

# Vermont Furbearer Management Newsletter



The MISSION of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

## Frequently Asked Questions

Do you ever wonder what your peers are thinking? We often receive questions or comments on the back of the trapper mail survey. We always appreciate the feedback and sometimes act on the suggestions. This year, we thought we would share with you some of the questions we received and our responses.

**1. The question most commonly asked by trappers was related to the fisher/bobcat season. Many wanted the fisher and bobcat season to run concurrently through the whole month of December. Some suggested moving the bobcat season to the second half of December. Several were concerned about the incidental take of bobcats outside the season. A few suggested issuing bobcat permits.** The furbearer management team reviews biological, harvest, and trapper effort data to track population changes over time. If such data suggests that a population is increasing to the point where the season can be relaxed, then the team develops a justification for a season expansion and makes a proposal to the Fish & Wildlife Board. If data suggests that the population is stable or decreasing, then we will often opt to maintain, or reduce the existing

season. We always work closely with the Vermont Trappers Association (VTA) to collect feedback and discuss options. In the case of the fisher/bobcat season, the data indicated that the fisher population could sustain a longer season, while the same was not true in regards to the bobcat population. Bobcats existed at very high numbers in the early and mid 1900s due to an expanding prey base, excellent habitat (as a result of reverting farms), and lack of competition (all other major predators except the fox had been extirpated). Beginning in the 1960s and 70s, competition from coyotes and fisher, the reduction of the deer herd, and the maturing forest, all combined to reduce bobcat numbers through the latter half of the 20th century. Although some of our recent data indicates an increase in the bobcat population, we are not yet in a position to justify an extension to the trapping or hunting season. We didn't however, want this fact to limit the opportunity to increase the fisher season. If at some point our information suggests that an expanded bobcat season is feasible, we will work with trappers and houndsmen to propose an equitable

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expansion. Until that happens, if there is enough support among the trapping public, we would certainly be open to exploring the possibility of shifting the bobcat season to the latter half of December or investigating other strategies to address this concern.

**2. The second most commonly asked question was related to the muskrat population/season. In this case, the comments were all over the board. A couple of folks suggested banning or shortening the muskrat shooting season. Several others recommended studying the population because “they [muskrat] are rare” or “in big trouble”. A few others were critical of the**



**recent two week**

**reduction to the muskrat trapping season because, in their opinion, they appear to be “abundant” or “increasing”. Reducing the muskrat trapping season was a difficult decision for the furbearer management team and the VTA. For the last five to ten years there has been anecdotal information that has suggested a national decline in the muskrat population. Data from the Vermont Trapper Mail Survey indicates a steady decline in muskrat harvest since 1997, decreasing more than 60% in the two years between 1997 and 1999. To a great degree, harvest fluctuations are related to trapper effort and pelt prices, but in this**

case it appears that there may be other factors at play. A researcher from Cornell’s Department of Natural Resources and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation reviewed muskrat harvest and effort data from the 12 northwestern states and provinces. He found that in almost all jurisdictions, the muskrat harvest has declined dramatically and does not appear to be a function of pelt price to the degree that it is with other furbearers. There also appears to be a pattern to the timing of the decline. According to the data, the declines began in the mid Atlantic states in the late 1970s and early 1980s and progressed northward into Ontario and Quebec in the late 1980s. While many theories abound, no one is certain what is causing this decline. Clearly, this is very preliminary information and more study is needed. The Northeast Furbearer Resources Technical Committee (NEFRTC), made up of all of the furbearer biologists from the Northeastern states and the five eastern Canadian provinces, has recognized this as a major concern and intends to continue its efforts to research this problem in hopes of furthering our understanding. Recognizing that more data is needed, both the Department and the VTA considered the season reduction very carefully. In the end,

however, we all opted to err on the side of caution and the resource to temporarily reduce the season until more information is gathered.

The muskrat shooting season is defined in statute and requires legislative action to change it. We hope eventually to shift the responsibility for season regulation to the Fish & Wildlife Board.

**3. Conibear trap check should be 48 hours not 24.** The way the regulation reads right now “a person who sets body grip traps in the water or foot traps under the ice during the open season for beaver shall visit his traps at least once every three days and remove any animal caught therein.” Other sets must be checked once daily (this includes upland conibear sets).

**4. Why can’t trappers set a land trap after December 31?** The December 31 closure for land trapping is dictated by statute and would require legislative change to alter the season.

**5. Put trapper mail survey online.** As a result of this suggestion, the trapper mail survey is now online <http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/AnnualTrappersReport.cfm>. Anyone who has access to a computer can send us the survey electronically.

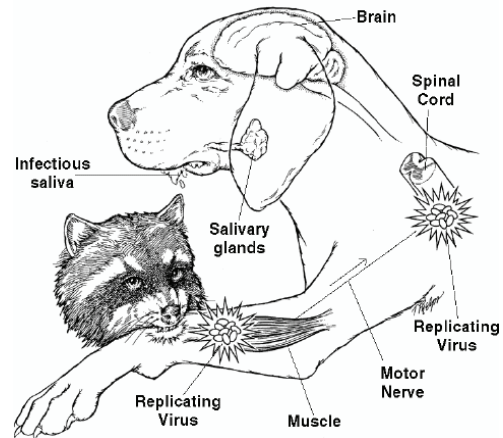
## Vermont Raccoons and Rabies

The raccoon strain of rabies was first confirmed in southern Vermont in June 1992. Since then the disease has spread northward and has been found in every county of the state. A total of 582 raccoons have tested positive for the virus during that time. In 2007, 104 raccoons tested positive. The majority of these were found in Franklin County.

In an effort to experimentally control the northward spread of the rabies virus, Wildlife Services, a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS), has assisted

the Vermont Department of Health in distributing oral rabies vaccination (ORV) bait in ten of Vermont's counties. This year marked the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Rabies Bait Drop. In response to a significant increase in numbers of animals testing positive compared to 2006, the Department of Health stepped up its efforts and dropped more than 400,000 cubes of bait from fixed-wing aircraft flying at an altitude of about 500 feet.

The ORV bait consists of a hollow fish meal cube. A plastic packet containing the rabies vaccine is inserted into the hollow area and sealed with wax. When a



raccoon finds the bait and bites into it, the packet ruptures allowing the vaccine to bathe the lymphatic tissue in its throat as it swallows. Raccoons that swallow an adequate dose of vaccine develop immunity to rabies and, as the number of vaccinated raccoons in the population increase, they act as a barrier to stop the spread of the disease to other wildlife, domestic animals, and humans. The bait does not cause rabies if it is

touched or eaten and is not harmful to children or pets.<sup>1</sup>

For more information about the Rabies Bait Drop or rabies in general, contact the Vermont Rabies Hotline at 1-800-4-RABIES or the Vermont Department of Health at 1-800-640-4374.

<sup>1</sup> USDA APHIS Wildlife Services; Preventing the Westward Spread of Rabies Factsheet; August 2002.

## Season Results 2006-07

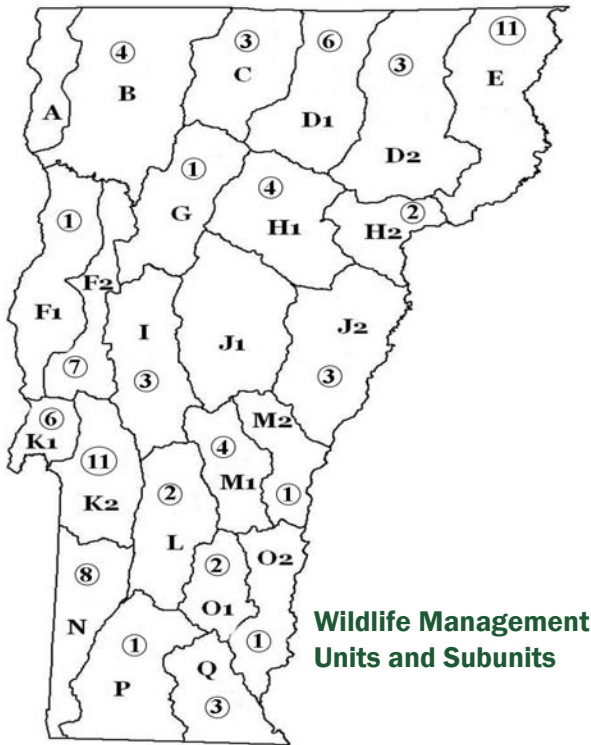
Ninety-two bobcat, 608 fisher, and 193 otter were reported and tagged by Vermont's Wardens during the 2006-07 season. Wildlife biologists and volunteers examined each carcass to determine their sex, age, and physical condition. These data are used to monitor changes in health, status, and population levels.

Bobcat and fisher are well distributed throughout much of the state (Figures 1 and 2). Otter are managed by Watershed Management Units, as this species is closely tied to waterways and well distributed throughout the state (Figure 3). We also monitor the harvest of furbearer species through the annual trapper mail survey (Figure 4), which allows us to track

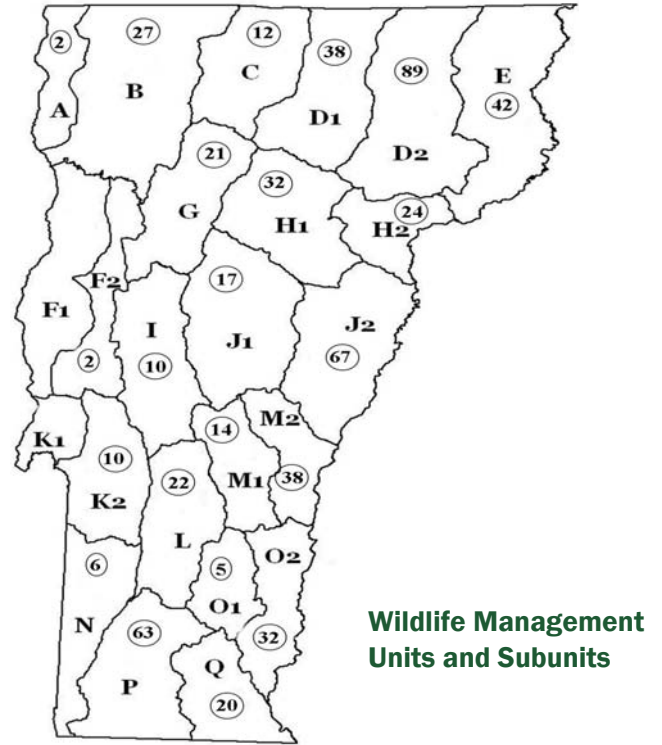
trapper effort (# traps x # nights) and pelt price. Historically, trapping effort has been closely related to harvest levels. This strong relationship is a reassuring indicator that we are not overharvesting furbearers in Vermont.

**Thanks to all of you who collect and/or contribute this essential information to the furbearer program.**

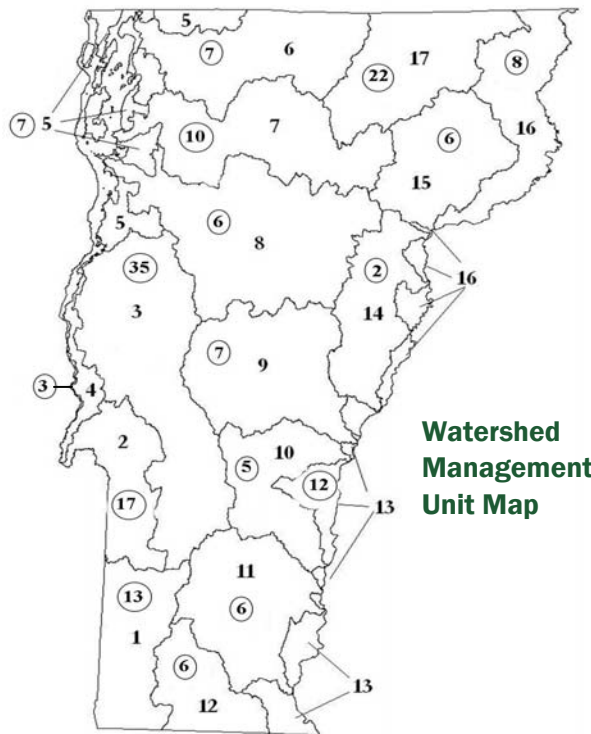
As pelt prices increase, monitoring harvest and effort data will become even more critical to understanding furbearer population dynamics and management.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of 87 bobcat taken during the 2006-2007 season. (The remaining 6 bobcat are unknown).



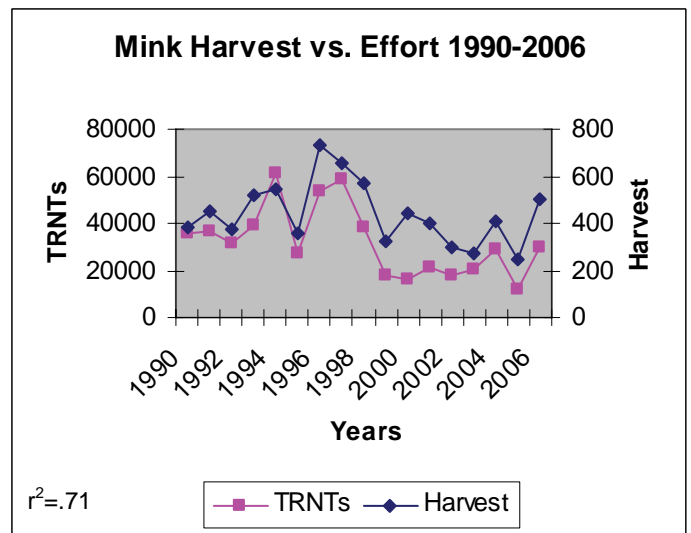
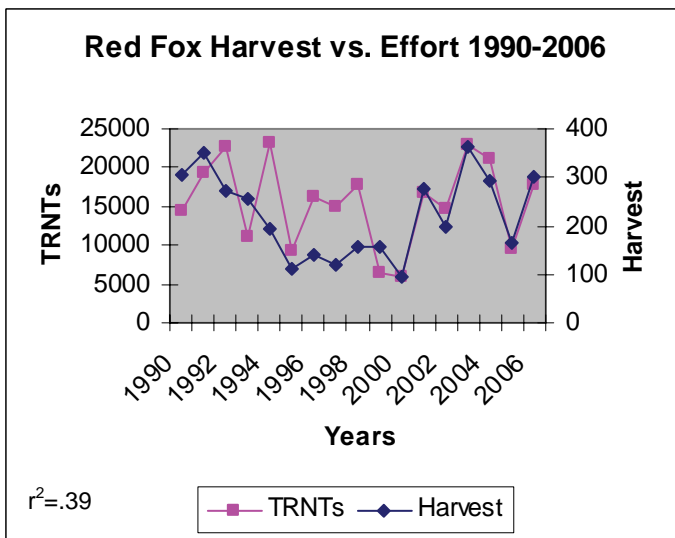
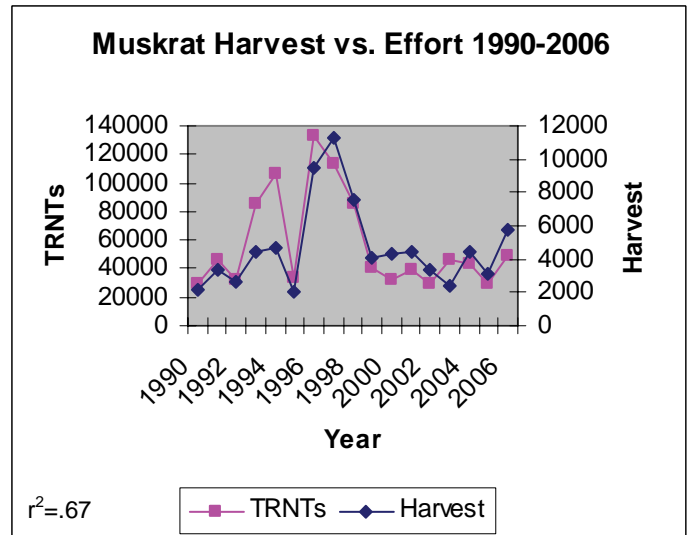
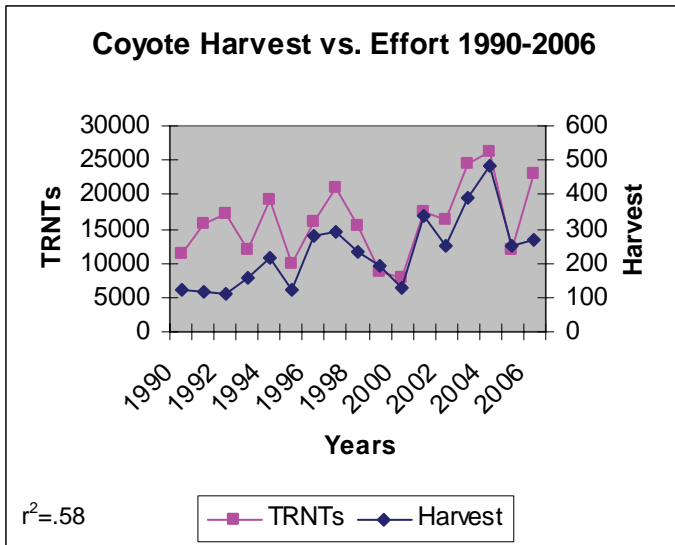
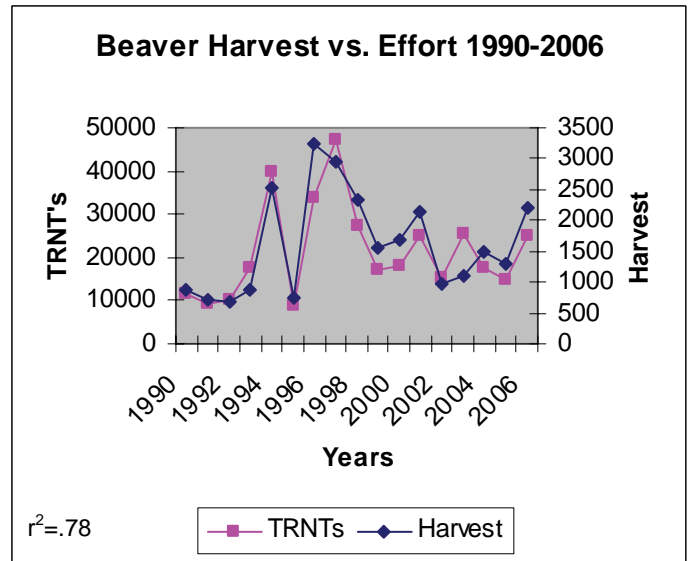
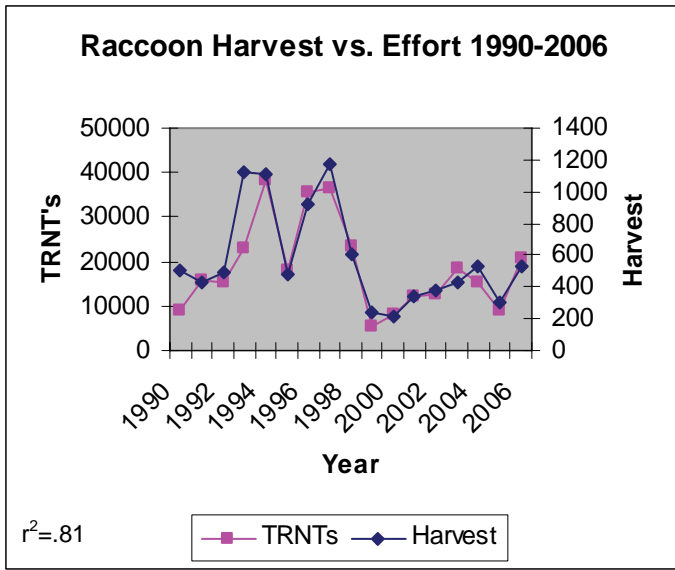
**Figure 2.** Distribution of 593 fisher taken during the 2006-2007 season. (The remaining 15 fisher are unknown).



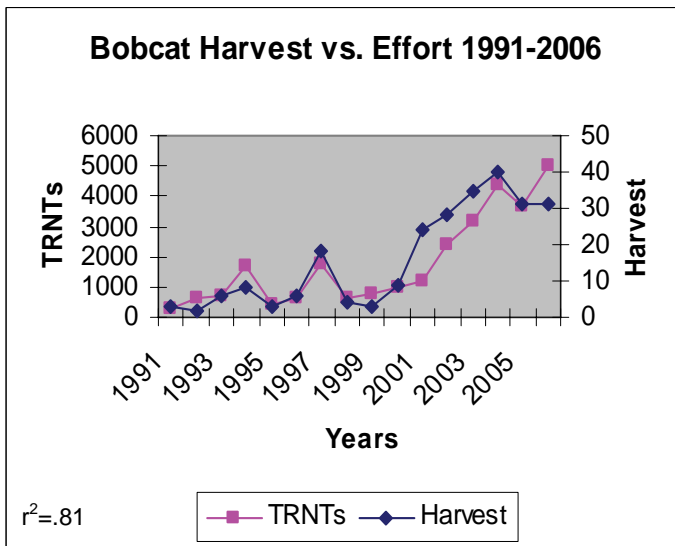
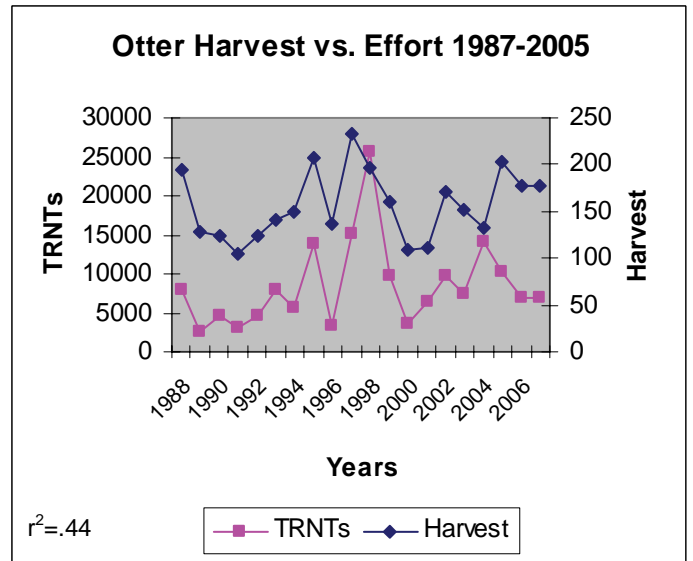
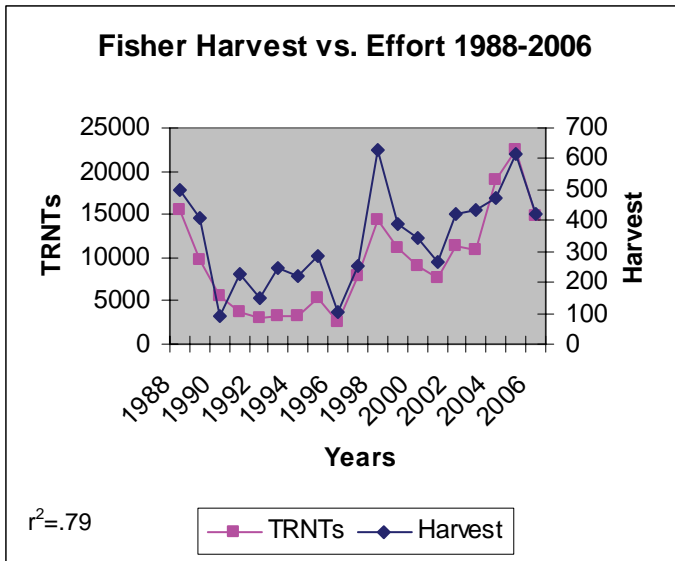
Watershed Management Units	
1.	Batten Kill, Walloomsuc, Hoosic
2.	Poultney, Mettawee
3.	Otter Creek, Little Otter Creek, Lewis Creek
4.	Lower Lake Champlain
5.	Upper Lake Champlain, LaPlatte, Malletts Bay, St. Albans Bay, Rock, Pike
6.	Missisquoi
7.	Lamoille
8.	Winooski
9.	White
10.	Ottawaquechee, Black
11.	West, Williams, Saxtons
12.	Deerfield
13.	Lower Connecticut, Mill Brook
14.	Stevens, Wells, Waits, Ompompanoosuc
15.	Passumpsic
16.	Upper Connecticut, Nulhegan, Willard Stream, Paul Stream
17.	Lake Memphremagog, Black, Barton, Clyde

**Figure 3.** Distribution of 172 otter taken during the 2005-2006 season. (The remaining 21 otter are unknown).

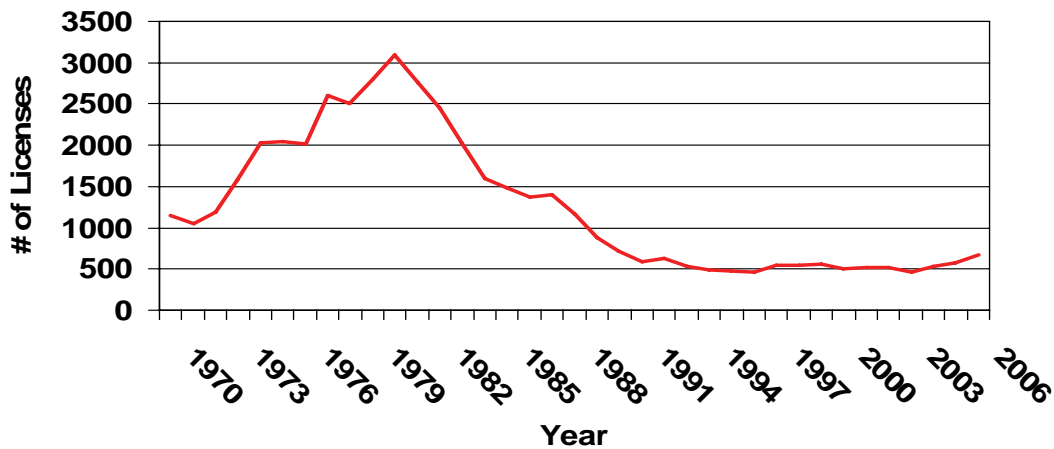




**Figure 4.** Harvest vs. Trapper Effort in Vermont (data from annual *Trapper Mail Survey* returned by trappers — thank you!). TRNTs = Number of trapping nights or effort.



**Figure 4.** Harvest vs. Trapper Effort in Vermont (*cont. from page 4*).



**Figure 5.** Total number of resident trapping license sales in Vermont by calendar year.

## A Note from the Director of Wildlife

By John M. Austin, Acting Director of Wildlife

It is an honor and a privilege to serve the department as Acting Director of Wildlife. Having worked for 12 years and dealing with many issues from managing the habitat and technical assistance, to serving on the waterfowl team, to helping in the development of our Wildlife Action Plan, I thought I had a fairly good understanding of the work we do. Serving in this new capacity, however, has given me a new appreciation for all that we do. The diversity and complexity of programs, projects, and initiatives we are engaged in is staggering and inspiring. We truly do represent all species of wild animals and plants in carrying out our mission to conserve and protect them and their habitats for the people of the state.

I want to share my perspective on wildlife conservation and how I view the Wildlife Division's many priorities. Habitat loss to development is arguably our greatest conservation challenge. Today, we lose habitat in Vermont to roads, buildings, electricity infrastructure, fragmentation, and invasion of non-native species. There is no easy solution to the changes occurring in our environment, yet we are tasked with representing the public's interests in making sure we conserve our unique natural heritage.

We are faced with an equally compelling challenge of changing public interests in and attitudes toward wildlife and land. As Vermont grows, land becomes parcelized and fragmented, and in turn, it becomes more difficult for people to access land to hunt, fish, trap, hike, and watch wildlife. It is our duty to ensure people have opportunities and reasons to connect to the land and wildlife. In my view, people will not protect what they do not care about. People must be able to pursue interests in wildlife, in all their forms, so we can continue to grow public support for wildlife conservation. We must ensure that our children's children have the same opportunities, with respect to wildlife conservation, that we are privileged to have today. Being an avid hunter and angler myself, I also feel strongly that we must work hard to maintain and expand opportunities for the traditional wildlife-based pursuits.

Some of our most effective initiatives for addressing habitat loss are through our interaction with private landowners and Vermont communities. Our assistance in land use and conservation planning, management, and acquisition is critical in this regard and we should continue to grow in this area.

The Wildlife Division also has a strong program for management and conservation of department

lands. We can continue to expand our efforts to set an example for being a responsible land steward in Vermont, for acquiring more land to provide the public with secure access to land, habitat, and wildlife, and to ensure the long-term conservation of the many species that rely on these public lands.

In May we will be seeking public input on the new ten-year management plans for black bear, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and moose. This will be a great opportunity to interact with hunters and many others to ensure the well-being of the environment, the interests of all Vermont citizens who enjoy these species in many ways, and those who have serious concerns about the impacts they have on the land on their property.

We will press forward in the application of our Wildlife Action Plan and all the projects it is funding, ranging from bobcat research and butterfly inventories to habitat evaluations.

I look forward to working with all of the talented conservation professionals in the department and all of our dedicated partners as we proceed with conserving Vermont's wildlife heritage.



## What's Up on the BMP Front?

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR TRAPPING IN THE UNITED STATES

BMPs are now available for:

- Eastern Coyote
- Western Coyote
- Red Fox
- Gray Fox
- Bobcat
- Raccoon
- Opossum
- Beaver
- River Otter
- Muskrat
- Fisher
- Nutria



ASSOCIATION *of*  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES

To date...

- ◆ All 50 states support the development of trapping BMPs
- ◆ 36 U.S. states have actively participated in trap testing
- ◆ Over 85 trapping devices have been tested including:
  - ◇ Live restraint cable devices
  - ◇ Plain jaw and modified coil-spring and longspring traps
  - ◇ Species selective traps
  - ◇ Cage traps
  - ◇ Bodygrip traps
- ◆ 1,000 trappers and technicians have participated in field testing traps
- ◆ Vermont has played a very active role in this effort

What's going on?

- ◆ Trapping BMPs are being published and made available to state and federal wildlife agencies. Any trapper organization and any other interested party may receive a free copy of BMPs as they become available. Contact the AFWA program manager with questions by email at [Bryant.White@mds.mo.gov](mailto:Bryant.White@mds.mo.gov)
- ◆ Each state will decide how BMPs will be incorporated into their trapper education and furbearer management program.
- ◆ Research for BMPs is coordinated by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). AFWA has no regulatory or enforcement authority.
- ◆ Experienced trappers, biologists, and members of trappers' associations are involved in field testing, gathering of data, and the development of BMPs.
- ◆ Trapping BMPs are "works in progress". They will be updated and expanded as more traps are tested for each furbearer species.
- ◆ Trapping BMPs are not laws. Instead, they are recommendations based on sound scientific research. BMPs address the welfare of captured animals and they identify the most efficient, practical, and safe trapping techniques and equipment.

For more information about BMPs, contact your state fish and wildlife agency or visit

[www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer\\_resources.html](http://www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer_resources.html)

**Supporting Trappers...Sustaining Trapping**



## Furbearer Education Kits

We are pleased to report that the response to the Furbearer Education Kits developed by the Northeast Furbearer Resources Technical Committee in 2004 has been overwhelmingly positive here in the Green Mountain State. The five Vermont kits, funded by the Vermont Trappers Association and the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, have been used repeatedly throughout the state by teachers, 4-H leaders, game wardens, biologists, and a variety of other educators.

Debbie Fajans, a UVM Extension 4-H Educator in Windham County, was very impressed by the quality of the kit and the ease of its use. *"I used it with kids in kindergarten through 8th grade at a summer day camp. The pelts are a good, hands-on teaching tool for younger kids and are a lead to a higher level thinking questions. The 5th through 8th grade kids love the skulls and scat!"*

Vermont State Game Wardens have also taken advantage of the teaching opportunities provided by the kit. Warden Travis Buttle appreciates the flexibility the kit offers since he doesn't always have an extended period of time with his audience. He has been able to pick and choose the focus and activities based on the age of the group and the time allotted. *"I have used it numerous times with age ranges from pre-K kids up to Junior High. The response is great."*



Travis Buttle, Vermont State Game Warden

*They all like to see the furs and look at the track casts. The older groups get the skull treatment where I mainly talk about teeth and how they are used."*

Chester-Andover Elementary School teacher Ellen Ferro did have a longer opportunity to take full advantage of the kit's curriculum. *"The kit was great. I used it as part of our fourth grade unit on habitats. We were studying the habitats of different animals and it fit right in. The biggest benefit is for the students to touch and see the pelts and skulls and tracks. They thought it was cool stuff!"*

It isn't just kids that benefit from the contents of the rolling black boxes. Last summer, Fajans laid out the pelts, skulls, scat, and track replicas at the Westminster Community Tent during an event at the Kurn Hattin School. *"It was a huge hit with families, and I was especially glad to see how*

F&W Office	Telephone Number
Waterbury	802.241.3700
Essex	802.878.1564
Rutland	802.786.0040
Springfield	802.885.8855
St. Johnsbury	802.751.0100

*comfortable and easy it was for fathers to pick things up and teach their children."*

Each kit includes a curriculum for middle school level students, 14 furbearer pelts, skulls, rubber track and scat replicas, mammal and track guide books, videos, and more! Contact the Waterbury headquarters of the Fish & Wildlife Department or one of the four regional offices (Essex, Rutland, Springfield, St. Johnsbury) to borrow a kit. Be sure to give them lots of lead time because the kits are in high demand.

The Northeast Furbearer Resources Technical Committee is comprised of professional wildlife biologists from the northeastern United States and Provinces of eastern Canada and is committed to the study and responsible management of our furbearer species.



## Featured Species: Raccoon

The masked face and ringed tail make *Procyon lotor* one of the most familiar animals in North America. It has become a common sight in cities, towns, and suburban areas as a result of its ability to adapt to a variety of surroundings.

The Abenaki called him “asban”, one who lifts things up. The English word “raccoon” is derived from the Algonquin who called him “arukan” for one who rubs, scrubs, and scratches with his hands. And though the common belief that a raccoon always washes its food is a myth, it has plenty of other interesting traits.

- *Procyon lotor* is found in southern Canada, all of the United States except the Rocky Mountains, and Central America.
- A raccoon is an omnivorous opportunist, dining on anything from carrion, garbage, and most human foods as well as insects, small mammals, crayfish, and various fruits and grains.
- Home ranges can vary from .5 mile to 2 miles.
- Female raccoons have one litter per year averaging 4 kits per litter. The young typically stay with their mother through the first winter.
- A raccoon hand has 10 times as many nerve endings as a human hand. Dipping food or other objects in water may make the pads of the raccoon’s hands more sensitive.

- They will purr, whimper, snarl, growl, hiss, scream, and whinny to communicate.
- Raccoons learn quickly and can remember things for over a year.
- Though color-blind, they have excellent night vision.
- Raccoons walk flat-footed like bears, but are most closely related to the canid family. A rotating hind foot allows them to descend a tree head first.
- Not true hibernators, raccoons enter periods of inactivity governed by air temperature. This helps to conserve fat reserves during the winter.
- It is conservatively estimated that there are 15-20 times as many raccoons in North America today as there were during the 1930s. Populations in Vermont have followed that trend.
- Average prices for raccoon pelts in the US have been as low as \$1.35 in 1970 and as high as \$27.25 in 1978. The average price for 2006 as reported with the Trapper Mail Survey is \$12.70.

## Raccoon Folklore

*From Raccoons: In Folklore, History, and Today’s Backyards* by Virginia C. Holmgren, Capra PR Publishing, March 1990.

- In the War of Independence, raccoon pelts were an important part of the colonial soldier’s uniform. Companies of fur-

capped marchers with ringed tails flaunted in dangling display were protected from hypothermia and frostbitten ears while the enemy shivered in their fancy battle array.

- On the frontier, raccoon pelts were a reliable source of income thanks to the steady demand for fur in Europe. A raccoon pelt, well prepared and of good quality, was as good as cash at any frontier trading post. Even government salaries and court fines were paid in coonskins.
- The fat from raccoons was used for healing sprains and bruises, softening leather, and as a substitute for lard.
- The phrase “a coon’s age” refers to a length of time beyond normal. Older raccoons with graying faces were admired for living a longer than average life despite trapping pressure during frontier times.
- Two presidents lived with raccoons as pets in the White House. “Rebecca” was the companion of Calvin Coolidge’s wife, Grace. “Suzie” had free run of the White House during Herbert Hoover’s term in office.



## RABIES ALERT!

### What Trappers and Houndsmen Should Know



#### What is rabies?

- Rabies is a deadly disease of the brain. If left untreated, rabies is 100 percent fatal.

#### What animals get rabies?

- Any warm blooded mammal can get rabies, including humans.
- However, rabies is primarily seen among wild animals such as bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes.

#### How do people get rabies?

- Because the rabies virus lives in the saliva (spit) of an animal, people are usually exposed to the rabies virus when bitten by an infected animal.
- People can also be exposed to rabies if the animal's saliva, brain matter, or spinal cord fluid gets into an open cut or into a person's eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Rabies is NOT found in the blood, urine, feces, or scent glands (i.e., skunk spray) of furbearers.

#### How can you protect yourself against rabies?

- Avoid wild animals that act tame, aggressive, or paralyzed.
- Wear rubber gloves, eye protection, and an apron while handling, skinning, and fleshing furbearers.

- Be extra careful when skinning around the head and mouth region.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water regularly.
- Clean and disinfect skinning and fleshing equipment with a solution of 1 part bleach to 20 parts water.
- Don't prepare meat with equipment used for skinning or fleshing.
- Heat kills the virus. It is safe to eat legally taken, properly prepared (cook meat thoroughly) meat from game animals.
- If you frequently handle furbearers, contact your physician about pre-exposure rabies vaccinations.

#### How can you protect hunting dogs and pets?

- Vaccinate hunting dogs and other pets. Keep their booster shots up to date.
- If your pet fights with a wild animal, attempt to secure the animal for rabies testing without endangering yourself. Always wear rubber gloves when treating your pet's wounds under these circumstances and contact your veterinarian for treatment advice.
- Do not feed wildlife carcasses to your hunting dogs or other pets.

#### What should you do if you're exposed to rabies?

- If you are bitten or scratched by a wild animal, wash the wound with soap and water for 5 minutes.
- Seek medical attention immediately.
- If possible, kill the animal without damaging the head and without exposing yourself to a bite or scratch and have the animal tested.

#### Who should you contact for more information?

- Vermont Rabies Hotline 1-800-4-RABIES (1-800-472-2437)
- Vermont Department of Health 1-800-640-4374

#### Remember:

- It is against Vermont state law to relocate foxes, raccoons, and skunks. Help reduce the spread of rabies by not relocating wildlife.

**IMPORTANT:** Rabies should not keep trappers and houndsmen from enjoying the benefits of harvesting fur. By following a few common sense precautions, fur takers may continue to harvest a renewable natural resource without undue risk.

*(Written by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Program. August 2000)*



## FAQ's *(continued from page 2)*

**6. November is too early to start beaver season. Beaver are not prime.** The recent 6-week extension to the beaver season November 15 to March 31, resulted from many discussions with the VTA board and membership, a written survey of trappers via the trapper mail survey, and a review of the pelt

price data from “nuisance” beaver pelts taken in November. Although there was some disagreement among trappers as to the best start date, an overwhelming majority wanted to begin the season in November. As long as the November pelts were marketable (and the review of prices suggested they would

be), the Department had no biological reason to limit the season to December.

**7. Would like cable restraints.** The Department has been exploring the possibility of legalizing cable restraints. We will be working with the VTA to discuss options.

## How Raccoon Got His Mask

A long time ago, Raccoon had no mask. It was the coldest winter ever and Raccoon had to follow people around to steal their food. One night the Ancestors lit a fire to keep them warm as it was a very cold night. The fire had gone out and Raccoon quietly crept into the longhouse. Raccoon put his nose down to sniff at the food and

his nose fell on the hot ashes of the fire which had burned out only recently. It stung horribly and Raccoon went outside to put his nose in the snow to cool it down but the ashes stuck to Raccoon’s face forever. The moral of the story is not to steal from people, for there are consequences.

— A Seneca Folk Tale



## Recipe

### Deep Fried Beaver

2-3 lbs. 1 inch cubed beaver  
 6 eggs  
 2 cups flour  
 Salt, pepper, ginger, sage, poultry seasoning, etc.  
 Oil for frying  
 Milk

Mix eggs, flour, and any combination of the spices above for a variety or about 1 tsp. salt and 1 tsp. pepper. Alternate beating and adding about 1 tbsp. of milk until the mix has thinned enough to jiggle when shaken. Continue to beat with a fork until

the ingredients are thoroughly blended. Stir in the beaver cubes until all cubes are well coated.

Drop individual coated cubes in hot oil (at least 2 inches deep). Cubes will sink and then float as they start frying. Stir and turn until golden brown making sure no chunks remain stuck to the bottom of your fry pan.

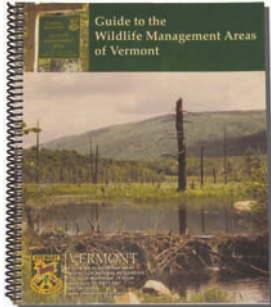
Eat plain or dip in sweet and sour sauce, BBQ sauce, honey, honey-mustard sauce, or your favorite steak sauce. Try different types of salad dressings.

*(From North Carolina Cooperative Extension)*

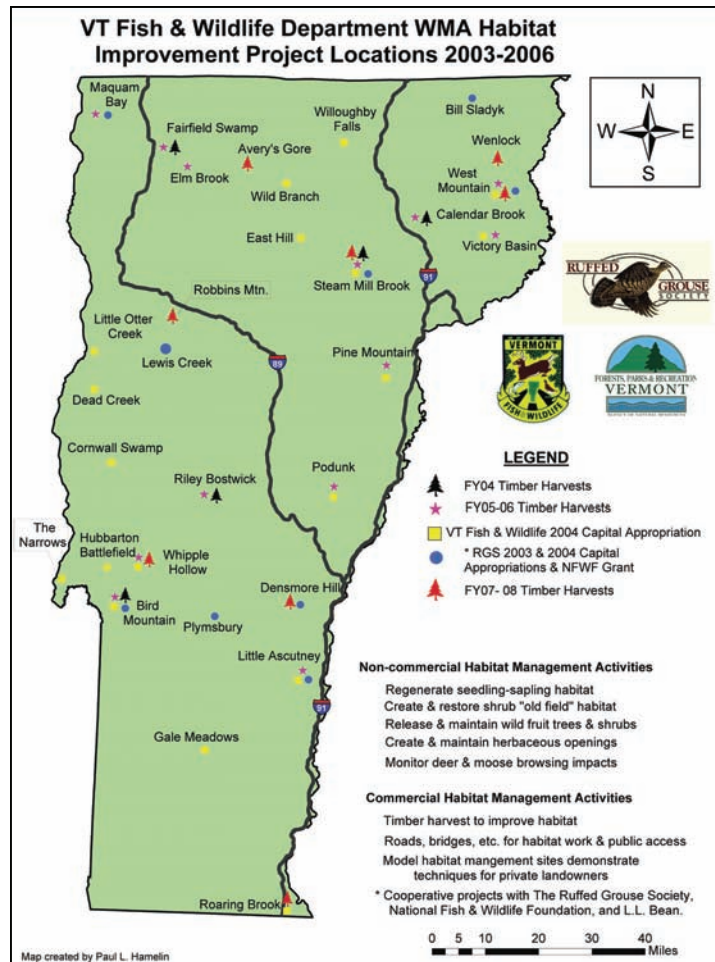


## Wildlife Management Areas

Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) provide excellent wildlife habitat as well as places to hunt, fish, or trap. With the help of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, many of these lands have been actively managed for a variety of wildlife species. Take a hike on your local WMA and let us know what you think. For individual maps, go to our website <http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/>



**Figure 6.** Statewide distribution of WMA timber harvests implemented by the Agency of Natural Resources since 2003, commercial and non-commercial WMA habitat management activities conducted with these funding sources since 2003, and activities planned for 2006.



## Keep Your Eyes Peeled

Many of you have probably heard about the recent increase in marten and lynx sightings and sign in the Northeast Kingdom. Both species are native to Vermont but were essentially extirpated in the late 1800s as a result of habitat changes and unregulated harvest. An unsuccessful attempt was made to reintroduce marten to the Green Mountain National

Forest in southern Vermont in 1989, 1990, and 1991. The cause of the failure is unknown but could have been related to the fact that the 1990s was one of the warmest decades on record. The resulting snow conditions may have been more conducive to fisher than to marten.

Until recently, the last confirmed lynx in Vermont was in 1968 in St. Albans. Since 2003, however, we have had two confirmed sightings — one animal taken in defense of property and several other sightings of animals or tracks. Please keep your eyes peeled for sign of either species, particularly if you spend time in the Northeast Kingdom. The booklet, *How to Avoid the Incidental Take of Lynx While Trapping or Hunting Bobcat and other Furbearers* can be found on our website <http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/> or you can call 802-885-8845 and request a copy.





## Check Out These Websites

**Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department**

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

**Conserve Wildlife**

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

**Vermont Trappers Association**

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

**National Trappers Association**

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

**IAFWA Furbearer Resources Technical Work Group**

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

**Furbearers Unlimited**

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

**Fur Takers of America**

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

**The Wildlife Society**

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

**Keeping Track**

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

## THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Trappers, hunters, game wardens, biologists, seasonal staff, support staff, and volunteers for your help in the management and conservation of Vermont's furbearers



The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is an equal opportunity agency and offers all persons the benefits of participation in each of its programs and competing in all areas of employment, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual preference, or other non-merit factors.

This publication is available upon request in large print, Braille, or audio cassette.



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