



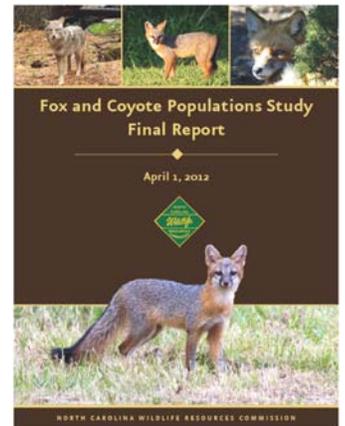
Some of the information in this letter has been provided through the cooperative efforts of North Carolina’s licensed trappers and licensed fur dealers. The information they provide helps the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission monitor furbearer harvest levels and track trends in the population.

Fox Hunting and Trapping in NC

In June 2011, the NCGA passed a bill that directed the WRC to study fox and coyote populations and to recommend management methods and controls designed to ensure statewide conservation of fox populations while managing adverse effects of coyote populations.

The WRC submitted the results of this study in April 2012. The report contains all available information on the harvest and status of foxes and coyotes and summarized stakeholder meetings. The report also reviewed the laws regarding foxes and the WRC’s limited authority in regulating take of foxes. Based on the study, the WRC offered recommendations for managing foxes and coyotes in North Carolina.

To download a copy of the report, visit the Species section on our website at www.ncwildlife.org and click on Coyote, Red or Gray fox.



There are 22 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”

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 fur sales and working with North Carolina fur dealers. We will need multiple years of data before we can start to detect trends in the muskrat population. Please stay tuned for results!

March 2012 (199 pelts examined)

	Ratio	
Adult	3.64 male to female	(40/11)
Juvenile	1.30 male to female	(70/54)
Juvenile vs. Adult	2.40 juveniles to adults	(125/52)
Juvenile vs. Ad. Female	11.36 juv. to ad. female	(125/11)



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.

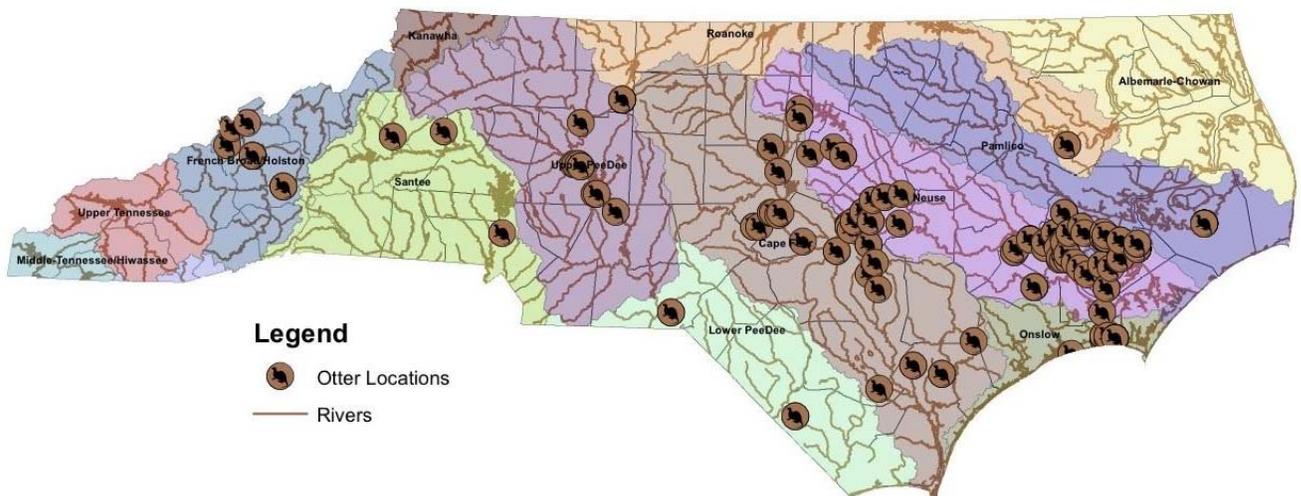
Table 1. Data collected from river otters harvested by trappers from 2009 through 2011.

	2009-10	2010-11	Total
Otters Sampled	74	178	252
Females	20	65	85
Males	54	113	167
Average Weight* (lbs)	19.6	17.1	16.0
Avg. Nose→Rump length (inches)	26.5	27.3	26.2
Avg. Nose→Tail length (inches)	43	43.6	42.5
Average Age	2	2	2
Most common Age	1	0	1
Maximum Age	11	12	12
Percent Caught in December	9%	5%	6%
Percent Caught in January	34%	39%	35%
Percent Caught in February	57%	44%	46%

*Note: weights are of skinned carcasses, full weights will be slightly higher

We are continuing this study throughout the 2012-13 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 Phone: (919) 896-9519



Season Results from 2011-2012 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

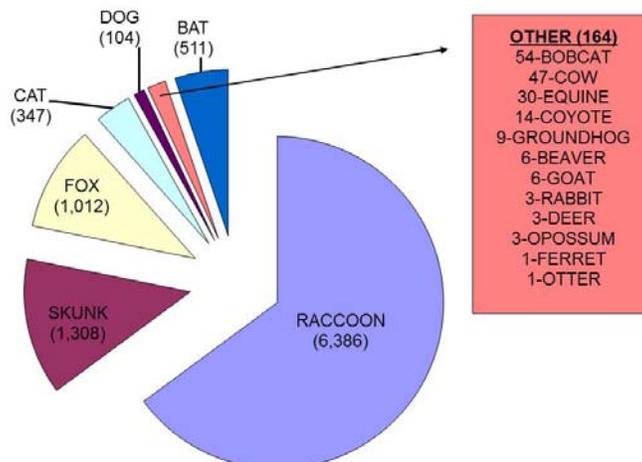
Species	Harvest 10-11	Harvest 11-12 ¹	% Change from prior year	Average Pelt Price ²	Value
Beaver	9,389	9,979	6%	\$18.17	\$181,309
Bobcat	993	927	-7%	\$55.99	\$51,903
Coyote	2,843	3,458	22%	\$13.77	\$47,617
Gray Fox	3,995	4,622	16%	\$24.37	\$112,638
Mink	248	263	6%	\$18.29	\$4,810
Muskrat	4,229	4,166	-1%	\$7.73	\$32,203
Nutria	1,224	1,516	24%	N/A	N/A
Opossum	5,216	6,080	17%	\$0.75	\$4,560
Otter	1,905	2,383	25%	\$56.71	\$135,140
Raccoon	7,568	9,612	27%	\$6.70	\$64,400
Red Fox	872	1,078	24%	\$37.20	\$40,102
Skunk	411	500	22%	\$1.26	\$630
Weasel	25	2	-92%	N/A	N/A
TOTALS	38,918	44,586	15%	--	\$675,312

¹ Updated as of September 2012. Final harvest figures may change as more trapper surveys are received.

² 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 2011. 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 1990-2011.

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 WDCAs 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

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: david.denton@ncwildlife.org



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

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