

Fur Harvesters:

Eighty-four percent of fur harvest survey responders indicated that they participated in the 2013/2014 fur harvest. Of those that were successful, 34% only trapped, 22% only hunted and 45% both trapped and hunted furbearers. The number of participants was higher than the previous year (1,331 compared to 979 in 2012/2013). The average successful trapper harvested more than twice as many furbearers as the average hunter (48 vs. 20). According to the fur harvest survey, each fur harvester received permission from an average four landowners to harvest fur on their lands.

Depredation:

The species most commonly harvested for depredation control purposes were raccoon, opossum and beaver.

Species	Number harvested for depredation	Percent of total harvest
Raccoon	20,675	9%
Opossum	4,058	11%
Beaver	3,874	37%
Coyote	3,045	8%
Striped Skunk	1,869	13%
Muskrat	1,457	7%
Badger	715	17%
Woodchuck	488	57%
Red Fox	108	3%
Bobcat	43	3%
Mink	33	2%

Pelts:

Based on results from the annual fur buyer survey, overall prices for wild pelts of most furbearing species have decreased compared with the previous season, and increased compared with the five-year average. Badger and bobcat pelt prices have experienced the greatest increases with average prices 40% and 22% higher than during the 2012/2013 season. Opossum and mink prices showed the greatest decreases with average prices 67% and 52% lower than the 2012/2013 season. Bobcat pelts remain the most valuable with average prices \$191 higher than any other furbearer.

Pelt Prices:

Species	2013-2014	Previous Season	5 Year Average
Bobcat	\$204.29	\$167.03	\$107.85
Coyote	\$13.36	\$17.08	\$12.66
Red Fox	\$12.87	\$21.91	\$14.04
Raccoon	\$9.48	\$10.19	\$9.16
Badger	\$8.08	\$5.79	\$7.04
Mink	\$6.19	\$12.93	\$10.13
Beaver	\$5.18	\$7.82	\$8.21

Muskrat	\$4.73	\$6.45	\$4.05
Opossum	\$0.58	\$1.75	\$1.14
Striped Skunk	None Reported	\$1.00	\$2.40

Early Raccoon Hunting-Only Season:

Estimates from the fur harvest survey indicate that harvesters who participated in the early raccoon season killed an estimated 4,627 raccoons (compared with 6,230 in 2012). The early raccoon-hunting season accounted for 2% of all raccoons taken during the entire 2013/2014 season (1% lower than in 2012/2013). Concerns with the season have been voiced by raccoon trappers fearing reduced trapping success due to localized population reduction by hunters prior to the trapping season. Fur buyers are concerned with the influx of valueless pelts on the market (raccoon pelts usually do not prime up until the middle of November).

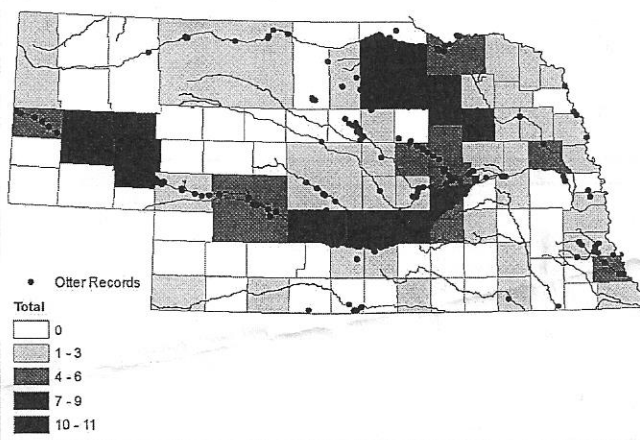
Gray Fox Tagging:

In 2002, a tagging requirement was implemented for all gray fox taken in Nebraska. Two gray foxes were tagged during the 2013/2014 season.

River Otter Distribution:

Information from fur harvesters regarding river otter distribution was collected through the 2013/2014 fur harvest survey. This information will be used to focus survey efforts and determine the current distribution of this threatened species.

of Fur Harvesters Reporting River Otters by County



Special thanks to all fur harvesters and fur buyers that made this analysis possible by responding to the fur harvest and fur buyer survey!



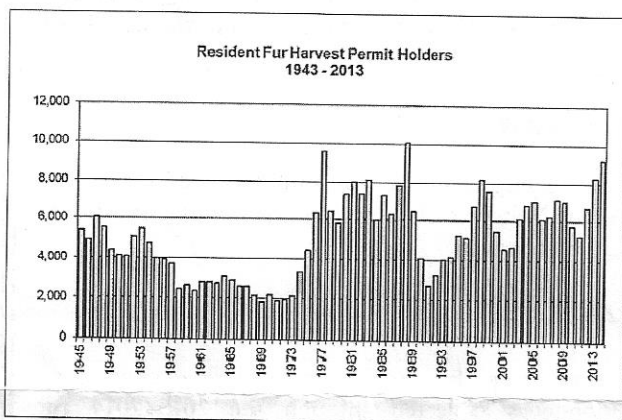
FUR HARVEST SURVEY 2013/2014 SEASON

Sam Wilson
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
September 26, 2014



Permits:

A total of 9,190 fur harvest permits were sold to Nebraska residents in 2013 (up from 8,288 in 2012). This is the third highest number of permits sold on record. Fifty-three fur harvest permits were sold to nonresidents from 17 different states (AK, AR, CO, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, MO, MT, PA, SD, VT, WI, and WY).



Survey:

A fur harvest survey was sent to 9,015 fur harvest permit holders. The response rate to the survey was 19% yielding a total of 1,706 responses. In addition, surveys were sent to 50 licensed fur buyers, of which 22% (11) responded to the survey.

Seasons:

Species	Trap and Hunt	Trap Only	Hunt only
Muskrat	N/A	Nov 1 – Mar. 31	N/A
Beaver	N/A	Nov 1 – Mar. 31	N/A
Bobcat	Dec. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Raccoon	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
Opossum	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
Weasel	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Mink	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Red Fox	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Gray Fox	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Badger	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Skunk	Year-round	N/A	N/A

Harvest:

The estimated harvest during the 2013/2014 season was higher compared with the five-year average. Opossum, coyote and raccoon showed the greatest increase (40%, 37% and 35% higher respectively).

Mink, muskrat and beaver showed the greatest decrease compared to the five-year average (down 33%, 33% and 18% respectively). The total estimated harvest for the 2013/2014 season was lower than the 2012/2013 season with mink and beaver showing the greatest decrease (down 56% and 42% respectively). Red fox was the only species to show a decrease (-2%). Continued high pelt prices likely maintained a high harvest effort. Furharvesters reported that 37% of coyotes and 11% of red foxes harvested showed symptoms of mange.

	Estimated Harvest		Total harvest	Previous Season	5-Yr Average 2009-2013
	Hunt	Trap			
Raccoon	50,479	181,046	231,525	261,269	171,528
Opossum	4,659	33,662	38,321	43,727	27,420
Coyote	14,471	21,796	36,268	46,230	26,513
Muskrat	N/A	21,796	21,796	32,530	32,299
Striped Skunk	2,097	11,817	13,913	19,923	14,317
Beaver	N/A	10,522	10,522	18,219	12,774
Badger	1,203	3,029	4,231	6,337	3,670
Red Fox	585	3,489	4,074	3,981	3,608
Mink	98	2,026	2,124	4,853	3,160
Bobcat	305	1,372	1,677	1,711	1,451
Woodchuck	341	509	851	1,271	913

1 Includes only harvest numbers provided by harvesters

2 Total harvest based on pelt tagging, hunt column includes harvested road kills

Nonresponder Bias:

The results of a 2003 phone survey indicate that active harvesters were 4.7 times more likely to respond to the fur harvest survey than those that did not participate in the 2002/2003 season. As a result, the proportion of inactive harvesters is greater in the population of nonresponders, likely resulting in an overestimation of total harvest estimates if simple extrapolation is used. Adjusting the 2013/2014 harvest data, based on the findings of the 2002/2003 follow up phone survey yields substantially lower total harvest estimates than the non-adjusted extrapolation.

Species	Harvest not adjusted	Estimated total harvest adjusted for nonresponder bias
Raccoon	231,525	158,958
Opossum	38,321	26,711
Coyote	36,268	24,778
Muskrat	21,796	14,657
Striped Skunk	13,913	9,947
Beaver	10,522	9,073
Badger	4,231	3,118
Red Fox	4,074	2,636
Mink	2,124	1,359