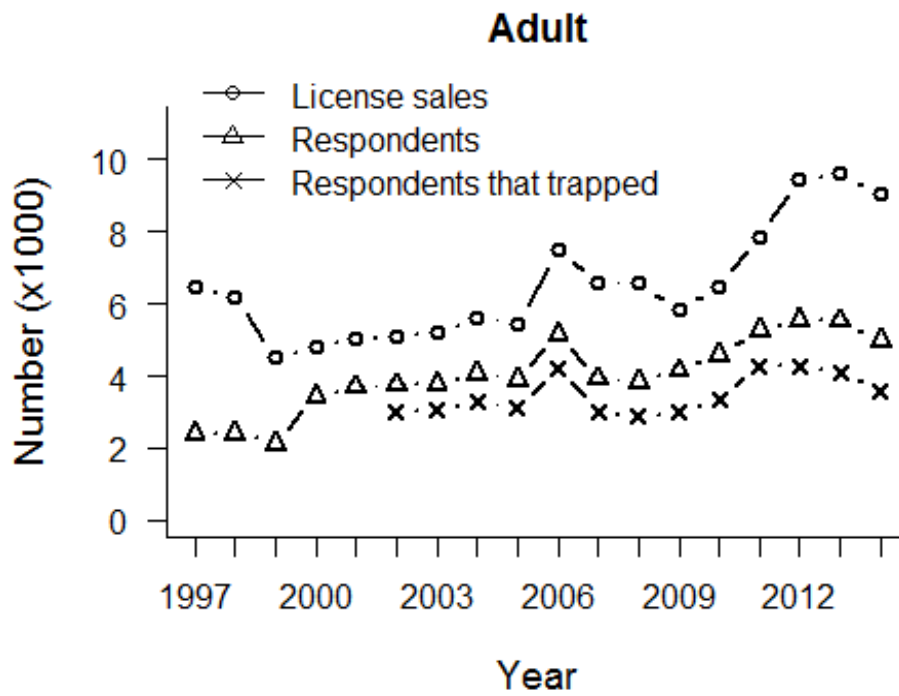


Figure 2. Trapper license sales and mail survey response by age class (Adult vs Youth), 1997-98 through 2014-15.

Table 1. Use of trapper licenses, 2002-03 through 2014-15.

Year	Status	Returns from mail survey	Projections from license sales
2002-03	Trapped	3,344 (80.6%)	4,615
	Did not trap	<u>804 (19.4%)</u>	<u>1,111</u>
		4,148 (100%)	5,726 ^a
2003-04	Trapped	3,412 (81.1%)	4,737
	Did not trap	<u>793 (18.9%)</u>	<u>1,104</u>
		4,205 (100.0%)	5,841 ^a
2004-05	Trapped	3,697 (81.9%)	5,136
	Did not trap	<u>815 (18.1%)</u>	<u>1,135</u>
		4,512 (100.0%)	6,271 ^a
2005-06	Trapped	3,495 (80.0%)	4,930
	Did not trap	<u>875 (20.0%)</u>	<u>1,233</u>
		4,370 (100.0%)	6,163 ^a
2006-07	Trapped	4,782 (81.9%)	7,008
	Did not trap	<u>1,053 (18.1%)</u>	<u>1,549</u>
		5,835 (100.0%)	8,557 ^a
2007-08	Trapped	3,322 (77.2%)	5,533
	Did not trap	<u>980 (22.8%)</u>	<u>1,634</u>
		4,302 (100.0%)	7,167 ^a
2008-09	Trapped	3,154 (75.7%)	5,319
	Did not trap	<u>1,012 (24.3%)</u>	<u>1,708</u>
		4,166 (100.0%)	7,027 ^a
2009-10	Trapped	3,202 (72.7%)	4,467
	Did not trap	<u>1,202 (27.3%)</u>	<u>1,677</u>
		4,404 (100.0%)	6,144 ^a
2010-11	Trapped	3,546 (73.2%)	5,032
	Did not trap	<u>1,298 (26.8%)</u>	<u>1,843</u>
		4,844 (100.0%)	6,875 ^a
2011-12	Trapped	4,498 (81.5%)	6,748
	Did not trap	<u>1,019 (18.5%)</u>	<u>1,532</u>
		5,517 (100.0%)	8,280 ^a
2012-13	Trapped	4,537 (77.6%)	7,747
	Did not trap	<u>1,307 (22.4%)</u>	<u>2,236</u>
		5,844 (100.0%)	9,983 ^a
2013-14	Trapped	4,342 (74.6%)	7,627
	Did not trap	<u>1,480 (25.4%)</u>	<u>2,597</u>
		5,822 (100.0%)	10,224 ^a
2014-15	Trapped	3,786 (72.2%)	6,888
	Did not trap	<u>1,459 (27.8%)</u>	<u>2,652</u>
		5,245 (100.0%)	9,540 ^a

^a excludes duplicates.

Table 2. Estimated number of trappers of various furbearers, 2001-02 through 2014-15.

	Estimated number of trappers													
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Muskrat	2419	2137	2117	2269	2351	4228	2371	2393	2088	2760	4,320	4,110	3,410	2,902
Mink	2117	1945	1917	2085	1864	3033	2168	2044	1541	1847	2,470	3,110	2,780	2,158
Short-tailed weasel	411	408	473	470	349	864	595	511	417	546	800	690	510	666
Long-tailed weasel	313	312	374	299	211	694	434	345	254	333	560	540	480	519
Raccoon (Sept -Feb)	2249	2427	2384	2505	2315	3766	3189	3150	2320	2567	4,060	4,680	4,660	4,182
Raccoon (Mar -Aug) ^a	334	354	338	406	322									
Striped skunk	955	1052	1102	1161	1023	1644	1485	1488	949	1130	1,800	1,940	1,610	1,541
Eastern spotted skunk	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Badger	250	237	292	310	219	347	330	293	206	229	310	360	390	284
Opossum	610	754	934	1037	957	1511	1392	1169	701	645	830	1,100	1,110	575
Red fox (Sept -Feb)	1093	1319	1290	1179	991	1608	1320	1232	1006	1068	1,900	2,240	2,080	2,012
Red fox (Mar -Aug) ^a	91	111	113	110	85									
Gray fox	277	421	441	451	407	806	654	657	529	555	970	1,180	1,060	1,035
Coyote	606	813	812	826	857	1379	1203	1141	888	998	1,720	2,360	2,200	2,396
Beaver (Oct 14- Feb 15)	2054	1844	1883	2171	1965	2659	2008	1877	1650	1722	2,360	2,620	2,710	2,189
Beaver (Mar 14- Apr 14)	1345	1296	1233	1449	1455	1710	1408	1257	1260	1367	1,510	1,810	1,150	1,305

^a Raccoon and red fox season continuous May 1994 thru March 15, 2006.

Note: Estimates prior to 2009 may differ from values published in previous reports because of rounding and more recent estimates were recomputed using a standardized historic dataset (vs. being carried forward from previous reports).

Table 3. Estimated take per trapper of various furbearers, 2000-01 through 2014-2015.

Estimated take per successful trapper reporting that species															
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Muskrat	42	42	36	33	32	39	58	32	34	48	66	82	59	36	39
Mink	13	14	11	9	11	10	9	9	9	9	8	7	6	6	5
Short-tailed weasel	9	11	8	8	6	7	10	7	7	8	10	10	7	5	8
Long-tailed weasel	5	8	4	5	4	4	6	5	3	4	6	6	4	3	5
Raccoon (Sept -Feb)	21	27	26	23	23	22	21	24	23	20	23	25	18	16	15
Raccoon (Mar Aug) ^a	11	20	12	15	13	12									
Striped skunk	9	8	8	8	8	7	7	8	7	7	8	7	7	6	6
Eastern spotted skunk	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Badger	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Opossum	12	9	12	13	14	13	14	13	10	8	7	6	7	7	7
Red fox (Sept -Feb)	7	7	6	6	4	4	5	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4
Red fox (Mar -Aug) ^a	5	5	6	6	4	3									
Gray fox	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2
Coyote	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	6	5	5	5
Beaver (Oct 14-Feb 15)	15	18	13	13	14	14	13	11	12	12	10	12	10	9	8
Beaver (Mar 14 - Apr 14)	27	32	27	22	27	25	25	19	23	20	22	20	20	9	16

^a Raccoon and red fox season continuous May 1994 thru March 15, 2006.

Note: Estimates may differ from values published in previous reports because of rounding and they were recomputed using a ratio of estimated totals (estimated harvest / estimated trappers), which were computed from the standardized, historic harvest dataset.

Table 4. Minnesota trapper license sales and estimated annual harvest, 2000-01 through 2014-2015^a

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Trapper license sales^b	5,337	5,534	5,725	5,841	6,271	6,163	8,557	7,167	7,027	6,158	6,885	8,280	9,998	10,224	9,540
Estimated harvest^c															
Muskrat	85,555	100,819	75,190	69,131	72,079	91,271	243,360	75,439	80,157	98,524	180,505	352,030	242,120	120,500	111,998
Mink	22,590	28,684	19,894	16,716	21,478	18,048	26,084	18,626	16,647	13,207	13,853	15,770	18,460	14,710	10,211
Short-tailed weasel	2,586	4,160	2,895	3,519	2,679	2,223	8,145	4,155	3,515	3,128	4,914	7,300	4,500	2,360	4,806
Long-tailed weasel	1,354	2,243	1,138	1,781	1,007	651	3,494	2,013	1,118	838	1,732	3,020	2,030	1,410	2,568
Raccoon (Oct - Feb)	32,460	60,292	61,221	53,534	56,848	48,966	78,571	73,498	71,893	45,118	57,245	98,240	79,800	70,380	58,868
Raccoon (Mar -Aug) ^f	3,702	6,468	4,137	4,933	4,940	3,594									
Striped skunk	4,580	7,168	7,901	8,474	8,704	6,881	10,773	10,811	10,354	6,194	8,023	12,250	12,620	9,430	7,956
Eastern spotted skunk ^g	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Badger	205	407	358	552	455	339	461	499	424	316	344	490	570	600	347
Opossum	5,351	5,127	8,491	11,251	14,313	11,754	20,442	17	11,296	4,963	4,193	4,400	6,780	6,720	3,524
Red fox (Oct - Feb)	6,165	6,870	7,851	6,721	4,684	3,528	6,783	4,060	3,500	2,984	3,311	7,250	7,540	5,710	6,040
Red fox (Mar -Aug) ^f	357	447	612	635	334	222									
Gray fox	468	525	892	915	898	797	1,703	1,360	1,320	1,084	1,110	2,100	2,550	1,940	1,902
Coyote	2,112	2,369	3,641	3,805	3,607	3,915	5,315	5,355	4,532	3,797	4,292	8,780	11,130	9,010	11,703
Beaver (Oct 13- Feb 14)	24,802	35,963	23,592	22,801	28,716	26,029	33,966	21,813	21,075	18,178	17,048	26,620	24,590	23,220	15,671
Beaver (Mar 13-Apr 13)	37,455	41,829	33,721	26,363	37,861	35,252	41,652	26,286	27,815	25,008	29,118	29,500	34,600	10,110	20,820
Registered harvest^d															
Otter	1,578	2,301	2,145	2,766	3,450	2,846	2,720	1,861	1,938	1,544	1,814	2,294	3,171	2,824	2,148
Lynx ^g	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Bobcat ^e	231	250	544	483	631	590	890	702	853	884	1,012	1,711	1,875	1,038	1,380
Fisher	1,674	2,119	2,660	2,517	2,552	2,388	3,251	1,682	1,712	1,259	903	1,473	1,293	1,146	919
Marten	1,629	1,928	2,839	3,214	3,241	2,653	3,788	2,221	1,823	2,073	1,842	2,525	1,472	1,014	1,055

^a Includes data for all seasons from October through April of years indicated.

^b Separate licenses were issued for juveniles (13-17 years old) and adults (18 and older), beginning in 1982. Nonresident (MN Landowner) licenses started in 2004. Senior trapping licenses were first issued in 2007. Lifetime Licenses became available for free when renewing lifetime sports or small game licenses in 2007. As of April, 2015 - 9,540 trapping licenses were sold in 2014: 489 (5.1%) were junior licenses, 7,239 (75.8%) were Regular adult licenses, 1,259 (13.2%) were Senior licenses, 542 (5.7%) were Lifetime licenses, and 11 (<1%) were Nonresident (MN Landowner) licenses. Duplicate licenses excluded.

^c Based upon trappers' responses to mail surveys. ^d Registered harvest information as reported from annual, mandatory registration.

^e Registered harvest for bobcat includes animals taken by hunting. ^f Raccoon and red fox season continuous May 1994 thru March 15, 2006.

^g Lynx (1984) and Eastern spotted skunk (1996) listed as Special Concern and threatened species (respectively) and are fully protected.



MINNESOTA FUR BUYERS SURVEY FOR THE 2014-2015 HUNTING AND TRAPPING SEASON

Jason Abraham, Wildlife Season Setting/Furbearer Specialist
Margaret Dexter, Wildlife Policy and Research Unit

INTRODUCTION

Fur buyers are individuals licensed by the State of Minnesota to buy and sell raw fur. They are required to keep complete records of all transactions and activities related to buying, selling, and disposing of raw furs. Each year buyers are sent a questionnaire asking them to submit information regarding the “average” price they paid to trappers for various furbearers the previous season.

METHODS

In August 2015, questionnaires were mailed to the 47 licensed fur buyers in Minnesota. The survey asked them to report the number and type of fur purchased from Minnesota trappers and hunters in 2014-15 and the “average price” paid to those hunters and trappers based on all furs purchased. A total of 37 usable surveys were received, for a return rate of 77 percent. Calculations of average pelt price for each species (Table 1) were weighted according to the number of pelts purchased by each buyer. Average pelt prices for the past 15 years are summarized in Table 2. Total estimated value of the furbearer harvest to trappers and hunters in 2014-15 was \$723,852.40, a 9 percent decrease from 2013-2014.

Table 1. Minnesota fur prices as reported by licensed fur dealers, 2014-15.

Species	Number Pelts	Minimum Price	Maximum Price	Weighted Mean
Muskrat	30,917	2.50	6.00	4.85
Mink Female	1,453	3.00	10.25	7.45
Mink male	1,828	6.00	18.00	10.50
Raccoon	22,089	6.00	15.00	8.64
Red Fox	1,354	10.00	30.00	20.41
Gray Fox	237	7.50	20.00	14.17
Coyote	4,684	10.00	40.00	25.10
Bobcat	157	40.00	90.00	66.67
River Otter	397	20.00	50.00	34.57
Beaver 10-12	2,872	5.00	15.00	12.40
Beaver 3-4	3,180	5.00	15.00	10.69
L.T. Weasel	58	2.00	2.00	2.00
S.T. Weasel	369	1.00	5.00	1.78
Striped Skunk	240	1.00	5.00	3.86
Badger	129	5.00	20.00	9.52
Opossum	131	0.50	1.50	1.17
Fisher Male	131	15.00	80.00	41.76
Fisher Female	128	10.00	80.00	50.87
Marten Male	63	30.00	50.00	38.92
Marten Female	49	25.00	44.29	32.20
Deer Hides	16,044	3.00	9.00	5.59
Bear Hides	34	25.00	45.00	32.94

Table 2. Average price per pelt paid to hunters and trappers in Minnesota, 2004-05 through 2014-15.

Species	Average pelt prices paid hunters and trappers in Minnesota (dollars)										
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Muskrat	1.9	2.81	5.79	2.96	1.85	4.43	5.33	5.86	7.91	8.72	4.85
Mink (female)	10.22	10.23	13.18	9.05	7.45	8.02	9.33	11.54	17.53	13.72	7.45
Mink (male)	11.34	14.29	18.04	12.32	9.14	9.37	13.66	14.68	18.27	18.11	10.50
S.T. Weasel	2.52	2.6	3.58	3.18	3.57	3.02	1.50	2.10	2.51	0.00	2.00
L.T. Weasel	3.05	2.56	4.35	5	2.21	3.12	2.87	4.02	4.10	2.35	1.78
Raccoon	10.49	9.61	11.92	14.32	9.34	9.18	10.87	12.57	16.60	16.58	8.64
Striped Skunk	3.95	3.77	4.46	5.27	2.56	3.66	3.29	3.55	5.00	4.14	3.86
Badger	12.94	13.4	15.71	13.92	7.70	8.81	10.43	13.47	14.54	13.72	9.52
Opossum	1.51	1.4	1.52	1.76	1.21	1.30	2.64	5.80	1.52	1.52	1.17
Red Fox	17.28	16.96	17.68	14.69	11.79	10.85	13.35	22.87	33.52	30.90	20.41
Gray Fox	12.58	15	22.36	30.09	14.08	11.55	14.64	15.11	19.20	21.27	14.17
Coyote	15.24	13.57	17.76	13.51	7.12	8.62	9.47	17.99	22.04	21.30	25.10
Bobcat	98.99	95.74	101.07	93.41	74.74	42.77	71.44	98.18	144.79	88.63	66.67
Beaver (fall-winter)	13.62	14.48	18.35	14.6	14.63	12.49	11.95	14.29	18.47	16.52	12.40
Beaver (spring)	13.8	16.49	14.81	17.77	9.36	14.47	14.50	19.96	12.80	14.77	10.69
Otter	87.23	88.89	42.85	29.49	24.33	35.65	34.53	51.40	72.12	61.32	34.57
Fisher (male)	30.02	36.03	76.33	63.09	22.27	34.45	38.19	47.69	62.38	61.32	41.76
Fisher (female)	27.47	31.46	67.82	48.24	37.22	34.90	37.31	39.59	63.02	67.73	50.87
Marten (male)	30.65	37.47	74.04	58.72	30.61	26.76	39.80	42.32	56.57	74.10	38.92
Marten (female)	27.42	31.53	66.09	50.05	28.19	29.95	36.57	39.49	54.29	70.94	32.20
Deer Hides	3.95	4.14	4.51	3.92	3.53	4.44	4.41	3.95	5.18	6.09	5.59
Bear Hides	46.61	39.3	43.03	36.57	29.81	43.00	33.38	28.79	30.28	42.63	32.94

