

HumanDimensions
Research Program

Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign



Federal Aid Project
Number W-112-R-33
Job Number 101.2
Wildlife Restoration
Oct. 1, 2023 - Sept. 30, 2024

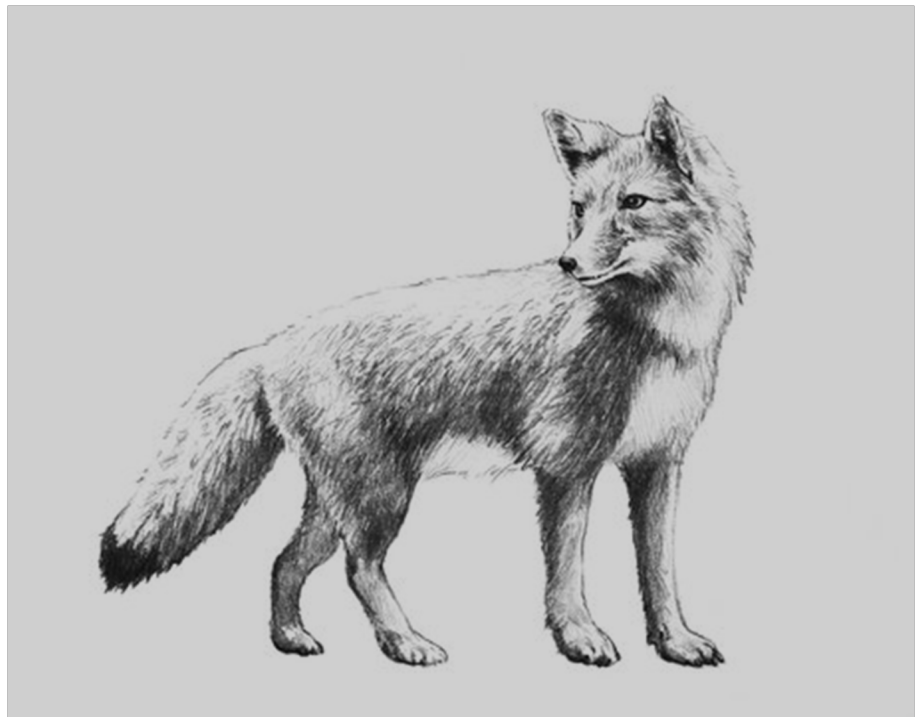
Natalie Phelps Finnie,
Director Illinois Department of
Natural Resources

Jennifer Wellman,
Federal Aid Coordinator

Mike Wefer, Chief,
Division of Wildlife Resources



2023-2024 Illinois Trapper Report: Harvest, Effort, and Trapper Opinions



Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey

Prepared by
Brent D. Williams, Craig A. Miller,
Lauren J. Stephens, and Eric M. Walberg

INHS Technical Report 2024 (29)
November 28, 2024

Key words: Trappers, harvest, effort, and trapper opinions

Suggested Citation:

Williams, B.D., C.A. Miller, L.J. Stephens, and E.M. Walberg. 2024. 2023-2024 Illinois Trapper Report: Harvest, Effort, and Trapper Opinions. Job Completion Report, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration W-112-R-33. Human Dimensions Research Program Report HR-24-02/INHS Technical Report 2024 (29). Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL. 62pp.

2023-2024
ILLINOIS TRAPPER REPORT:
Harvest, Effort, and Marketing Practices

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

WILDLIFE HARVEST AND
HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-33
STUDY 101
JOB NO. 101.2

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois

Prepared by
Brent D. Williams, Craig A. Miller,
Lauren J. Stephens, and Eric M. Walberg

Illinois Natural History Survey
Champaign, IL
November 28, 2024

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
W-112-R-33
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Natalie Phelps Finnie, Director
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Mike Wefer, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion, or other non-merit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; 217/785-0067; TTY 217/782-9175.

LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1..... License purchasers that set traps for furbearers in Illinois during the 2023-24 trapping season.....	2
Figure 2..... Distribution of active trappers by zones in Illinois.....	2
Figure 3..... Comparison of trapping activity in 2022-23to 2023-24 estimates.....	3
Figure 4..... Distribution of days of trapping by active trappers during 2023-24 trapping season	3
Figure 5..... Type of land on which trappers set traps most	4
Figure 6..... Distribution of the number of muskrats trapped per successful muskrat trapper in Illinois	5
Figure 7..... Distribution of the number of raccoons trapped per successful raccoon trapper in Illinois.....	5
Figure 8..... Where trappers sold furs outside of Illinois.....	6
Figure 9..... How trappers most often prepared sold furs.....	6
Figure 10..... Percent of trappers who sold furs on the craft market.....	6
Figure 11..... Percent change in number of successful trappers and harvest by species from 2022-23 to 2023-24 season	7
Figure 12..... 2010-2023 change in Muskrat harvest.....	8
Figure 13..... 2010-2023 change in Mink harvest.....	8
Figure 14..... 2010-2023 change in Raccoon harvest.....	9
Figure 15..... 2010-2023 change in Opossum harvest.....	9
Figure 16..... 2010-2023 change in Red Fox harvest	10
Figure 17..... 2010-2023 change in Gray Fox harvest	10
Figure 18..... 2010-2023 change in Beaver harvest	11
Figure 19..... 2010-2023 change in Skunk harvest	11
Figure 20..... 2010-2023 change in Weasel harvest	12
Figure 21..... 2010-2023 change in Coyote harvest	12
Figure 22..... 2010-2023 change in Badger harvest.....	13
Figure 23..... 2015-2023 change in Otter harvest.....	13
Figure 24..... 2017-2023 change in Bobcat harvest	14
Figure 25..... 2010-2023 change in All Species harvest.....	14
Figure 26..... Trappers who hunted furbearers with a gun and/or dogs in Illinois during the 2023-24 season	15
Figure 27..... Percent of furbearer hunters who hunted with dogs during the 2023-24 season	15
Figure 28..... Type of land on which respondents most often hunted furbearers.....	16
Figure 29..... Percent of respondents who feel safe hunting after sunset in Illinois.....	16
Figure 30..... Percent of furbearer hunters who hunted after sunset.....	16
Figure 31..... Trappers who sighted species of species of special interest (badgers, gray foxes, others, & bobcats).....	17
Figure 32..... Trappers who sighted sign of species of special interest (badgers, gray foxes, others, & bobcats).....	17
Figure 33..... Trappers’ opinion of the amount of otter sign witnessed over the past 5 years	18
Figure 34..... Trappers’ opinion of the current number of bobcats in Southern Illinois as compared to 2015	19
Figure 35..... Change in the amount of bobcat sign seen over the past 5 years.....	19
Figure 36..... Respondents’ preference for fewer or more bobcats over the next 5 years.....	19
Figure 37..... Respondents’ satisfaction with the number of bobcats currently in Illinois.....	19
Figure 38..... Percentage of respondents who have been asked by someone to trap a property.....	21
Figure 39..... How often landowners ask trappers to target animals on their property.....	21
Figure 40..... Reasons for which trappers were asked to set traps on property	21
Figure 41..... Species trappers were asked to target	22
Figure 42..... Percent of respondents who attended trapping meetings in the last 12 months.....	22
Figure 43..... Percentage of respondents who have internet service at home.....	22
Figure 44..... Percentage of respondents who have mentored a new trapper	24
Figure 45..... Age when they first started trapping.....	24
Figure 46..... Percentage of respondents who have mentored a new trapper	24
Figure 47..... Percentage of respondents who know someone who doesn’t trap but is interested.....	24
Table 1..... Participation and harvest by fur trappers in Illinois, 2023-24 season.....	27
Table 2..... Distribution of reported furbearer harvest among successful trappers in Illinois.....	28
Table 3..... Summary of statewide data from post-season mail survey of resident trappers in Illinois.....	28
Table 4..... Muskrat WMU ^a	29
Table 5..... Mink WMU	29
Table 6..... Otter WMU	30
Table 7..... Raccoon WMU.....	30
Table 8..... Opossum WMU	31
Table 9..... Red Fox WMU	31
Table 10..... Gray Fox WMU	32
Table 11..... Beaver WMU	32
Table 12..... Striped Skunk WMU.....	33
Table 13..... Weasel WMU.....	33
Table 14..... Coyote WMU	34
Table 15..... Badger WMU.....	34
Table 16..... Bobcat WMU	35
Table 17..... Muskrat FMZ ^b	35
Table 18..... Mink FMZ.....	35
Table 19..... Otter FMZ.....	36
Table 20..... Raccoon FMZ.....	36

Table 21	Opossum FMZ	36
Table 22	Red Fox FMZ	37
Table 23	Gray Fox FMZ	37
Table 24	Beaver FMZ	37
Table 25	Skunk FMZ	38
Table 26	Weasel FMZ	38
Table 27	Coyote FMZ	38
Table 28	Badger FMZ	39
Table 29	Bobcat FMZ	39
Table 30	Number of pelts sold by successful trappers, 2023-24 season	40
Table 31	Estimated statewide harvest by resident Illinois trappers	41
Table 32	Summary of fur hunting activities reported by trappers in Illinois	42
Table 33	Number of trappers who saw badgers or signs of badger by the county in Illinois	43
Table 34	Number of trappers who saw gray foxes or signs of gray fox by the county in Illinois	44
Table 33	Number of trappers who saw otters or signs of otter by the county in Illinois	45
Table 35	Number of trappers who saw bobcats or signs of bobcat by the county in Illinois	46
Table 36	Types of traps owned and used by active Illinois trappers	47
Table 37	Distribution of active trappers by county trapped most in Illinois	48
Table 38	Distribution of respondents by county of residence	49
Appendix A	Illinois Trapper Survey: 2023-24 Season	50
Appendix B	Cover letter sent with first mailing of the 2023-24 Trapper Survey	58
Appendix C	Thank you/reminder postcard sent as follow-up to the mailings	59
Appendix D	Cover letter sent with second mailing of the 2023-24 Trapper Survey	60
Appendix E	2023-24 Season dates and limits information	61
Appendix F	Wildlife management units and furbearer management zones in Illinois	62

^a WMU = Wildlife Management Unit

^b FMZ = Furbearer Management Zones

ABSTRACT

We sampled 2,000 of 2023-24 resident Illinois trapping license purchasers from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources licensing database. License purchasers were mailed an 8-page questionnaire, and we received 872 (44%) questionnaires. Trapping license sales decreased by 0.2% from 2022-23 (6,868) to 2023-24 (6,850). Trappers set an average of 13.1 traps for an average of 26.8 days or nights during the 2023-24 season and harvested an estimated 153,471 furbearers (up 20% from the 127,756 harvested in 2022-23). An estimated 80,073 raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) were trapped during the 2023-24 Illinois trapping season, an increase of 18% from the estimated 67,892 trapped during the 2022-23 season. Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) harvest was next highest at 21,830 animals, followed by 16,959 opossums (*Didelphis virginiana*).

OBJECTIVE

To survey furbearer (14 species of mammals) trappers annually to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, and opinions in Illinois.

METHODS

A random sample of 2,000 resident Illinois trappers who purchased a trapper license (2023-24) was selected from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) license sales database. Each trapper was mailed an 8-page questionnaire (Appendix A), cover letter (Appendix B), and a postage-paid return envelope on 06 June 2024. The initial sample of 2,000 licenses was reduced to 1,974 due to undeliverable addresses. Nonrespondents were mailed a thank you/reminder postcard (Appendix C) on 21 June 2024. Remaining non-respondents were mailed a second questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix D) on 17 July 2024. Trappers who did not respond to the previous mailings were mailed a second thank you/reminder postcard on 12 August 2024. A third final questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix E) were sent on 11 September 2024. Season date information can be found in Appendix F.

RESULTS

A total of 872 license purchasers responded with usable questionnaires, resulting in a 44% response rate. Using procedures adopted by Anderson and Campbell (1992), we calculated trapper participation and harvest for all furbearer species in Illinois (Tables 1-29). The results were organized by wildlife management units (WMUs, Appendix F), furbearer management zones, and statewide for presentation.

Trapper Participation

Of the 872 respondents, 440 (50.5%) set traps for furbearers in Illinois during the 2023-24 season (Figure 1). There were more trappers in the north zone than the south (Figure 2). Active trappers set an average of 13.1 traps for an average of 26.8 days or nights (Figure 3). The average number of days/nights and traps set were slightly higher for those in the north zone though neither difference was statistically significant. Maximum number of days a trapper could have trapped was 142 (Appendix F); 24.1% set traps for > 30 days and 13.0% of trappers set traps for > 50 days (Figure 4).

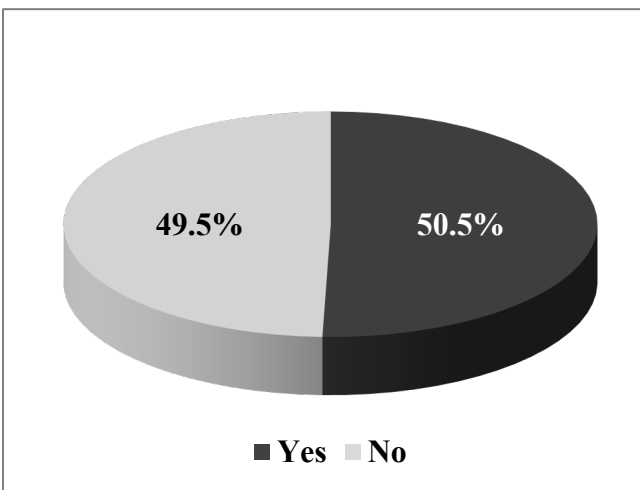


Figure 1. License purchasers who set traps for furbearers in Illinois during the 2023-24 trapping season ($n = 872$).

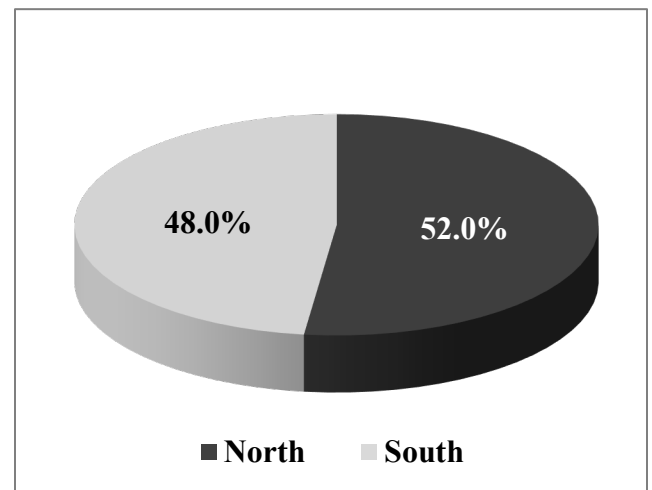


Figure 2. Distribution of active trappers by zones in Illinois ($n = 440$).

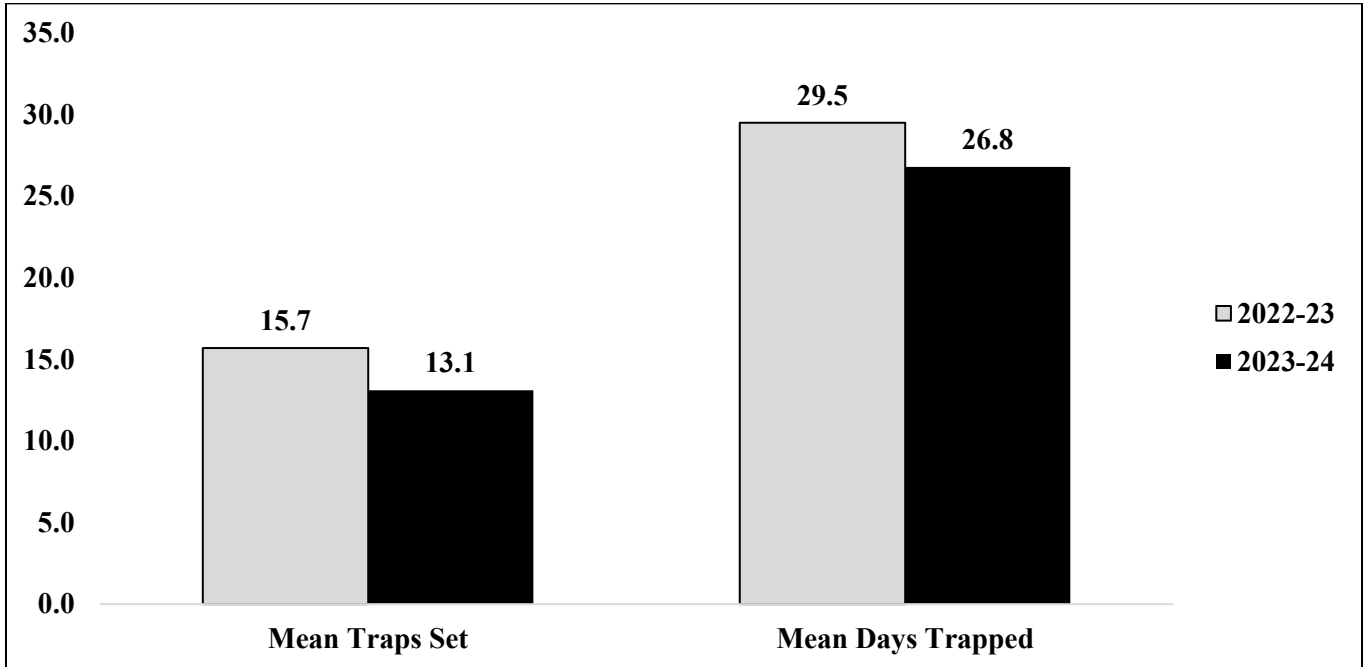


Figure 3. Comparison of trapping activity reported in 2022-23 and 2023-24 Illinois Trapper Survey.

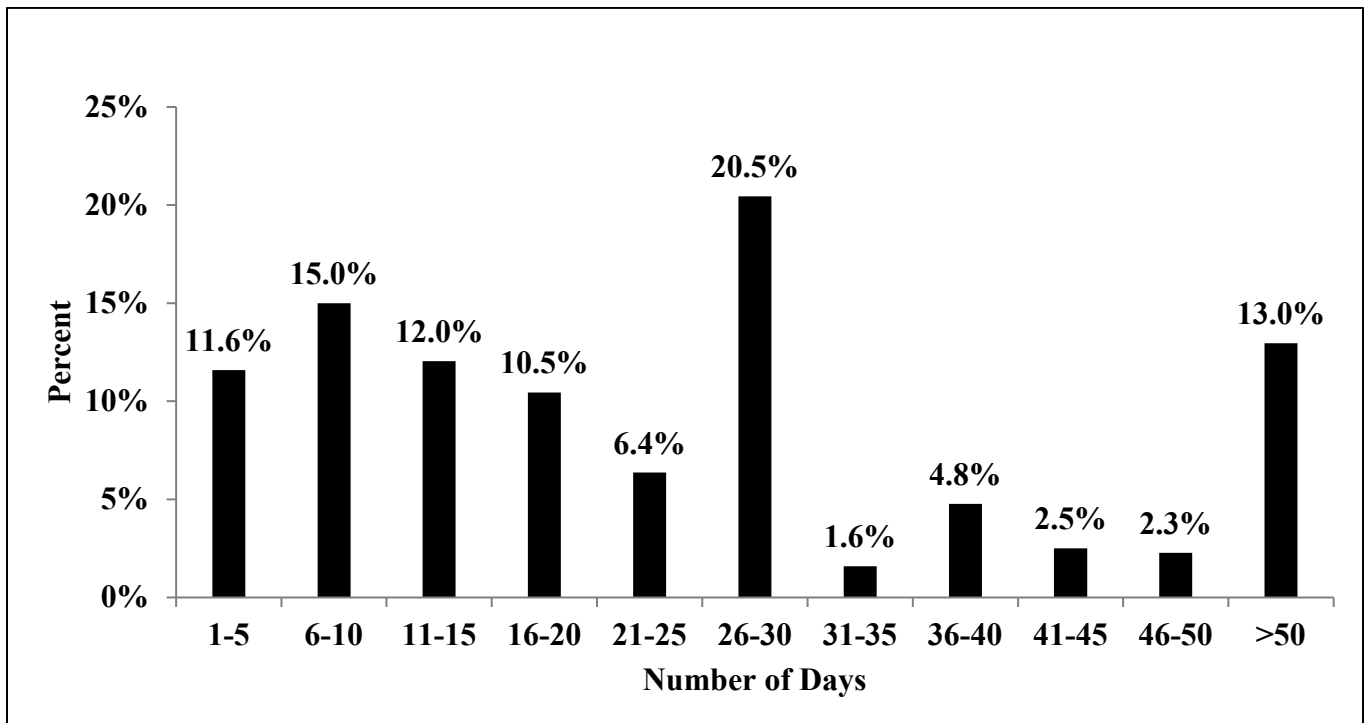


Figure 4. Distribution of days of trapping by active trappers in Illinois, 2023-24 season ($n = 440$).

Participation during the 2023-24 season was highest among raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) trappers, estimated at 3,158 successful trappers statewide (Table 3), an increase of 34% from the 2022-23 trapping season. Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) was second with 1,768 successful trappers, followed by beaver (*Castor canadensis*) 1,731 successful trappers), coyote (*Canis latrans*; 1,353 successful trappers), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*; 1,123 successful trappers), striped skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*; 939 successful trappers), and otter (*Lontra canadensis*; 856 successful trappers). Mink (*Neovison vison*; 359 successful trappers), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*; 221 successful trappers), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*; 120 successful trappers), badger (*Taxidea taxus*; 74 successful trappers), weasel (*Mustela frenata* and *nivalis*; 28 successful trappers), and gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*; 9 successful trappers) were the least trapped species.

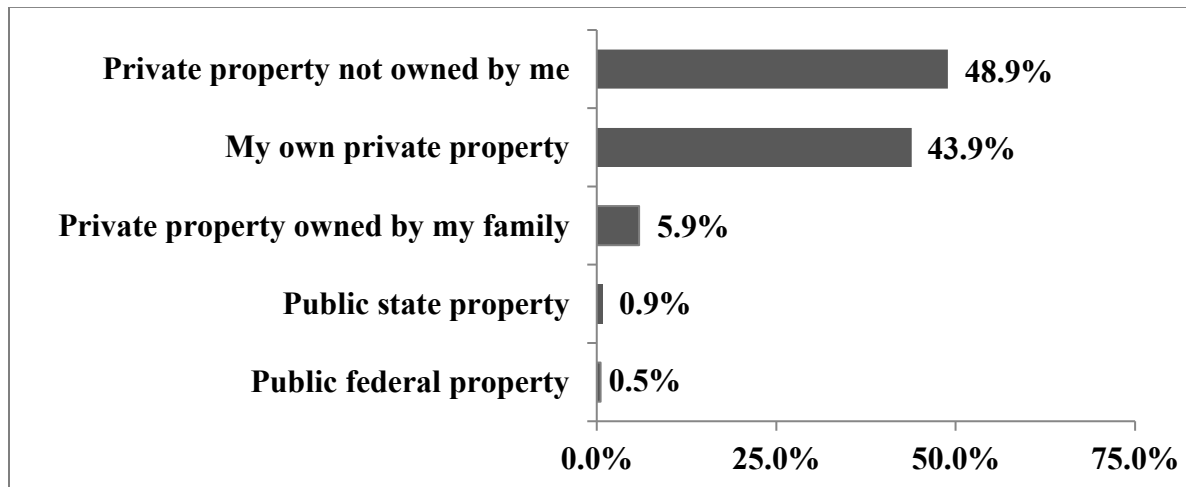


Figure 5. Type of land on which trappers set traps most ($n=440$).

Harvest

An estimated 80,073 raccoons were trapped during the 2023-24 Illinois trapping season (Table 3), an increase of 18% from the estimated 67,892 trapped during the 2022-23 season. Otter (2,642; 112% increase from previous year), badger, beaver, bobcat, coyote, gray fox, muskrat, opossum, and skunk had increased harvest as compared to the previous year. All other species, including mink (810, 33% decrease from previous year) had decreases in trapper harvest totals for the season. The number of muskrats harvested averaged 14.5

per trapper and ranged from 1-127 (Figure 6), and the number of raccoons harvested averaged 25.4 per trapper and ranged from 1-1,000 (Figure 7). Confidence intervals (95%) for trapper participation and harvest of each species are presented in Table 3. Harvest and trapping effort for each species are reported for each wildlife management unit and furbearer management zone (Tables 4-29).

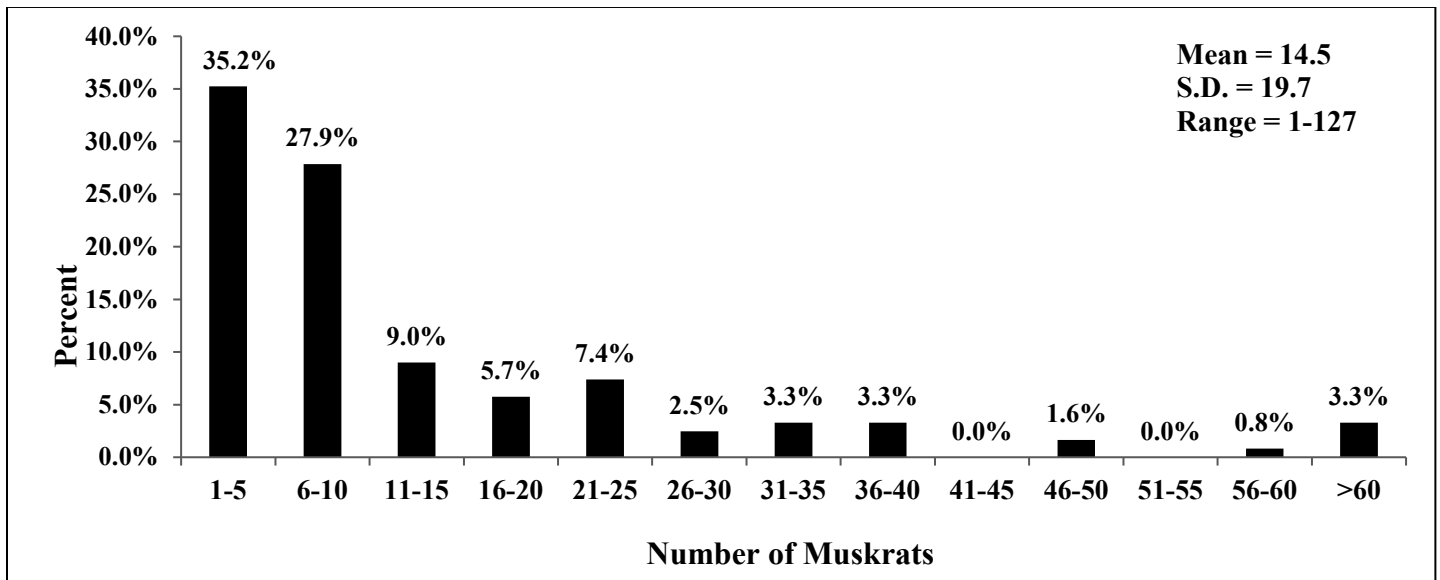


Figure 6. Distribution of the number of muskrats trapped per successful muskrat trapper in Illinois, 2023-24 season ($n = 122$).

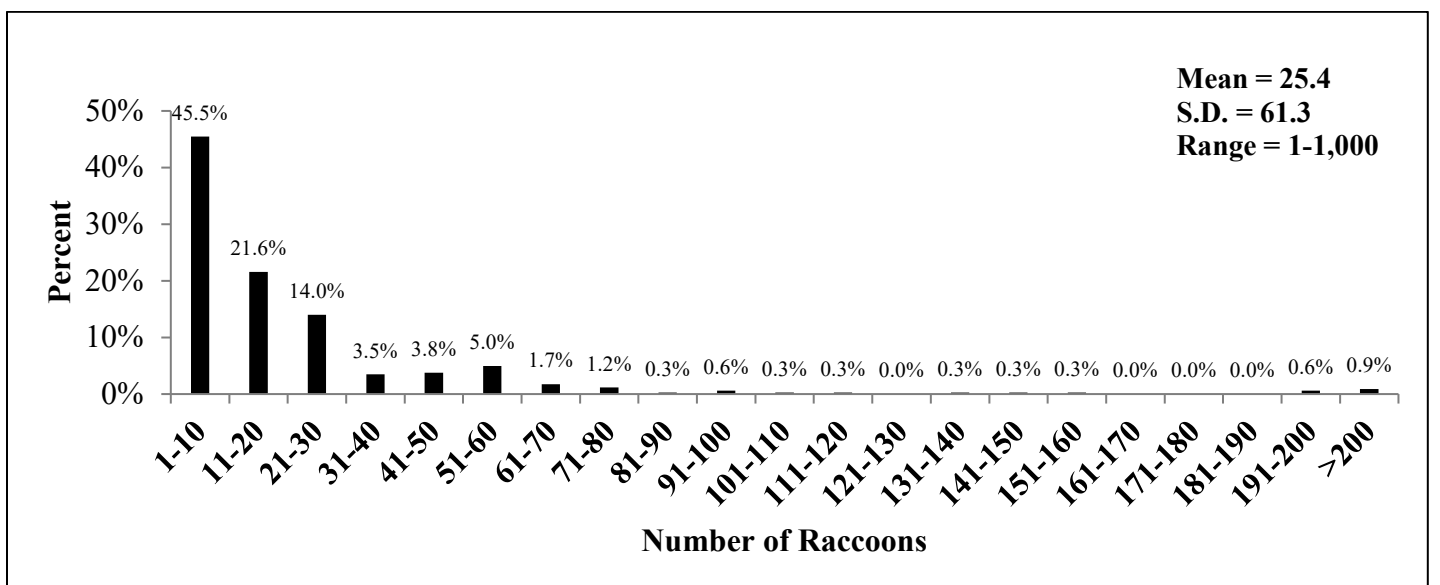


Figure 7. Distribution of the number of raccoons trapped per successful raccoon trapper in Illinois, 2023-24 season ($n = 343$).

Estimated number of pelts sold in 2023-24 is presented by species (Table 30). Thirty-five trappers (8.0%) sold furs out of Illinois, and most (50%) sales outside Illinois were sold in Canada (Figure 8). The states in which furs were sold, in decreasing order of popularity, were: Missouri, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. Fur trapper's most often sell green skinned (Figure 9), though active trappers are more likely to sell stretched and dried. Twenty-seven trappers (3.1%) sold furs on the craft market in the 2023-24 season (Figure 10), these results are similar to results from 2022-23 in which 4.5% of active trappers sold furs on the craft market. Raccoon, beaver, and coyote were the most sold furs whereas mink, fox, muskrat, and ermine were the least sold. Most sold pelts and skulls via word of mouth, to friends, through Facebook marketplace, a local outdoor market, or at local fairs and festivals.

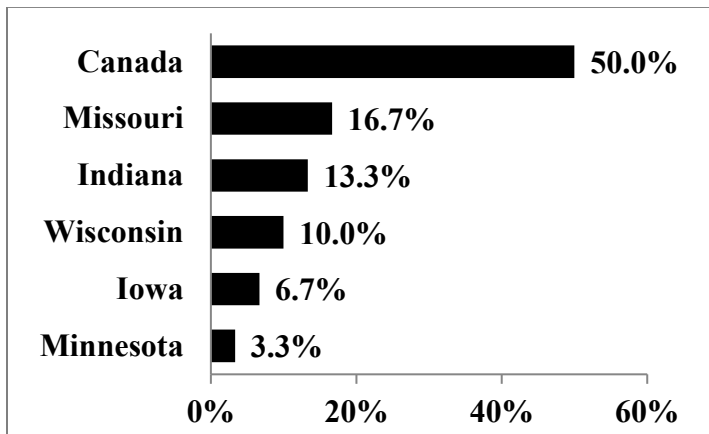


Figure 8. Where trappers sold furs outside of Illinois ($n = 35$).

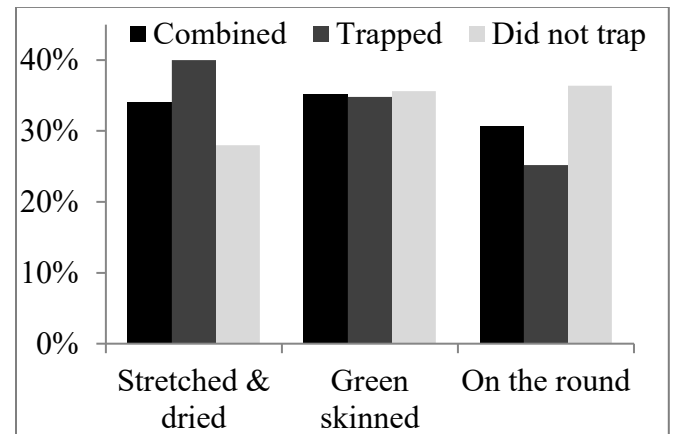


Figure 9. How trappers most often prepared sold furs ($n = 872$).

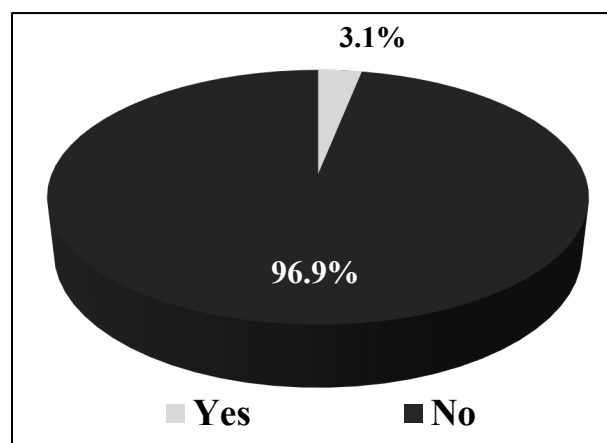


Figure 10. Percent of trappers who sold furs on the craft market ($n = 845$).

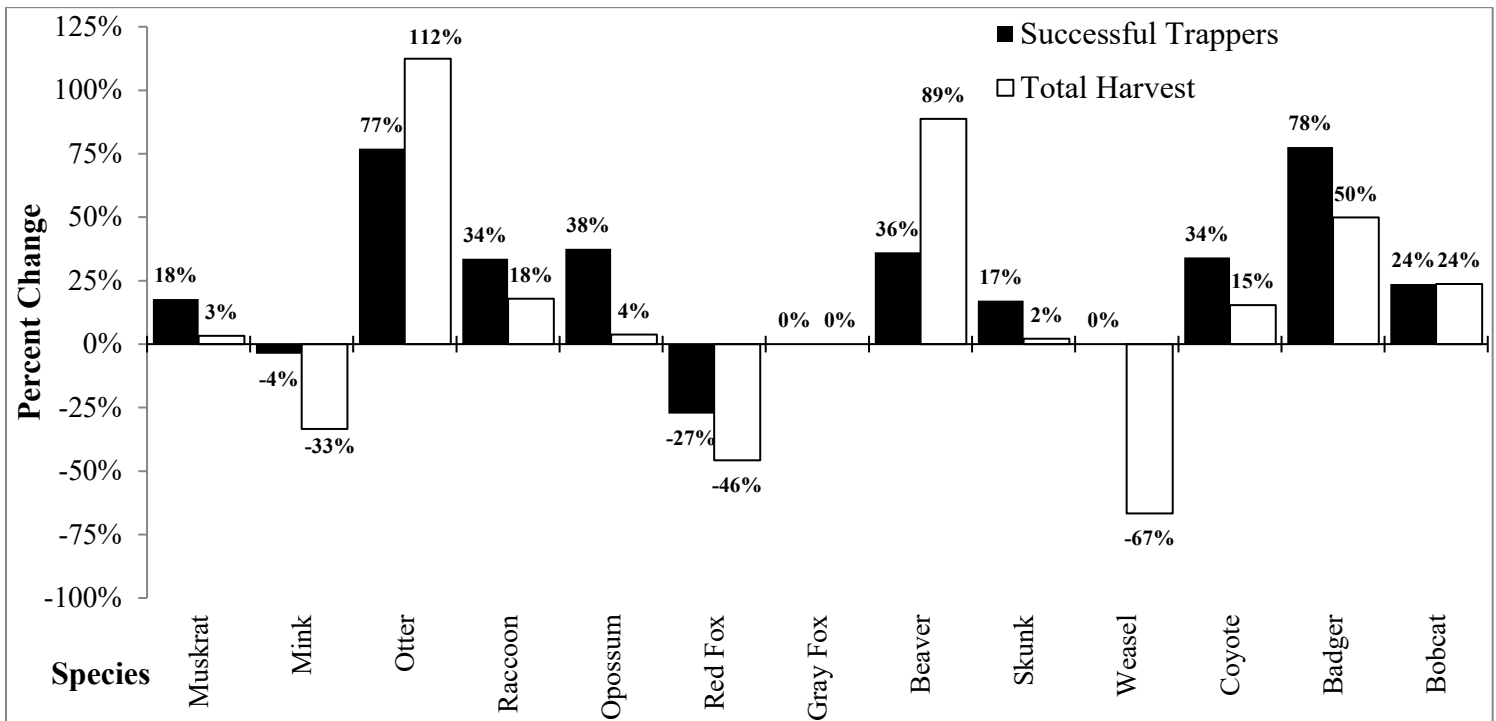


Figure 11. Percent change in number of successful trappers and harvest by species between 2022-23 and 2023-24 license years.

Changes in Trapper Participation and Harvest

The number of Illinois residents purchasing trapping licenses decreased 0.2% during 2023-24 from 2022-23 (6,850 from 6,868 licenses, respectively). Number of successful trappers increased for badger, beaver, bobcat, coyote, gray fox, muskrat, opossum, otter, raccoon, and skunk. Estimated total harvest increased for badger, beaver, bobcat, coyote, gray fox, muskrat, opossum, otter, raccoon, and skunk. The largest decreases in total harvest were for weasel (-67%) followed by red fox (-46%), and mink (-33%; Figure 11). Trends in statewide harvests of furbearers for the previous 10 years are listed in Table 31. Most species had increases in total number harvested. However, harvest for weasel, red fox, and mink have decreased. Harvest of raccoon and opossum have declined from early 2010 highs but appear stable for the past 7 years, whereas harvest of beaver and coyote have increased.

Changes in trapper harvest over the past fourteen years (2010-2023) for each species type and all species are shown in Figures 12-25.

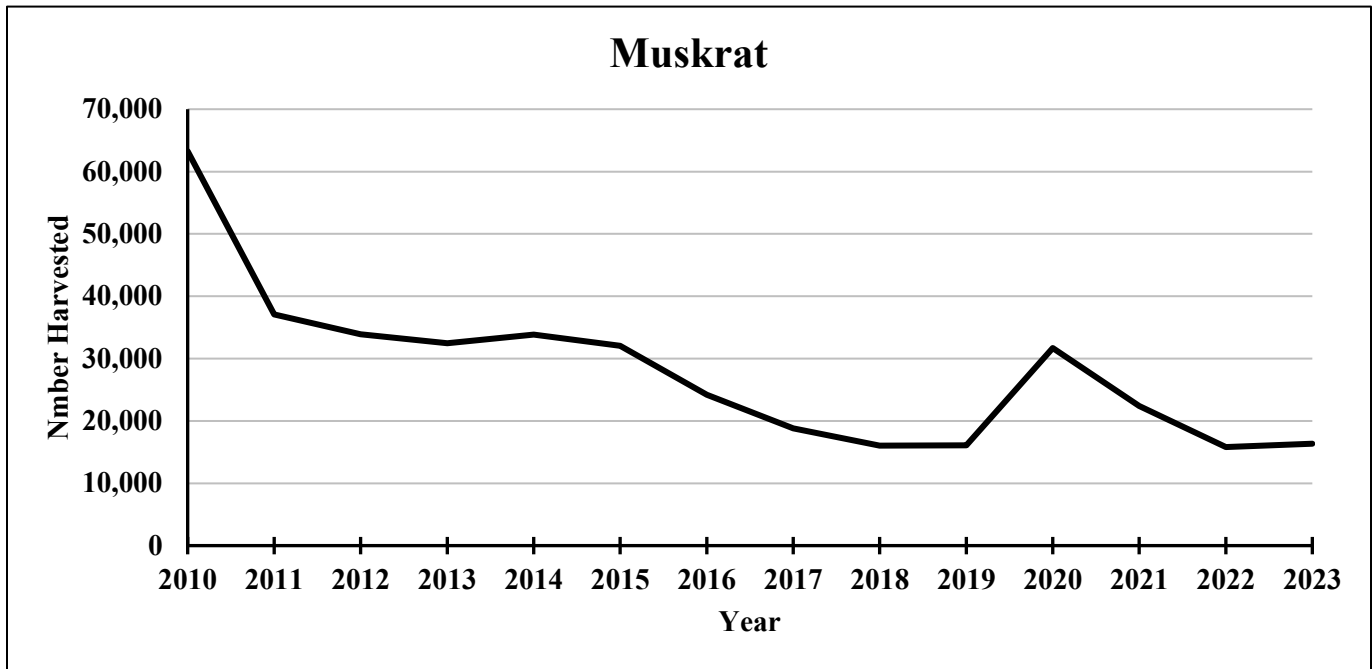


Figure 12. Muskrat harvest 2010 to 2023.

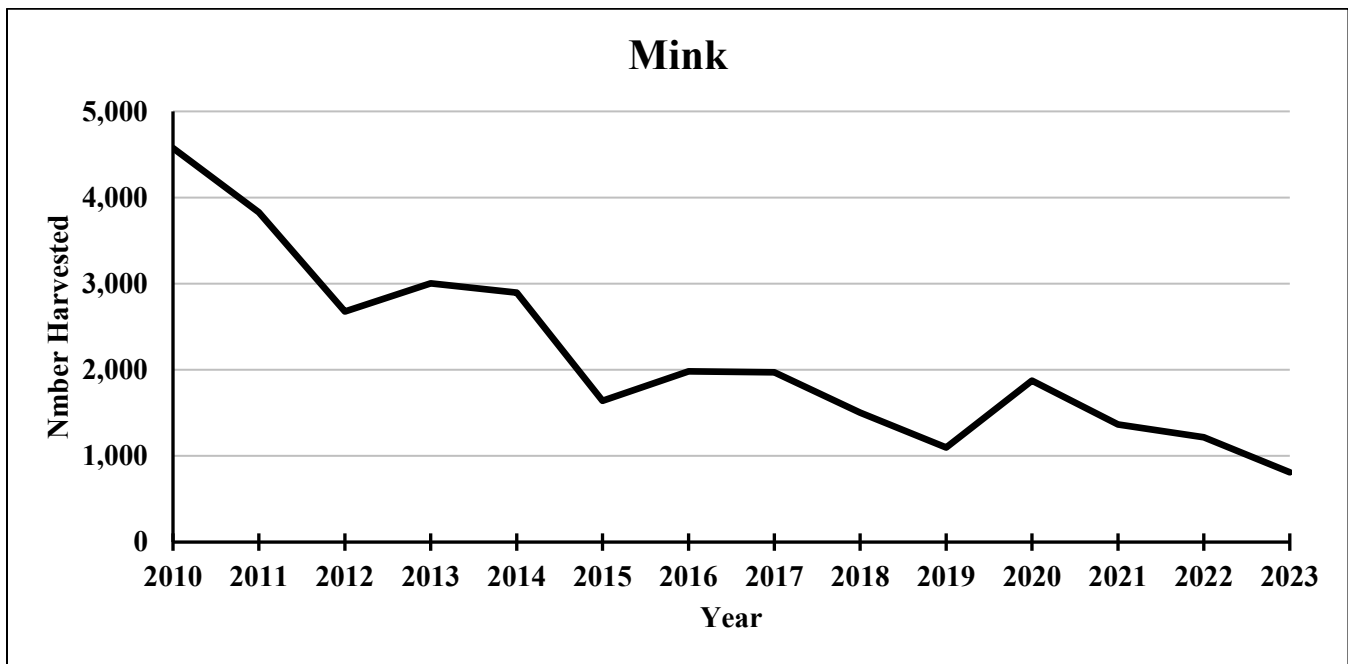


Figure 13. Mink harvest 2010 to 2023.

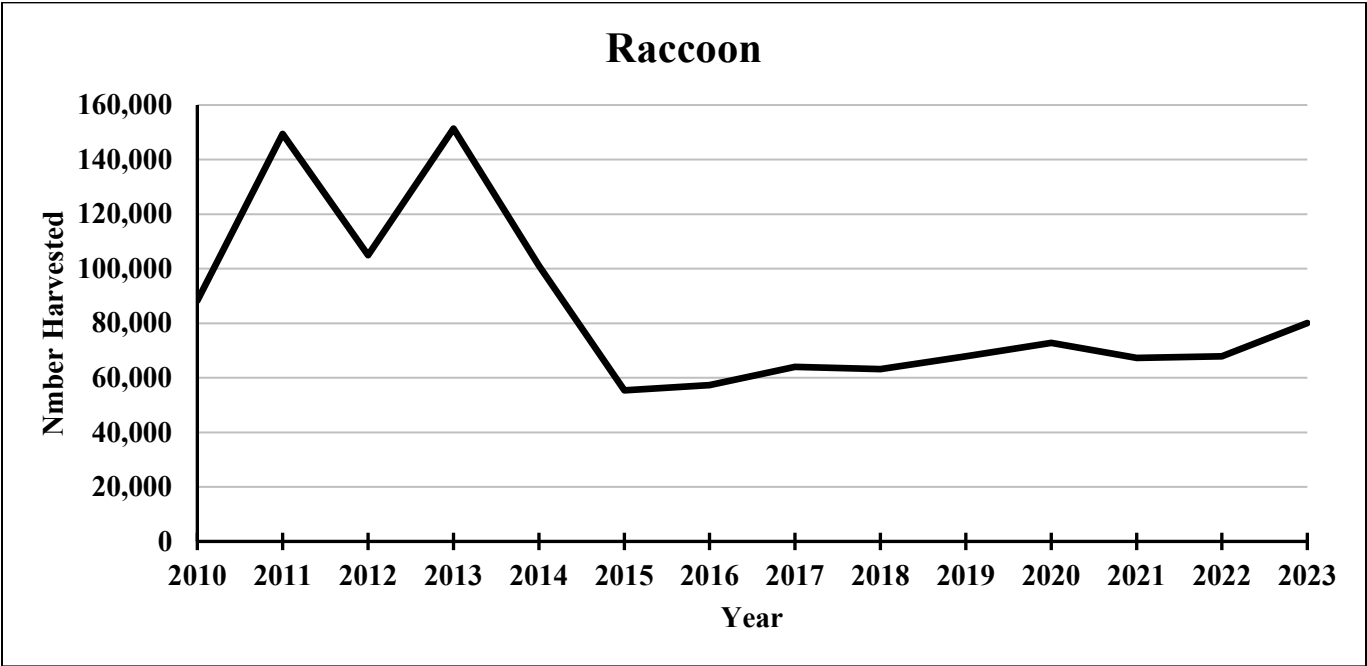


Figure 14. Raccoon harvest 2010 to 2023.

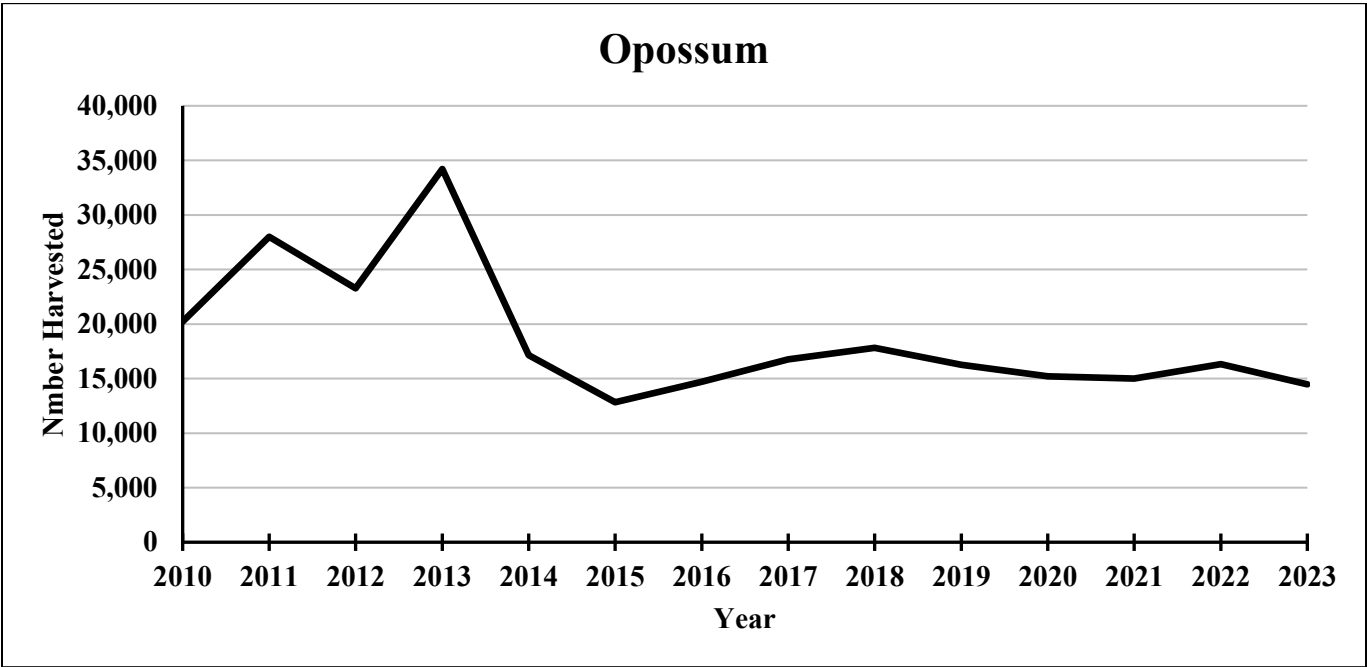


Figure 15. Opossum harvest 2010 to 2023.

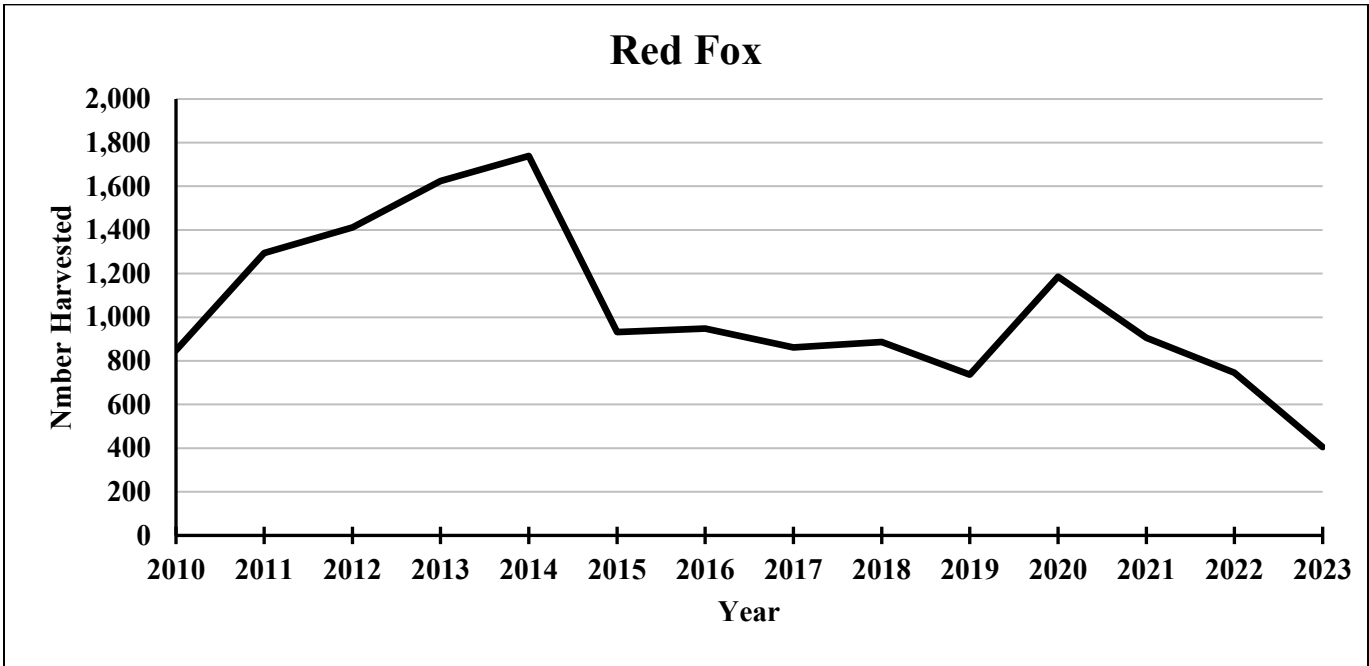


Figure 16. Red Fox harvest 2010 to 2023.

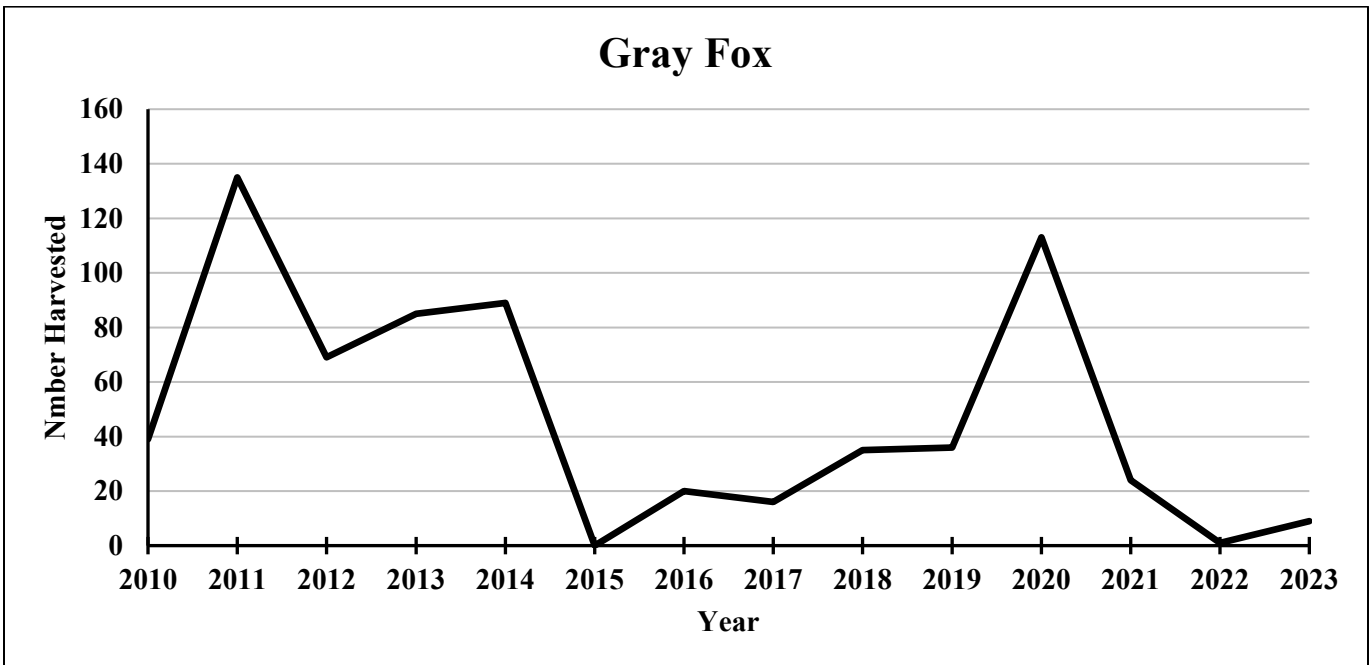


Figure 17. Gray Fox harvest 2010 to 2023.

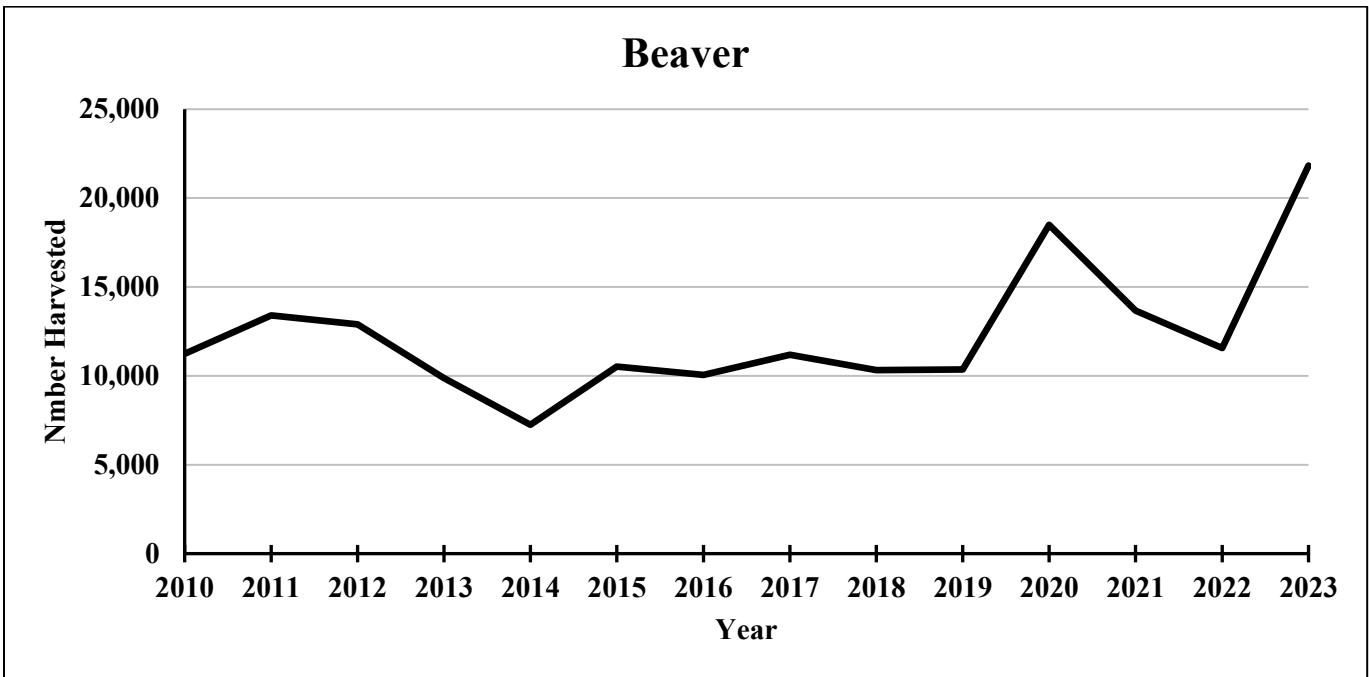


Figure 18. Beaver harvest 2010 to 2023.

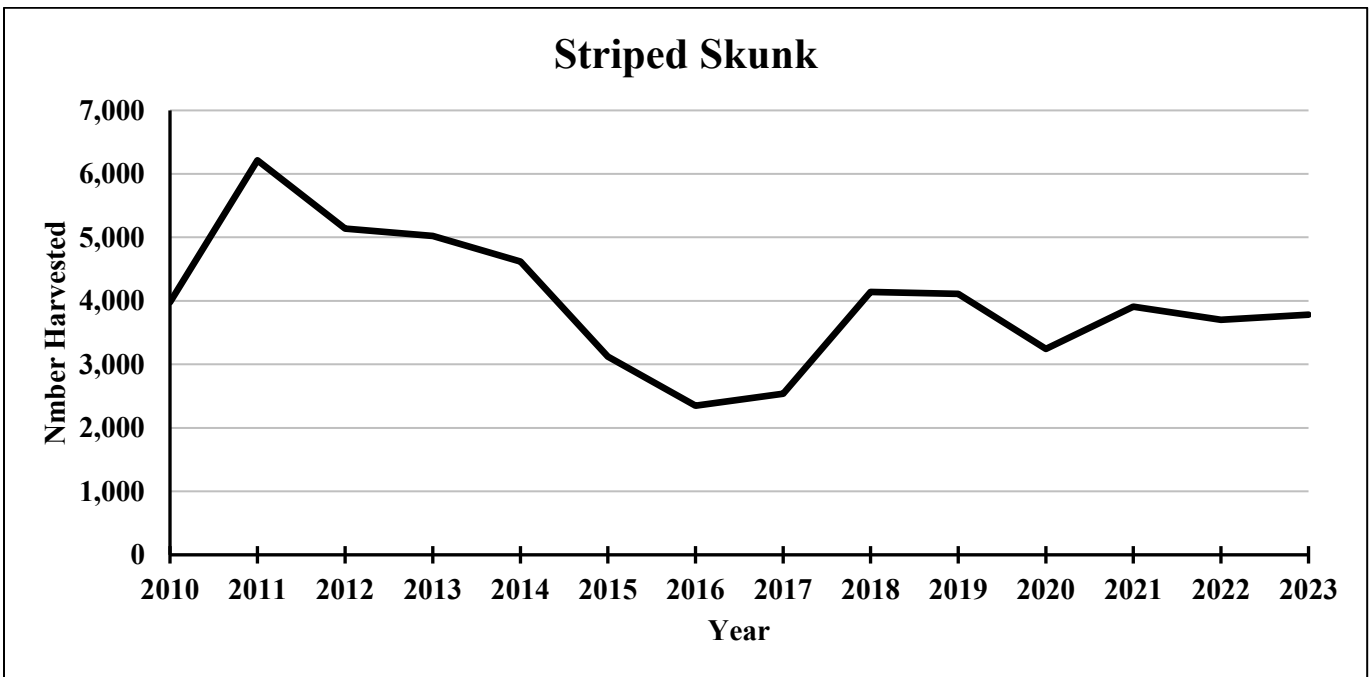


Figure 19. Striped Skunk harvest 2010 to 2023.

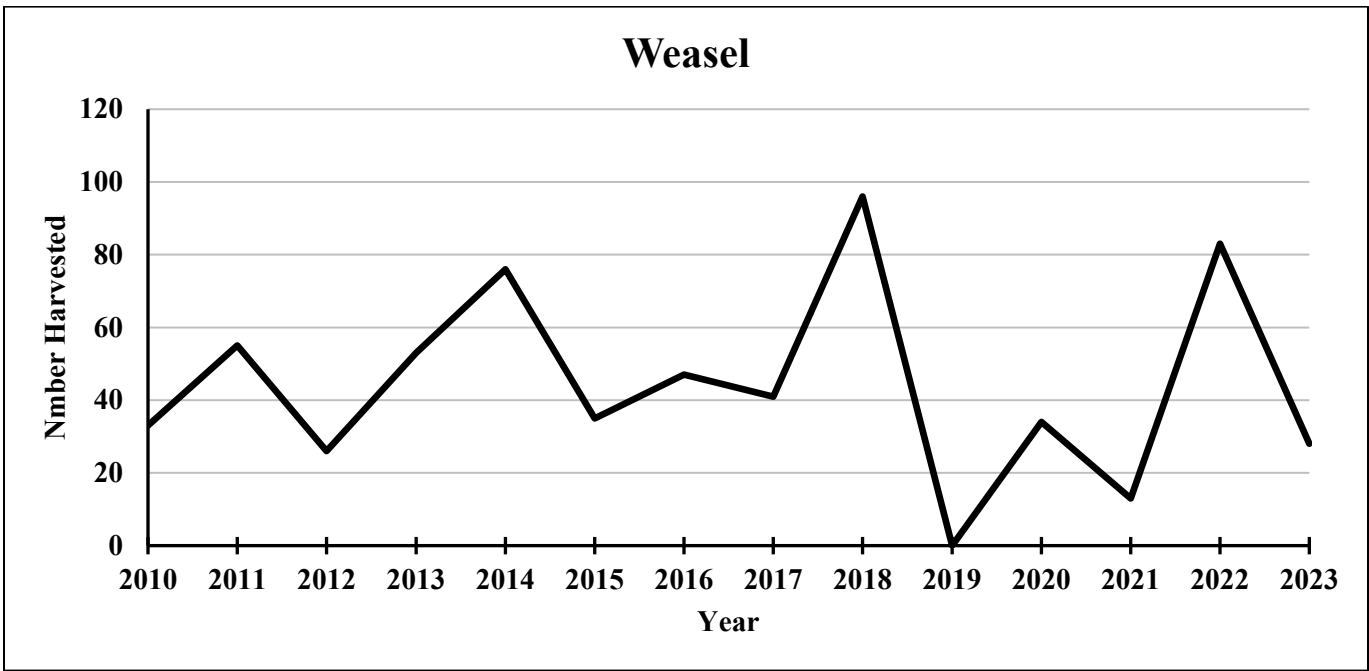


Figure 20. Weasel harvest 2010 to 2023.

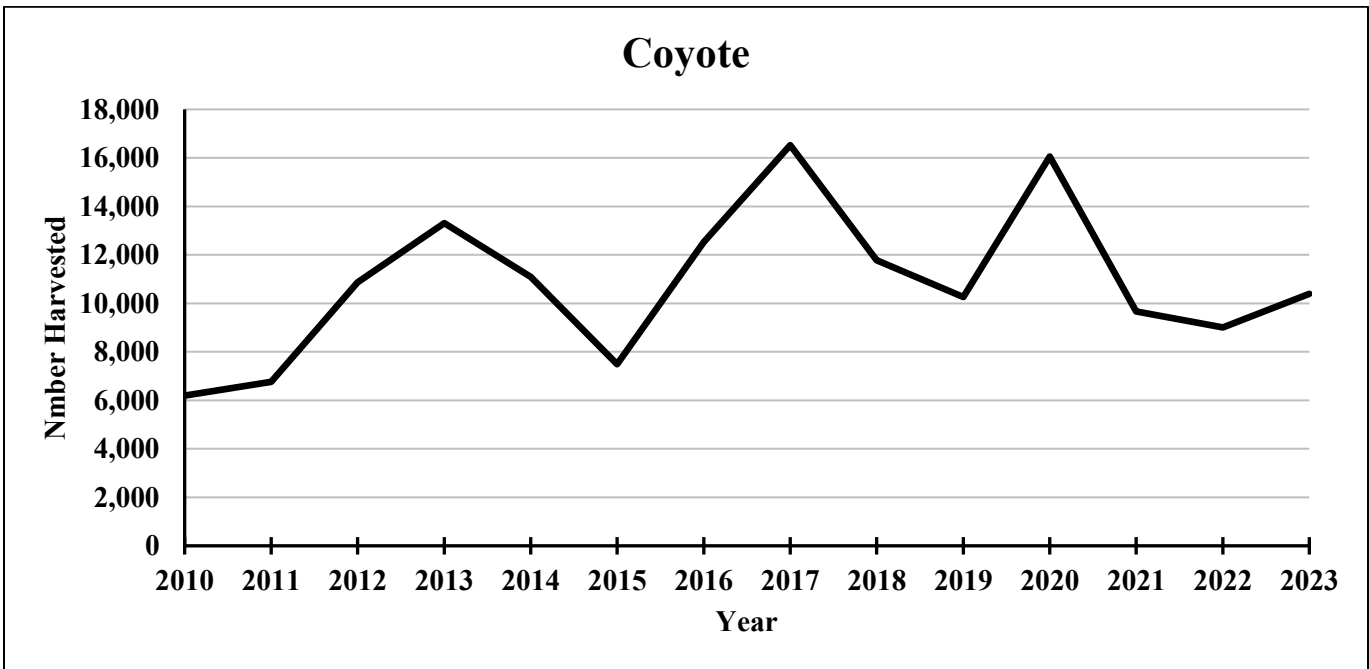


Figure 21. Coyote harvest 2010 to 2023.

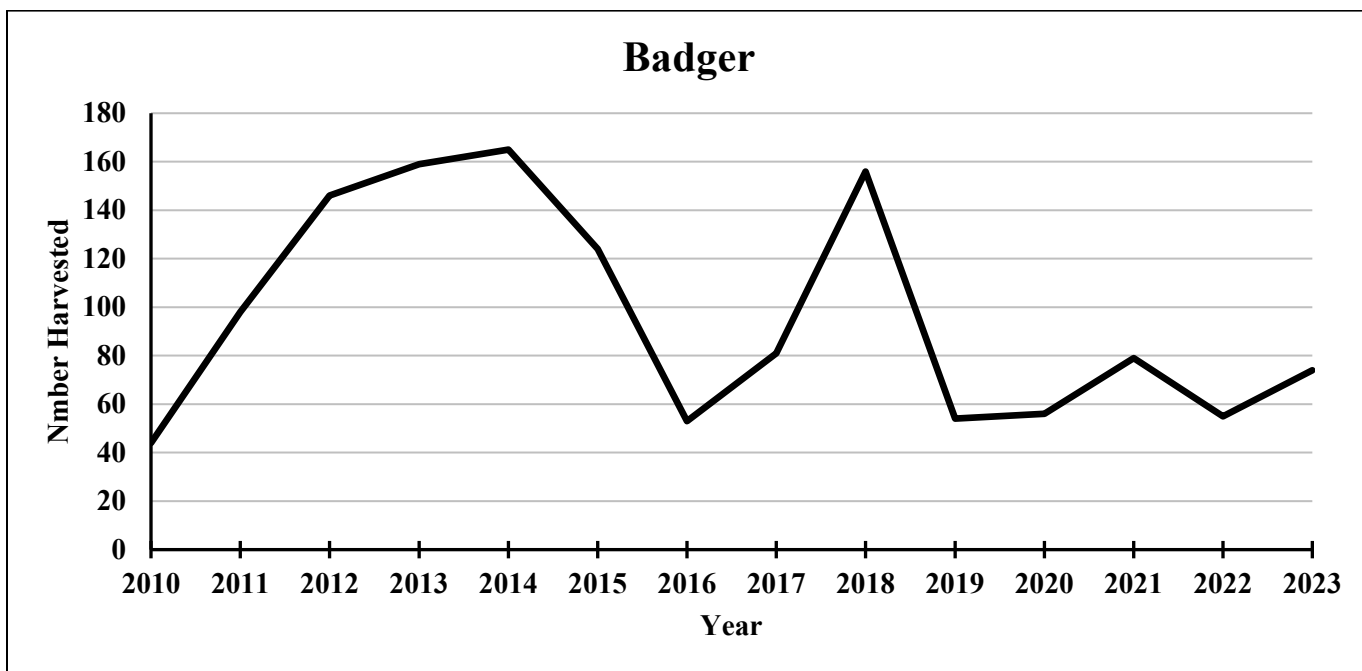


Figure 22. Badger harvest 2010 to 2023.

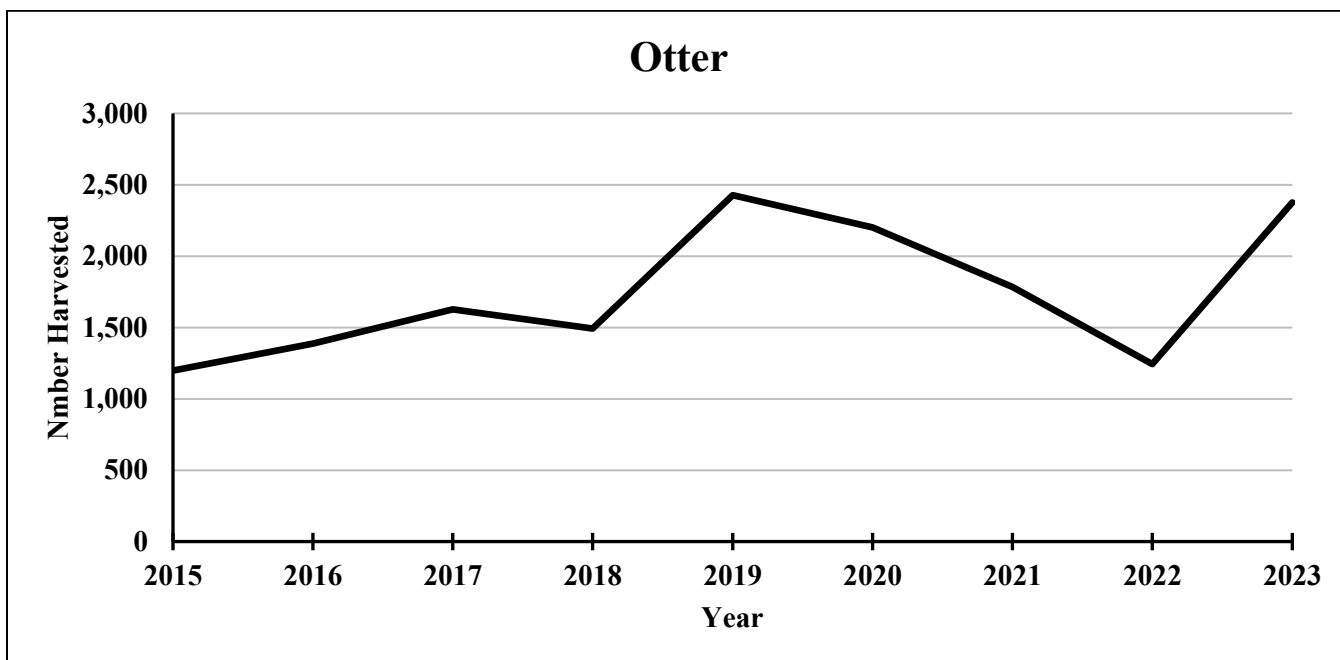


Figure 23. Otter harvest 2015 to 2023.

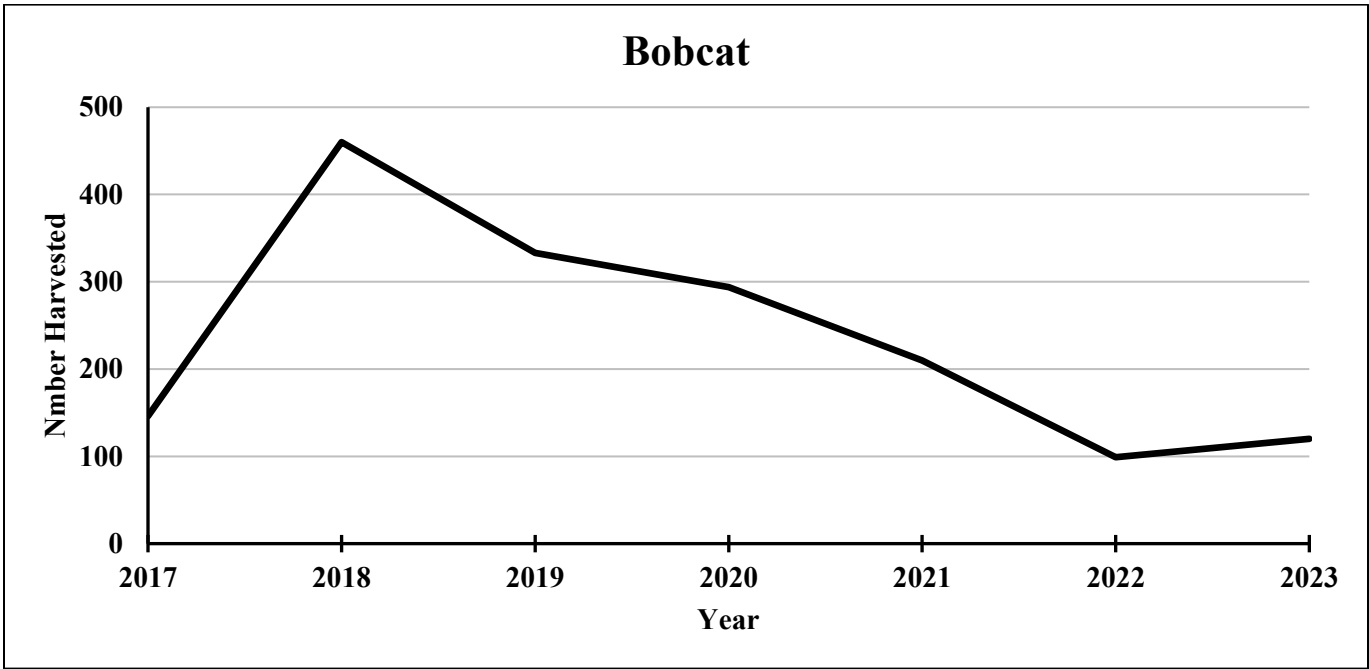


Figure 24. Bobcat harvest 2017 to 2023.

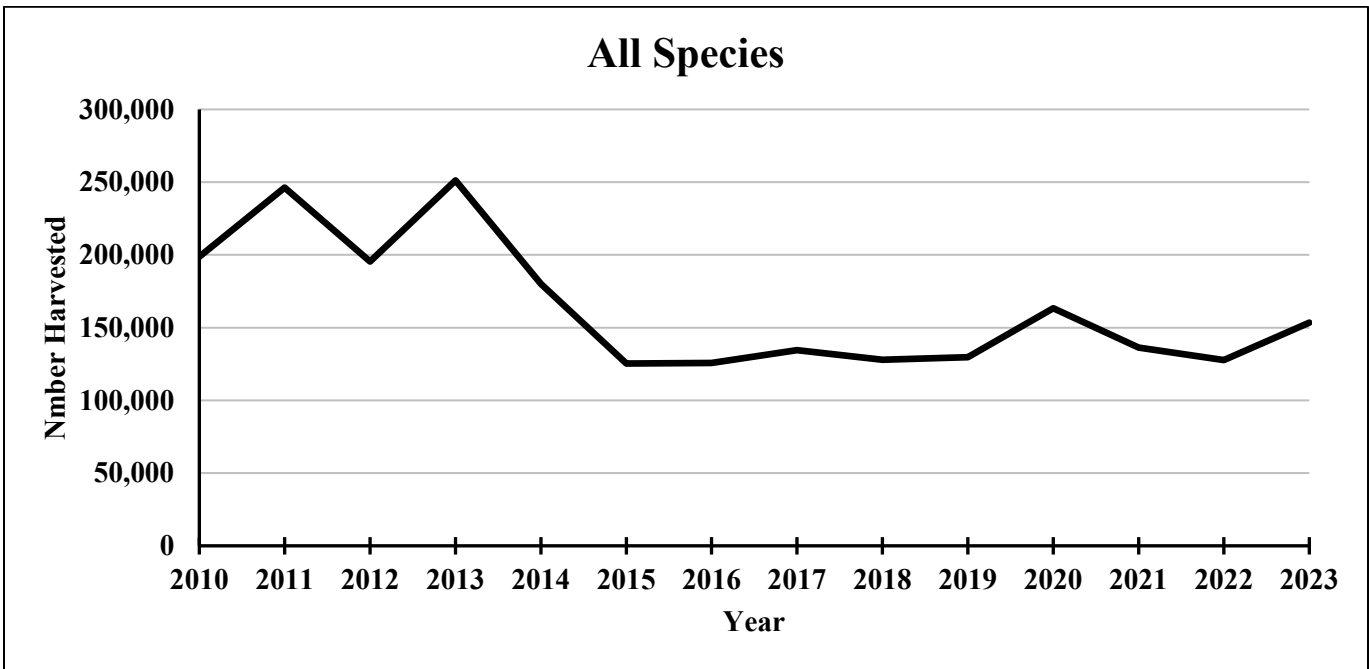


Figure 25. All species' harvest 2010 to 2023. *Years 2014 and prior do not include otter harvest and years prior to 2017 do not include bobcat.

Fur Hunting by Trappers

A total of 233 trappers, 26.7% of respondents, reported hunting furbearers with a gun and/or dogs in 2023-24 (Figure 26) and over 1 in 10 (12.9%) of those who hunted furbearers used a dog (Figure 27). All furbearer hunting occurred on private property and over half (55%) occurred on private land owned by the hunter or a family member (Figure 28). There were an estimated 2,145 trapper license purchasers who hunted furbearers during 2023-24. Their total harvest was estimated to be 32,096 furbearers or an average of 15.0 furbearers per hunter (Table 32). Trappers harvested more raccoon and coyote than any other species. Eighty-nine percent of participants felt safe hunting in Illinois after sunset (Figure 30). Two-thirds (65.7%) of furbearer hunters had done so after sunset in the 2023-24 season (Figure 31). To hunt furbearers after sunset, trappers used electronic calls (34.8%), hand-held or gun mounted lights (28.8%), thermal imaging equipment (29.6%), night vision equipment (12.4%), dogs (9.0%), and baiting (5.2%). The species most hunted after sunset were raccoon (45.1%) and coyote (40.8%), followed by skunk (4.3%), red fox (3.4%), gray fox (0.4%).

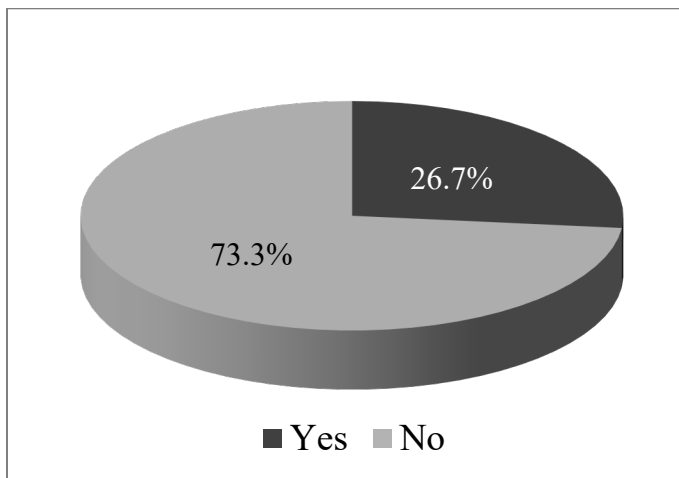


Figure 26. Trappers who hunted furbearers with a gun and/or dogs in Illinois during the 2023-24 season ($n = 872$).

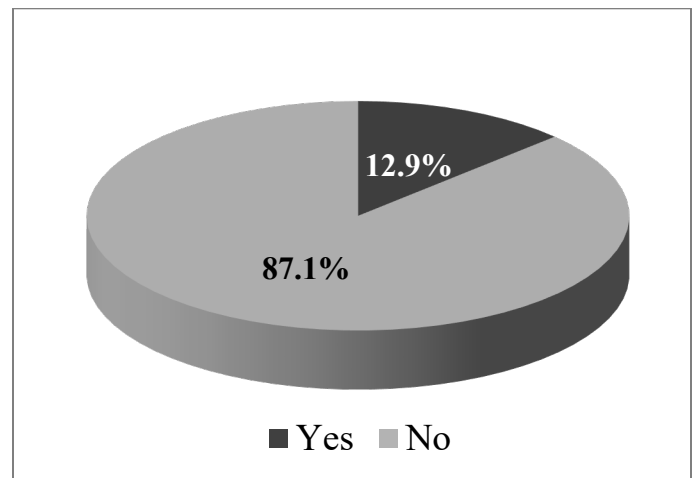


Figure 27. Percent of furbearer hunters who hunted with dogs during the 2023-24 season ($n = 233$).

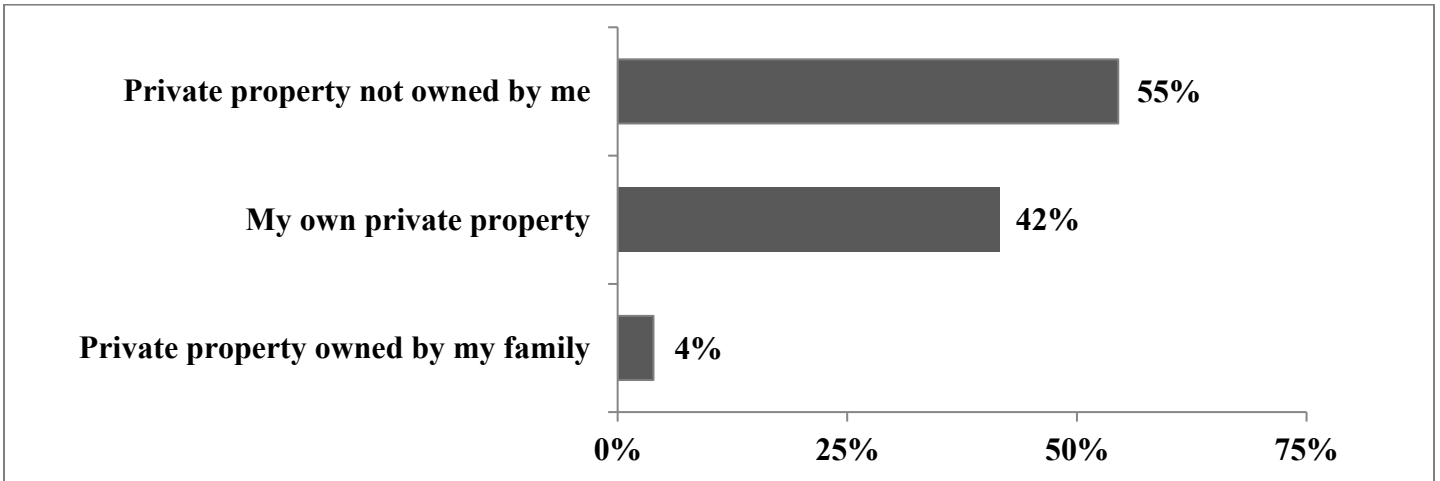


Figure 28. Type of land on which respondents most often hunted furbearers (n=233).

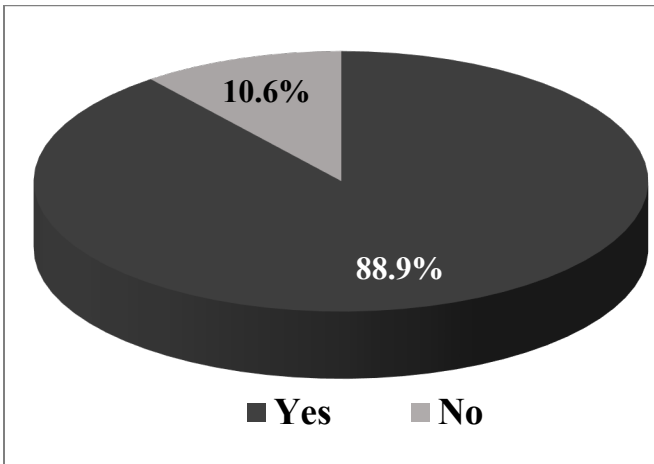


Figure 29. Percent of participants who feel safe hunting after sunset in Illinois (n = 872).

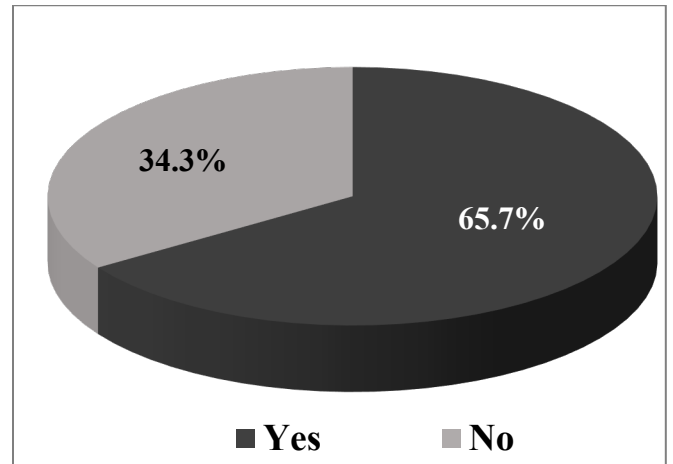


Figure 30. Percent of furbearer hunters who hunted after sunset during 2023-24 (n = 233).

Badger, Gray Fox, Otter, and Bobcat Sightings & Signs

Trappers were asked to identify if they observed any animals or signs of 4 species of special interest in Illinois during the 2023-24 trapping season. One in 10 (10.4%) license purchasers reported they sighted a badger (Figure 31), and 17.2% claimed to see signs of badgers (Figure 32). Mason, De Kalb, Livingston, Scott, and Whiteside were the counties in which sightings of badgers were reported most often. Signs of badgers were reported most often from Logan, Livingston, Scott, and Whiteside (Table 33). Gray fox sightings were rarer

than badger sightings; 48 in 50 trappers (96.9%) of trappers did not see a gray fox and 3.1% saw sign of gray fox (Figure 33). The counties where gray fox was sighted most often Cass, Hardin, Randolph, Wayne, and Woodford (Table 34). Similarly, sightings of gray fox sign were most prevalent in those counties. Slightly less than half, (40.0%) reported seeing otter in the areas where they trap. More than one-third of trappers (36.6%) felt the number of otter signs they had witnessed had increased over the past 5 years (Figure 33). The counties with the most sightings of otter were Pike, Fulton, Mason, Jackson, Knox, and Schuyler (Table 35). Half of active trappers saw a bobcat and a similar percentage of trappers saw sign of a bobcat. The counties with the most bobcat sightings were Pike, Fulton, Randolph, Jefferson, Jackson, Macoupin, and Schuyler (Table 36).

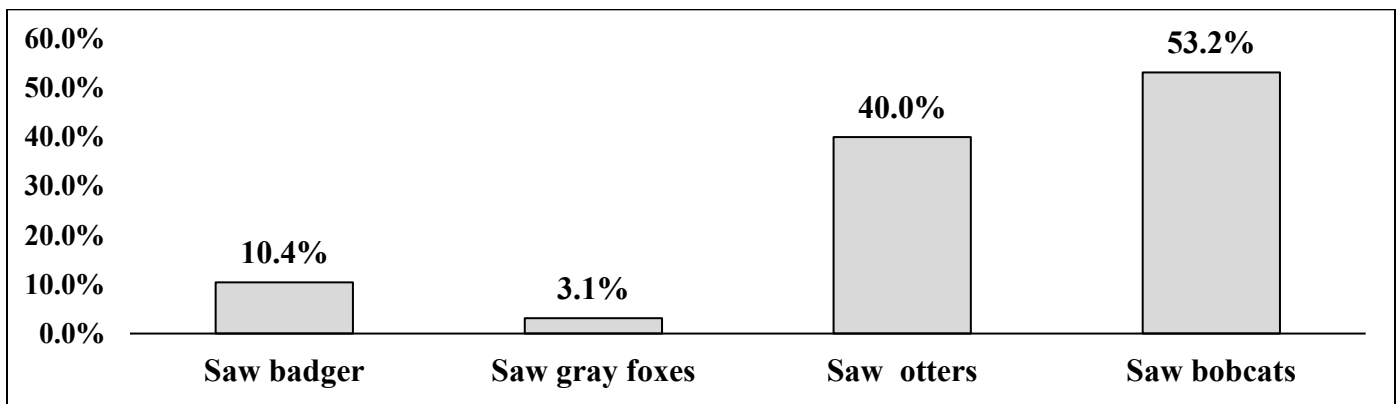


Figure 31. Percent of trappers who sighted species of special interest in Illinois ($n = 872$).

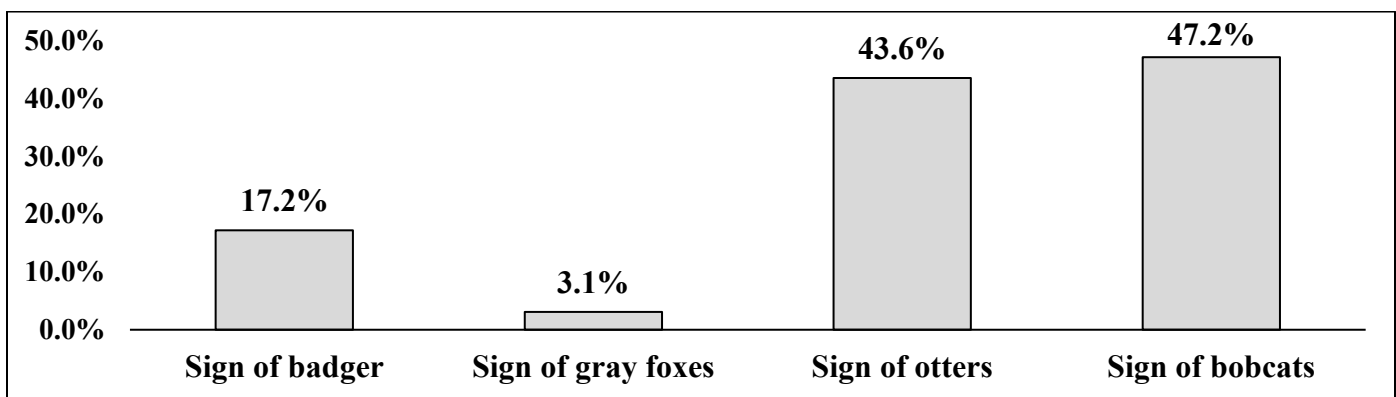


Figure 32. Percent of trappers who sighted signs of special interest species in Illinois ($n = 872$).

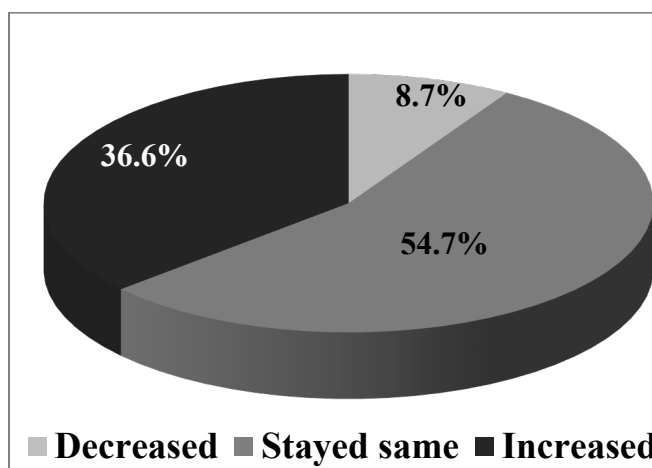


Figure 33. Trappers' opinion of the amount of otter sign witnessed over the past 5 years ($n = 872$).

One in 10 of those who set traps (10.2%) reported catching a bobcat during 2023-24. Of those who caught a bobcat, 31.1% were actively targeting bobcats. A total of 133 bobcats were accidentally caught, a 72% increase from the previous year. The majority (90.2%) of incidentally caught bobcats were released. Most trappers who incidentally caught a bobcat trapped a single bobcat during the season, however 11 trappers (27% of incidental trappers) caught 4 or more bobcats over the season. When bobcats were incidentally caught the targeted species were most often coyote, red fox, and raccoon. In 2023 there were an estimated 23,000 bobcats in Illinois. Trappers were asked if they felt there were fewer or more now in Illinois, those who set traps were more likely to feel there more, whereas those who did not were more likely to feel the population was the same. (Figure 34). Similarly, over two-thirds (67.7%) of active trappers felt they see more signs of bobcat now as compared to 5 years ago (Figure 35). Those who trapped in 2023-24 were more likely to want fewer bobcats over the next 5 years as compared to those who did not set traps in 2023-24 (Figure 36). Most of both groups were neither satisfied or dissatisfied with the number of bobcats in Illinois, though a larger proportion of those who trapped were unsatisfied than those who did not set traps (Figure 37).

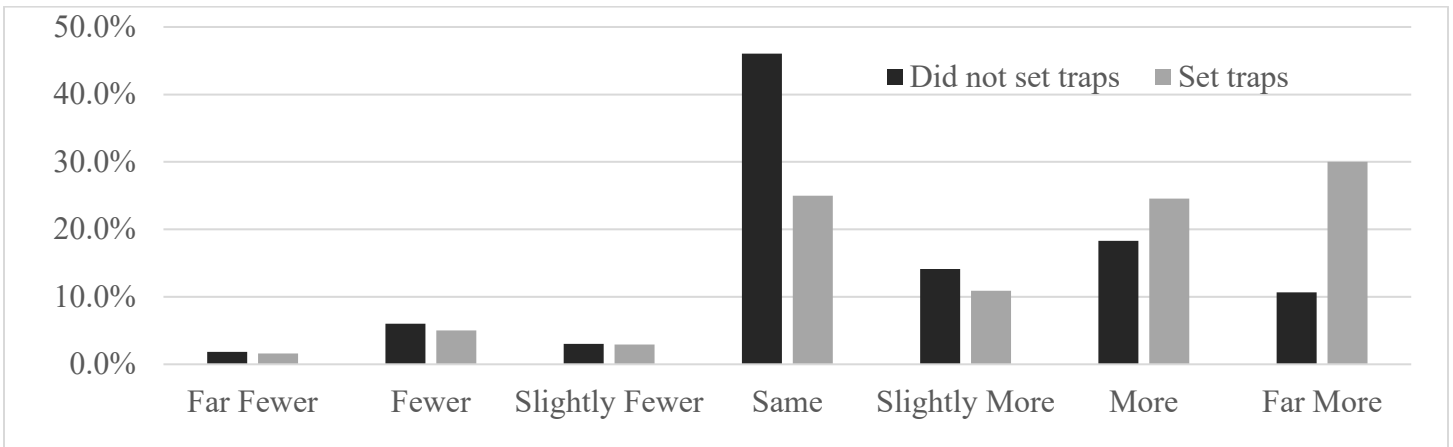


Figure 34. Respondents' perceived bobcat population estimate as compared to the IDNR estimate of 23,000 ($n = 872$).

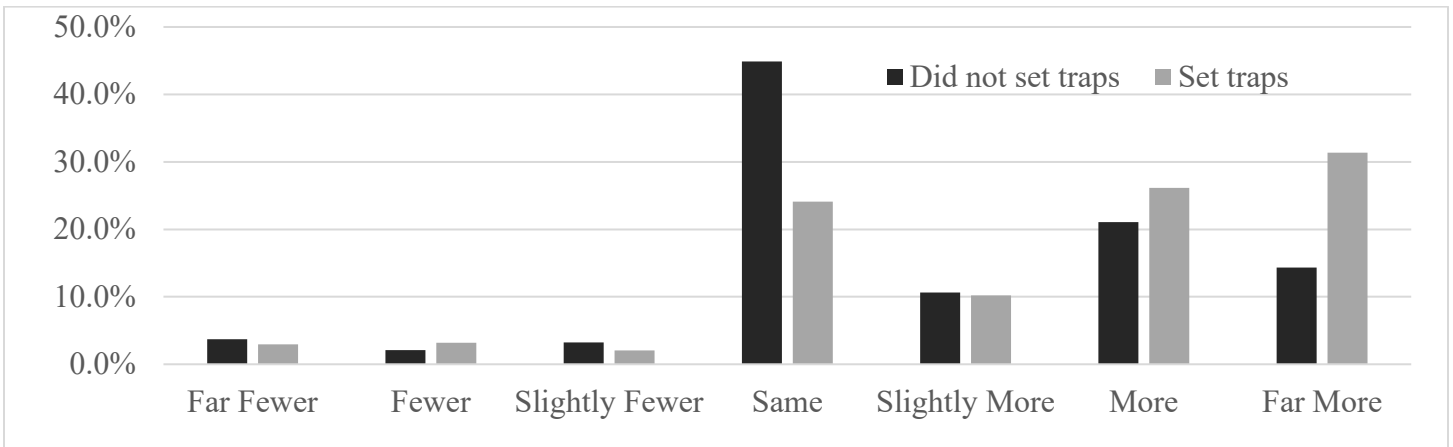


Figure 35. Respondents' perception of the number signs of bobcats they have seen over the last 5 years ($n = 872$).

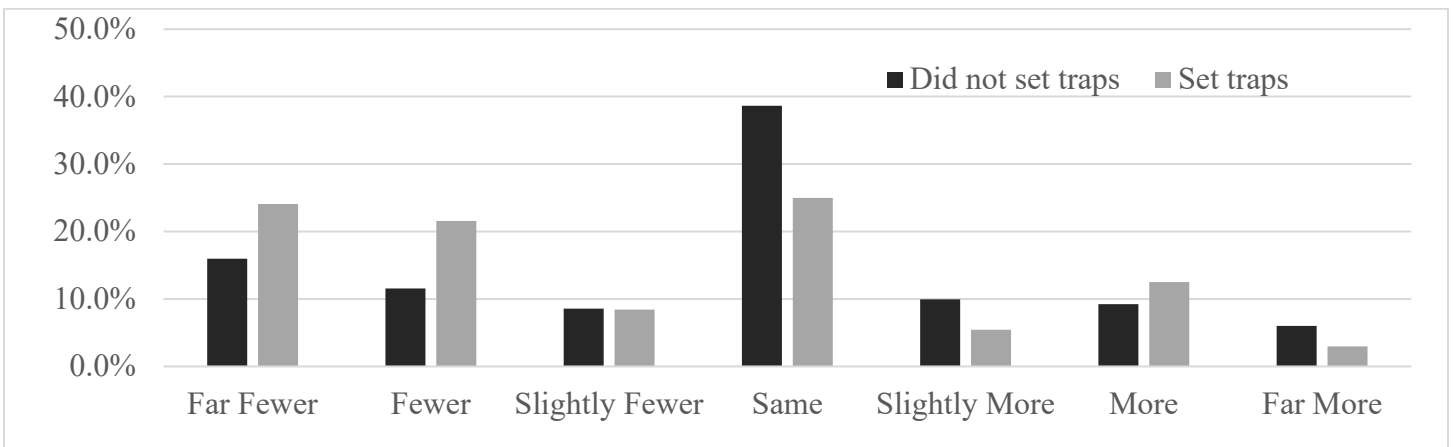


Figure 36. Respondents' preference for fewer or more bobcats over the next 5 years ($n = 872$).

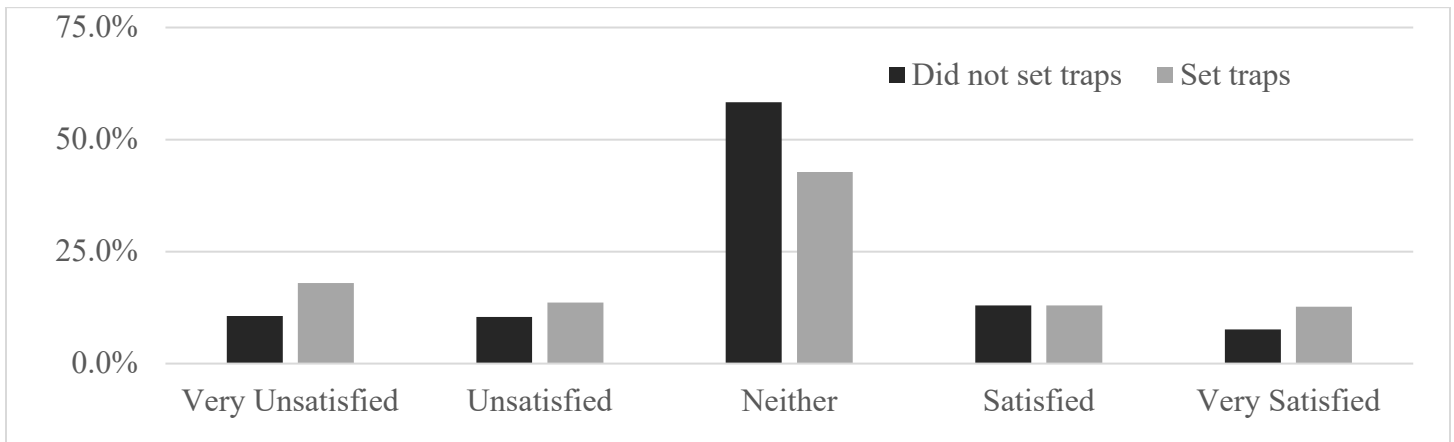


Figure 37. Respondents' satisfaction with the number of bobcats currently in Illinois ($n = 872$).

Trap use and ownership

When asked about the traps currently owned 76.8% foot-hold traps, 68.2% trappers owned conibear traps, 42.7% cage style live traps, 9.8% owned modified foot-hold, and 13.6% owned snares. During the 2023-24 trapping season conibear, foot-hold, and cage type live traps were the used most often (Table 37). Dog-proof traps were the most mentioned write-in type of trap, snake traps and drowning rigs were included. Trappers were most likely to set no more than 10 traps of any given type. Types of traps reported owned by license purchasers who did not set traps followed the same trend as those who had set traps during 2023-24 (foot-hold traps, conibear, and cage type) and were not broken out for additional analysis. In the 2023-24 season sample, 48 trappers purchased an average 9.4 foot-hold traps, 40 purchased an average 12.9 conibear, 21 purchased an average 2.6 cage style, and 11 purchased an average 20.3 snares.

Trapping for Others

Over half (60.3%) of trappers had been asked to trap for someone (Figure 38) and almost half (47%) of those who did so in 2023-24. One-quarter (25.1%) of trappers were often asked by landowners to trap a property and 46.5% were asked to do so sometimes (Figure 39). They were most often asked by landowners

who wanted nuisance control for property damage (Figure 40). The species trappers were most frequently asked to target were raccoons, beavers, coyotes, and muskrats (Figure 41).

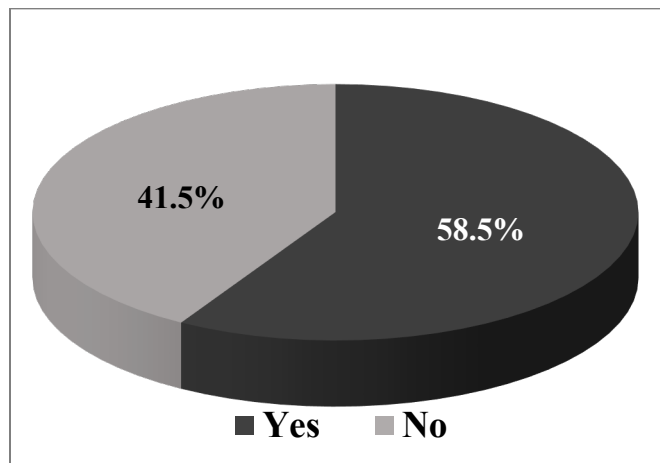


Figure 38. Percentage of respondents who have been asked by someone to trap a property ($n = 872$).

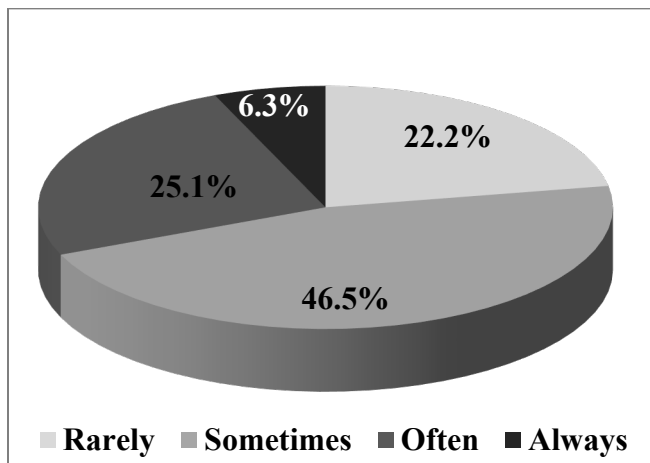


Figure 39. How often landowners ask trappers to target animals on their property ($n = 510$).

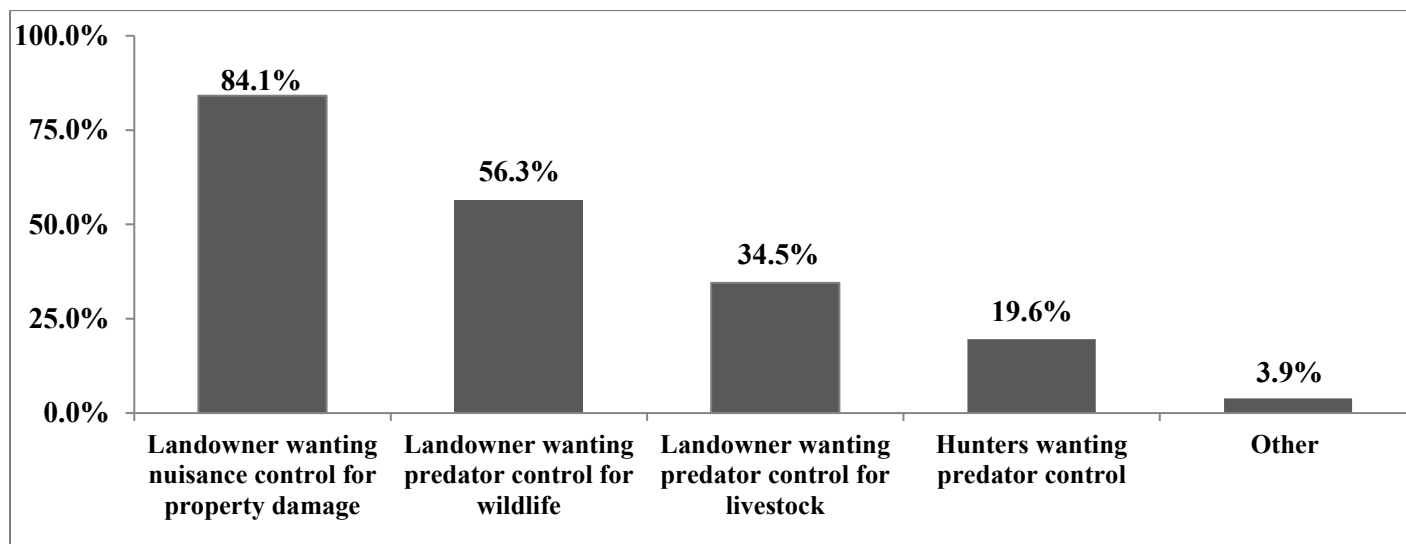


Figure 40. Reasons for which trappers were asked to set traps on property ($n = 510$).

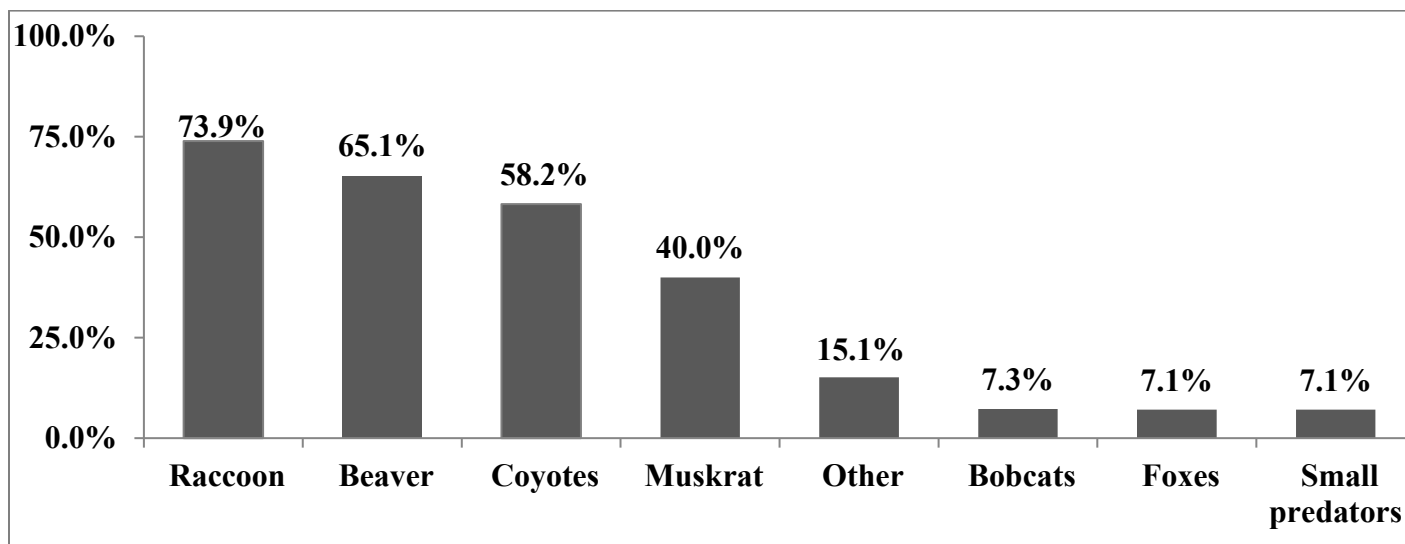


Figure 41. Species trappers were asked to target ($n = 510$).

Trapper Education

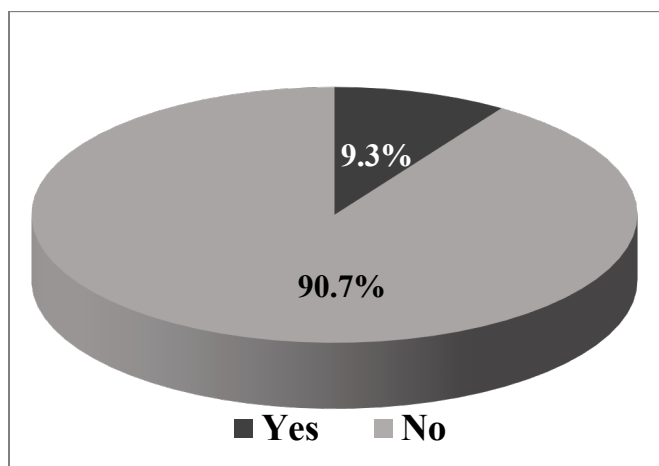


Figure 42. Percentage of respondents who attended trapping meetings or conventions in the last 12 months ($n = 872$).

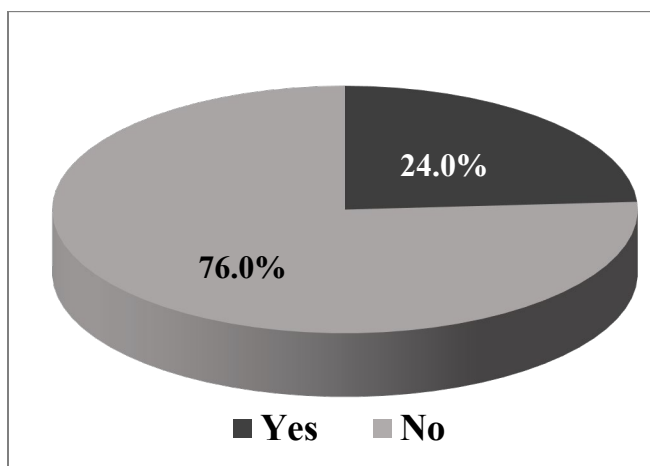


Figure 43. Percentage of respondents who have ever taken a trapper education course ($n = 872$).

One in 10 trappers have attended a trapping association meeting or convention within the last 12 months (Figure 42). Most attended one meeting, but 32.1% attended ≥ 2 meetings during the year prior. One-quarter (24.2% Figure 43) had ever taken a trapper education course offered by IDNR or another resource management agency. Participants of these programs were roughly split on why they had attended with 50% doing so out of

desire and the remainder doing so because it was required. Forty percent had visited the general trapping web site www.TrapperEd.com whereas 69.7% had visited IDNR's fur hunting and trapping website. Almost one-third (30.2%) had ever referenced the best management practices (BMPs) for trapping furbearers. Slightly less than half of trappers (48.2%) reported they were "Not at all familiar" with trapping BMPs and 10.9% were "very" or "extremely familiar." The BMPs with which trappers were most familiar were coyote, beaver, and raccoon and 50% were familiar with none of the species listed. Approximately 22.8% of trappers have ever used BMPs as a guide for which traps they should use and 19.6% have previously purchased traps because of BMPs recommendations.

General Information

Eighty-seven percent of trappers indicated they had Internet access in their homes (Figure 43) and 80.6% of those with internet access had highspeed Internet. One in 4 trappers (22.4%) currently receive email announcements from IDNR, and 13.6% used to receive announcements but no longer do. Thirty-two percent have signed up for email announcements, and 43.2% have missed a permit deadline because they did not know it was due. Over half (53.2%) would use a free app to keep electronic copies of their permits and licenses. Similarly 69.4% would use an app to report harvests if it were available.

During the 2023-24 season, Illinois trappers averaged 53.9 years (± 14.5 , $n = 872$) of age and had been trapping in Illinois for an average of 23.1 years (± 19.3 , $n = 872$). The average age to start trapping was 24.2 (± 16.0 , $n = 872$) and almost half (43.3%) began trapping between 10 and 19 years old (Figure 44). Forty-nine percent of trappers (active and inactive) have ever mentored someone new to trapping (Figure 45). One-quarter (26.0%) of trappers (active and inactive) know someone who does not currently trap but is interested in learning to do so (Figure 47). They knew of 438 people interested in learning to trap with an average age of 21.7. When asked about hunting license purchases, 94.5% of trappers had purchased one for the 2023-24 hunting season.

Most trappers, (97.5%) purchased a furbearer license only for the state of Illinois. Missouri, Wisconsin, Colorado, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and California were the most frequently indicated states for additional furbearer license purchases.

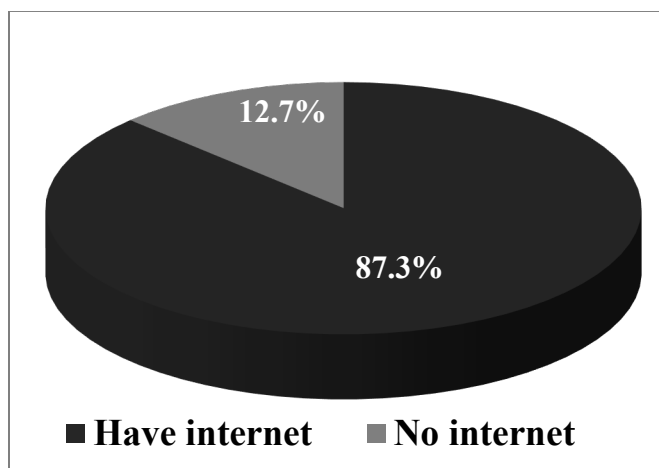


Figure 44. Percent of respondents who have Internet service in their home ($n = 872$).

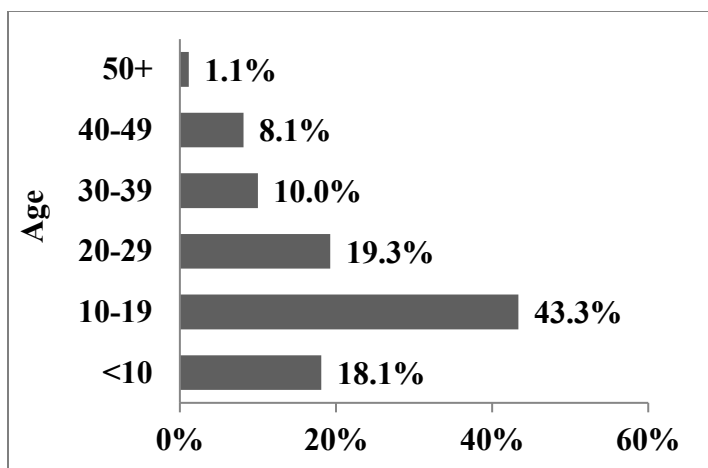


Figure 45. Age of trappers when they started trapping ($n = 872$).

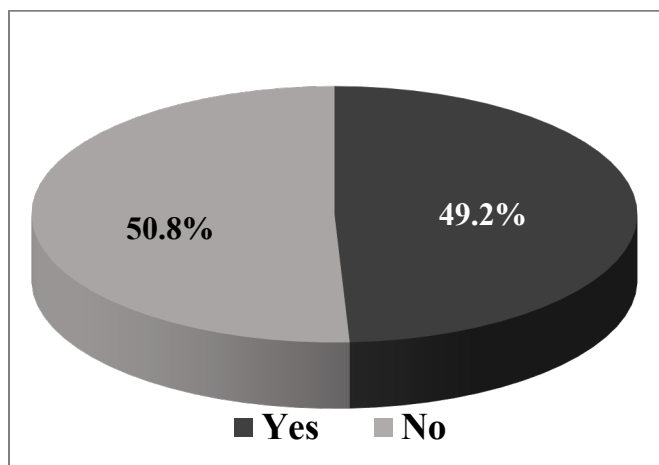


Figure 46. Percentage of respondents who have mentored a new trapper ($n = 872$).

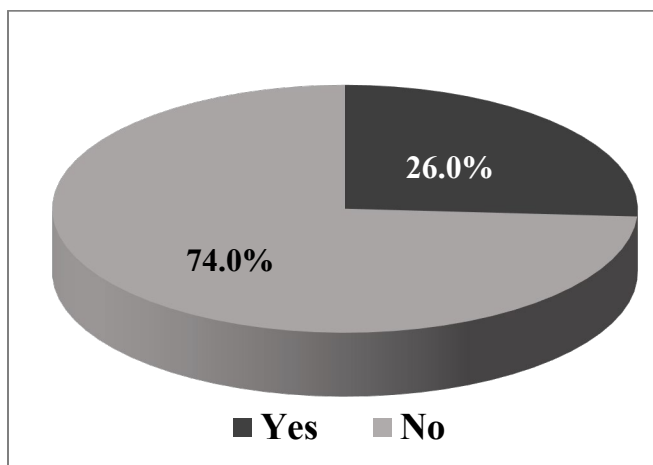


Figure 47. Percentage of respondents who know of someone who doesn't trap but is interested ($n = 872$).

Thirty-eight percent of trappers felt their trapping effort had decreased over the past 5 years, whereas 19.4% felt effort had increased. The counties which reported the greatest number of active trappers were Pike,

Shelby, Randolph, Adams, Henry, Clinton, Jackson, Knox, and Ogle (Table 36). The highest densities of trapper residences were in Henry, Madison, LaSalle, Adams, Peoria, Pike, and Sangamon counties (Table 37).

REFERENCES

Anderson, W.L., and L.K. Campbell. 1992. Fur hunter/trapper survey, 1990-91. Illinois Department of Conservation, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Projects W-99-R-3 and W-112-R-1, Study 1, Job 2, Job Completion Report, 71 pp.

Table 1. Participation and harvest by fur trappers in Illinois, 2023-24 season ($n = 872$).

Species	Number of Reported Successful Trappers	% (Total Respondents)	Reported Harvest by Successful Trappers
Muskrat	122	16.4	1,774
Mink	39	5.2	88
Otter	93	12.5	287
Raccoon	343	46.1	8,697
Opossum	192	25.8	1,842
Red fox	24	3.2	44
Gray fox	1	0.1	1
Beaver	188	25.3	2,371
Striped skunk	102	13.7	411
Weasel	3	0.4	3
Coyote	147	19.8	1,129
Badger	8	1.1	9
Bobcat	13	1.7	13

Table 2. Distribution of reported furbearer harvest among successful trappers in Illinois based on responses to the 2023-24 Illinois Trapper Survey.

Total Season Catch	Percentage of Trappers												
	Muskrat (n=122)	Mink (n=39)	Otter (n=93)	Raccoon (n=343)	Opossum (n=192)	Red Fox (n=24)	Gray Fox (n=1)	Beaver (n=188)	Striped Skunk (n=102)	Weasel (n=3)	Coyote (n=147)	Badger (n=8)	Bobcat (n=13)
1-5	35.2%	92.3%	97.8%	24.8%	46.9%	95.8%	100.0%	43.6%	84.3%	100.0%	64.6%	100.0%	100.0%
6-10	27.9%	5.1%	1.1%	20.7%	25.0%	4.2%	0.0%	17.6%	9.8%	0.0%	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%
11-15	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.4%	13.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%	2.0%	0.0%	8.2%	0.0%	0.0%
16-20	5.7%	2.6%	0.0%	8.2%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
21-25	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	1.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
>25	14.8%	0.0%	1.1%	25.7%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%	14.4%	1.0%	0.0%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 3. Summary of statewide data from post-season mail survey of resident trappers in Illinois, 2023-24 ($n = 872$), along with confidence intervals (95%) for estimated number of trappers, average season harvest, and total trapper harvest.

Species	Estimated Number of Trappers	Percent of Licensed Trappers	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Percent Sold	Estimated Total Sold
Muskrat	1,123 ± 186	16.4%	14.54 ± 3.50	16,333 ± 3,991	66.1%	10,791
Mink	359 ± 112	5.2%	2.26 ± 0.86	810 ± 331	70.5%	571
Otter	856 ± 166	12.5%	3.09 ± 0.88	2,642 ± 762	70.0%	1,851
Raccoon	3,158 ± 250	46.1%	25.36 ± 6.49	80,073 ± 18,077	37.6%	30,134
Opossum	1,768 ± 220	25.8%	9.59 ± 1.68	16,959 ± 3,058	18.2%	3,084
Red fox	221 ± 89	3.2%	1.83 ± 0.56	405 ± 169	40.9%	166
Gray fox	9 ± 18	0.1%	1.00 ± 0.00	9 ± 15	0.0%	-
Beaver	1,731 ± 218	25.3%	12.61 ± 2.00	21,830 ± 3,720	68.4%	14,934
Striped Skunk	939 ± 173	13.7%	4.03 ± 1.07	3,784 ± 1,023	20.9%	792
Weasel	28 ± 32	0.4%	1.00 ± 0.00	28 ± 26	33.3%	9
Coyote	1,353 ± 200	19.8%	7.68 ± 1.81	10,395 ± 2,421	30.9%	3,213
Badger	74 ± 52	1.1%	1.13 ± 0.25	83 ± 50	33.3%	28
Bobcat	120 ± 66	1.7%	1.00 ± 0.00	120 ± 54	7.7%	9

Table 4. Summary of 2023-24 MUSKRAT trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 122$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	193	17.2	2.1	14.3	2,762	29.4
Northeast Moraine	55	4.9	0.7	19.8	1,096	13.2
Mississippi Border-North	55	4.9	0.7	11.5	635	8.1
Mississippi Border-South	129	11.5	0.9	9.6	1,243	9.1
Western Prairie/Forest	110	9.8	0.8	15.9	1,759	12.2
Central Sand Prairie	46	4.1	1.1	11.8	543	13.1
Grand Prairie	331	29.5	0.6	15.9	5,285	10.0
Southern Plain	120	10.7	0.5	19.8	2,375	10.0
Wabash Border	74	6.6	1.1	7.3	534	7.9
Shawnee Hills	9	0.8	0.2	11.0	101	1.9
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	1,123	100.0	0.8	14.5	16,333	11.2

Table 5. Summary of 2023-24 MINK trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 39$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	74	20.5	0.8	2.1	157	1.7
Northeast Moraine	18	5.1	0.2	1.0	18	0.2
Mississippi Border-North	18	5.1	0.2	1.0	18	0.2
Mississippi Border-South	9	2.6	0.1	2.0	18	0.1
Western Prairie/Forest	46	12.8	0.3	1.2	55	0.4
Central Sand Prairie	9	2.6	0.2	3.0	28	0.7
Grand Prairie	120	33.3	0.2	2.9	350	0.7
Southern Plain	46	12.8	0.2	3.2	147	0.6
Wabash Border	9	2.6	0.1	1.0	9	0.1
Shawnee Hills	9	2.6	0.2	1.0	9	0.2
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	359	100.0	0.2	2.3	810	0.6

Table 6. Summary of 2023-24 OTTER trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois (*n* = 93).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	129	4.1	1.4	3.1	405	4.3
Northeast Moraine	9	0.3	0.1	4.0	37	0.4
Mississippi Border-North	37	1.2	0.5	3.5	129	1.6
Mississippi Border-South	92	2.9	0.7	2.3	212	1.5
Western Prairie/Forest	101	3.2	0.7	3.2	322	2.2
Central Sand Prairie	74	2.3	1.8	2.4	175	4.2
Grand Prairie	157	5.0	0.3	4.7	737	1.4
Southern Plain	175	5.5	0.7	2.5	433	1.8
Wabash Border	83	2.6	1.2	2.3	193	2.9
Shawnee Hills	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	856	27.1	0.6	3.1	2,642	1.8

Table 7. Summary of 2023-24 RACCOON trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois (*n* = 343).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	368	11.7	3.9	26.5	9,759	103.8
Northeast Moraine	74	2.3	0.9	6.3	460	5.6
Mississippi Border-North	230	7.3	2.9	67.8	15,597	198.7
Mississippi Border-South	543	17.2	4.0	27.8	15,127	110.6
Western Prairie/Forest	368	11.7	2.6	25.1	9,244	64.1
Central Sand Prairie	74	2.3	1.8	21.8	1,602	38.6
Grand Prairie	810	25.7	1.5	15.5	12,531	23.8
Southern Plain	460	14.6	1.9	24.6	11,343	47.8
Wabash Border	120	3.8	1.8	17.5	2,099	31.1
Shawnee Hills	110	3.5	2.1	20.9	2,311	44.3
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	3,158	100.0	2.2	25.4	80,073	54.8

Table 8. Summary of 2023-24 OPOSSUM trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 192$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	193	10.9	2.1	9.3	1,795	19.1
Northeast Moraine	18	1.0	0.2	1.0	18	0.2
Mississippi Border-North	120	6.8	1.5	13.3	1,593	20.3
Mississippi Border-South	341	19.3	2.5	11.2	3,802	27.8
Western Prairie/Forest	193	10.9	1.3	13.5	2,606	18.1
Central Sand Prairie	46	2.6	1.1	11.2	516	12.4
Grand Prairie	497	28.1	0.9	7.5	3,710	7.1
Southern Plain	221	12.5	0.9	9.1	2,007	8.5
Wabash Border	74	4.2	1.1	3.5	258	3.8
Shawnee Hills	64	3.6	1.2	10.1	654	12.5
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	1,768	100.0	1.2	9.6	16,959	11.6

Table 9. Summary of 2023-24 RED FOX trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 24$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	37	16.7	0.4	1.5	55	0.6
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-North	18	8.3	0.2	1.0	18	0.2
Mississippi Border-South	28	12.5	0.2	2.7	74	0.5
Western Prairie/Forest	28	12.5	0.2	3.0	83	0.6
Central Sand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Grand Prairie	55	25.0	0.1	1.8	101	0.2
Southern Plain	37	16.7	0.2	1.5	55	0.2
Wabash Border	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Shawnee Hills	18	8.3	0.4	1.0	18	0.4
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	221	100.0	0.2	1.8	405	0.3

Table 10. Summary of 2023-24 GRAY FOX trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 1$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Mississippi Border-North	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Mississippi Border-South	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Western Prairie/Forest	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Central Sand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Grand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Southern Plain	-	-	0.0	-	-	0.0
Wabash Border	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Shawnee Hills	9	100.0	0.2	1.0	9	0.2
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	9	100.0	0.0	1.0	9	0.0

Table 11. Summary of 2023-24 BEAVER trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 188$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	212	12.2	2.3	12.6	2,661	28.3
Northeast Moraine	83	4.8	1.0	12.0	994	12.0
Mississippi Border-North	92	5.3	1.2	14.5	1,335	17.0
Mississippi Border-South	249	14.4	1.8	8.6	2,136	15.6
Western Prairie/Forest	138	8.0	1.0	15.7	2,173	15.1
Central Sand Prairie	101	5.9	2.4	12.5	1,261	30.4
Grand Prairie	488	28.2	0.9	11.5	5,625	10.7
Southern Plain	249	14.4	1.0	15.9	3,941	16.6
Wabash Border	74	4.3	1.1	18.1	1,335	19.8
Shawnee Hills	46	2.7	0.9	8.0	368	7.1
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	1,731	100.0	1.2	12.6	21,830	14.9

Table 12. Summary of 2023-24 STRIPED SKUNK trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 102$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	92	9.8	1.0	4.2	387	4.1
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-North	46	4.9	0.6	5.8	267	3.4
Mississippi Border-South	175	18.6	1.3	4.0	700	5.1
Western Prairie/Forest	92	9.8	0.6	9.5	875	6.1
Central Sand Prairie	46	4.9	1.1	3.4	157	3.8
Grand Prairie	313	33.3	0.6	2.9	902	1.7
Southern Plain	101	10.8	0.4	3.3	331	1.4
Wabash Border	28	2.9	0.4	2.0	55	0.8
Shawnee Hills	46	4.9	0.9	2.4	110	2.1
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	939	100.0	0.6	4.0	3,784	2.6

Table 13. Summary of 2023-24 WEASEL trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 3$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	28	100.0	0.3	1.0	28	0.3
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-North	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-South	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Western Prairie/Forest	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Central Sand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Grand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Southern Plain	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Wabash Border	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Shawnee Hills	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-
Statewide	28	100.0	0.0	1.0	28	0.0

Table 14. Summary of 2023-24 COYOTE trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 147$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	92	6.8	1.0	7.5	691	7.3
Northeast Moraine	28	2.0	0.3	6.0	166	2.0
Mississippi Border-North	55	4.1	0.7	9.8	543	6.9
Mississippi Border-South	239	17.7	1.8	5.2	1,234	9.0
Western Prairie/Forest	157	11.6	1.1	11.8	1,851	12.8
Central Sand Prairie	37	2.7	0.9	15.0	552	13.3
Grand Prairie	414	30.6	0.8	8.5	3,526	6.7
Southern Plain	212	15.6	0.9	5.8	1,234	5.2
Wabash Border	55	4.1	0.8	7.3	405	6.0
Shawnee Hills	64	4.8	1.2	3.0	193	3.7
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	1,353	100.0	0.9	7.7	10,395	7.1

Table 15. Summary of 2023-24 BADGER trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 8$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	18	25.0	0.2	1.0	18	0.2
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-North	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-South	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Western Prairie/Forest	9	12.5	0.1	1.0	9	0.1
Central Sand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Grand Prairie	46	62.5	0.1	1.2	55	0.1
Southern Plain	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Wabash Border	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Shawnee Hills	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	74	100.0	0.1	1.1	83	0.1

Table 16. Summary of 2023-24 BOBCAT trapper and harvest data in Wildlife Management Units in Illinois ($n = 13$).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Total Trapper Harvest	Estimated Trapper Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Northeast Moraine	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Mississippi Border-North	9	12.5	0.1	1.0	9	0.1
Mississippi Border-South	18	25.0	0.1	1.0	18	0.1
Western Prairie/Forest	28	37.5	0.2	1.0	28	0.2
Central Sand Prairie	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Grand Prairie	28	37.5	0.1	1.0	28	0.1
Southern Plain	28	37.5	0.1	1.0	28	0.1
Wabash Border	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Shawnee Hills	9	12.5	0.2	1.0	9	0.2
Unknown	-	0.0	-	-	-	-
Statewide	120	162.5	0.1	1.0	120	0.1

Table 17. Summary of 2023-24 MUSKRAT trapper and harvest data in Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 122$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/100km ²
North	654	58.2	0.8	17.0	11,122	68.1	13.6
South	470	41.8	0.7	11.1	5,211	31.9	8.1
Statewide	1,123	100.0	0.8	14.5	16,333	100.0	11.2

Table 18. Summary of 2023-24 MINK trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 39$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/100km ²
North	258	71.8	0.3	2.3	589	72.7	0.7
South	101	28.2	0.2	2.2	221	27.3	0.3
Statewide	359	100.0	0.2	2.3	810	100.0	0.6

Table 19. Summary of 2023-24 OTTER trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 93$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/100km ²
North	451	14.3	0.6	3.7	1,676	2.1	2.0
South	405	12.8	0.6	2.4	967	1.2	1.5
Statewide	856	27.1	0.6	3.1	2,642	3.3	1.8

Table 20. Summary of 2023-24 RACCOON trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 343$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/100km ²
North	1,657	52.5	2.0	27.3	45,188	56.4	55.2
South	1,501	47.5	2.3	23.2	34,885	43.6	54.3
Statewide	3,158	100.0	2.2	25.4	80,073	100.0	54.8

Table 21. Summary of 2023-24 OPOSSUM trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 192$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/100km ²
North	911	51.6	1.1	10.1	9,170	54.1	11.2
South	856	48.4	1.3	9.1	7,789	45.9	12.1
Statewide	1,768	100.0	1.2	9.6	16,959	100.0	11.6

Table 22. Summary of 2023-24 RED FOX trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 24$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	129	58.3	0.2	1.9	249	61.4	0.3
South	92	41.7	0.1	1.7	157	38.6	0.2
Statewide	221	100.0	0.2	1.8	405	100.0	0.3

Table 23. Summary of 2023-24 GRAY FOX trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 1$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	0	0.0	0.0	-	0	0.0	0.0
South	9	100.0	0.0	1.0	9	100.0	0.0
Statewide	9	100.0	0.0	1.0	9	100.0	0.0

Table 24. Summary of 2023-24 BEAVER trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 188$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	976	56.4	1.2	12.6	12,328	56.5	15.1
South	755	43.6	1.2	12.6	9,502	43.5	14.8
Statewide	1,731	100.0	1.2	12.6	21,830	100.0	14.9

Table 25. Summary of 2023-24 STRIPED SKUNK trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 102$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	543	57.8	0.7	4.6	2,523	66.7	3.1
South	396	42.2	0.6	3.2	1,261	33.3	2.0
Statewide	939	100.0	0.6	4.0	3,784	100.0	2.6

Table 26. Summary of 2023-24 WEASEL trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 3$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	28	100.0	0.0	1.0	28	100.0	0.0
South	0	0.0	0.0	#####	0	0.0	0.0
Statewide	28	100.0	0.0	1.0	28	100.0	0.0

Table 27. Summary of 2023-24 COYOTE trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 147$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	635	46.9	0.8	9.6	6,086	58.5	7.4
South	718	53.1	1.1	6.0	4,309	41.5	6.7
Statewide	1353	100.0	0.9	7.7	10,395	100.0	7.1

Table 28. Summary of 2023-24 BADGER trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 8$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	46	62.5	0.1	1.2	55	66.7	0.1
South	28	37.5	0.0	1.0	28	33.3	0.0
Statewide	74	100.0	0.1	1.1	83	100.0	0.1

Table 29. Summary of 2023-24 BOBCAT trapper and harvest data by Furbearer Management Zones in Illinois ($n = 13$).

Trapping Zone	Estimated Trappers	%	Estimated Trappers/ 100km ²	Average Season Catch	Estimated Harvest	% of Harvest	Estimated Harvest/ 100km ²
North	37	30.8	0.0	1.0	37	30.8	0.0
South	83	69.2	0.1	1.0	83	69.2	0.1
Statewide	120	100.0	0.1	1.0	120	100.0	0.1

Table 30. The number of pelts sold by successful trappers (i.e., caught ≥ 1 animal) for 13 species of furbearers in Illinois, 2023-24 season ($n = 872$).

Species	Number of Pelts Sold	Pelts Sold in Illinois		Pelts Sold Outside Illinois		% of harvested pelts sold	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	This year	Last year
Muskrat	10,791	6,261	58.0	4,530	10,791	66%	62%
Mink	571	396	69.4	175	571	70%	63%
Otter	1,851	1,022	55.2	829	1,851	70%	56%
Raccoon	30,134	25,181	83.6	4,953	30,134	38%	41%
Opossum	3,084	1,860	60.3	1,225	3,084	18%	12%
Red fox	166	157	94.4	9	166	41%	42%
Gray fox	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beaver	14,934	8,866	59.4	6,067	14,934	68%	60%
Striped skunk	792	534	67.4	258	792	21%	16%
Weasel	9	9	100.0	-	9	33%	0%
Coyote	3,213	2,403	74.8	810	3,213	31%	51%
Badger	28	28	100.0	-	28	34%	0%
Bobcat	9	9	100.0	-	9	8%	14%
Total	65,581	46,725	71.2	18,856	65,581	43%	41%

Table 31. Estimated statewide harvest by resident Illinois trappers, 2007-2023.

Season	Muskrat	Mink	Otter	Raccoon	Opossum	Red Fox	Gray Fox	Beaver	Striped Skunk	Weasel	Coyote	Badger	Bobcat	All Species
2007	35,461	3,563	-	88,784	27,011	1,316	191	9,394	6,558	53	9,216	84		181,631
2008	32,480	2,764	-	77,310	22,839	783	86	9,997	4,745	22	4,405	65		155,496
2009	31,942	1,792	-	52,431	14,203	1,001	71	7,697	3,784	29	4,585	62		117,597
2010	63,257	4,574	-	88,233	20,213	848	39	11,238	3,981	33	6,193	44		198,653
2011	37,068	3,828	-	149,449	27,983	1,294	135	13,397	6,214	55	6,766	98		246,286
2012	33,906	2,678	-	104,947	23,264	1,412	69	12,898	5,140	26	10,874	146		195,360
2013	32,467	3,005	-	151,367	34,208	1,624	85	9,874	5,022	53	13,314	159		251,178
2014	33,860	2,895	-	101,035	17,152	1,739	89	7,249	4,621	76	11,096	165		179,978
2015	32,038	1,641	1,198	55,390	12,829	932	0	10,514	3,123	35	7,488	124		125,314
2016	24,217	1,982	1,388	57,324	14,695	948	20	10,050	2,349	47	12,532	53		125,605
2017	18,795	1,969	1,627	64,025	16,753	862	16	11,179	2,539	41	16,525	81	146	134,560
2018	16,079	1,502	1,493	63,179	17,815	894	35	10,358	4,141	96	11,781	156	460	127,990
2019	16,111	1,097	2,427	67,915	16,255	737	36	10,357	4,109	0	10,258	54	333	129,689
2020	31,703	1,875	2,202	72,836	15,202	1,186	112	18,489	3,241	33	16,060	56	293	163,292
2021	22,386	1,364	1,784	67,288	15,002	905	26	13,665	3,908	13	9,665	79	210	136,294
2022	15,809	1,216	1,244	67,892	16,334	746	0	11,566	3,703	83	9,010	55	97	127,756
2023	16,333	810	2,642	80,073	16,959	405	9	21,830	3,784	28	10,395	83	120	153,471

Table 32. Summary of fur hunting activities reported by trappers^a in Illinois, 2023-24.

Species	Number of Trappers Hunting	Mean # of Days Hunted	Mean # of Species Observed	Total Reported Harvest by Hunting	Average Reported Harvest Per Hunter	% of Trappers Hunting Each Species	Estimated Total Harvest By Hunting	Counties hunted most often
Raccoon	131	10.0	47.4	2,400	18.3	17.6%	22,097	Adams, Henry, Hancock
Opossum	36	16.2	10.2	121	3.4	4.8%	1,114	Pike, Henry, LaSalle
Red fox	11	15.1	3.4	5	0.5	1.5%	46	Boone, Cass, Fayette
Gray fox	2	42.5	0.5	-	0.0	0.3%	-	Wayne, Cass
Bobcat	21	13.5	3.8	6	0.3	2.8%	55	Cumberland, Henry, Adams
Woodchuck	11	6.4	12.8	20	1.8	1.5%	184	Green, Cass, Clark
Coyote	173	12.6	13.9	898	5.2	23.3%	8,268	Pike, Will, Carroll
Skunk	17	18.4	9.7	36	2.1	2.3%	331	Henry, Pike, Lawrence
All species	233	21.4	40.4	3,486	15.0	31.3%	32,096	

^a Active and inactive trappers.

^b Successful and unsuccessful hunters.

^c Total for hunters of all species may be less than the sum of values because some trappers hunted >1 species.

Table 33. Number of trappers who saw badger or signs of badger by the county in Illinois.

County	Saw		County	Saw		County	Saw	
	Badger	Saw Sign		Badger	Saw Sign		Badger	Saw Sign
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Adams	0	3	Hardin	0	0	Morgan	2	3
Alexander	0	0	Henderson	1	2	Moultrie	0	1
Bond	0	0	Henry	2	8	Ogle	3	5
Boone	1	0	Iroquois	2	2	Peoria	3	5
Brown	1	1	Jackson	0	0	Perry	0	0
Bureau	3	5	Jasper	0	0	Piatt	0	0
Calhoun	1	1	Jefferson	0	0	Pike	0	3
Carroll	2	2	Jersey	0	0	Pope	0	0
Cass	1	3	Jo Daviess	3	3	Pulaski	0	0
Champaign	2	3	Johnson	0	0	Putnam	0	1
Christian	4	4	Kane	2	3	Randolph	0	2
Clark	0	0	Kankakee	0	0	Richland	0	0
Clay	0	0	Kendall	0	1	Rock Island	0	3
Clinton	0	0	Knox	2	9	St. Clair	0	0
Coles	1	1	Lake	0	0	Saline	0	0
Cook	0	0	LaSalle	4	8	Sangamon	2	2
Crawford	1	1	Lawrence	0	0	Schuyler	2	2
Cumberland	0	0	Lee	0	0	Scott	5	9
De Kalb	6	5	Livingston	5	9	Shelby	1	1
DeWitt	0	0	Logan	2	10	Stark	1	2
Douglas	1	0	McDonough	0	0	Stephenson	0	4
Du Page	0	0	McHenry	0	2	Tazewell	3	2
Edgar	1	1	McLean	3	4	Union	0	0
Edwards	0	0	Macon	0	3	Vermillion	2	0
Effingham	0	0	Macoupin	0	0	Wabash	0	0
Fayette	0	1	Madison	1	0	Warren	0	0
Ford	1	2	Marion	0	0	Washington	0	0
Franklin	0	0	Marshall	0	2	Wayne	0	0
Fulton	2	3	Mason	7	8	White	0	0
Gallatin	0	0	Massac	0	0	Whiteside	5	9
Greene	1	1	Menard	2	2	Will	0	2
Grundy	1	2	Mercer	3	8	Williamson	0	0
Hamilton	0	0	Monroe	1	3	Winnebago	2	5
Hancock	1	2	Montgomery	0	0	Woodford	1	2

Table 34. Number of trappers who saw gray fox or signs of gray fox by the county in Illinois.

County	Saw		County	Saw		County	Saw	
	Gray Fox	Saw Sign		Gray Fox	Saw Sign		Gray Fox	Saw Sign
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Adams	0	0	Hardin	2	2	Morgan	0	0
Alexander	1	0	Henderson	1	1	Moultrie	0	0
Bond	0	0	Henry	0	0	Ogle	1	0
Boone	0	0	Iroquois	0	0	Peoria	0	0
Brown	0	0	Jackson	1	0	Perry	0	0
Bureau	0	0	Jasper	0	0	Piatt	1	0
Calhoun	2	0	Jefferson	2	2	Pike	0	1
Carroll	0	0	Jersey	0	0	Pope	1	1
Cass	3	2	Jo Daviess	0	0	Pulaski	1	1
Champaign	0	0	Johnson	1	0	Putnam	0	0
Christian	1	0	Kane	0	0	Randolph	2	2
Clark	0	0	Kankakee	0	0	Richland	1	0
Clay	0	0	Kendall	1	0	Rock Island	0	0
Clinton	0	0	Knox	0	0	St. Clair	0	0
Coles	0	0	Lake	0	0	Saline	0	0
Cook	2	0	LaSalle	0	1	Sangamon	3	1
Crawford	1	1	Lawrence	1	1	Schuyler	1	0
Cumberland	1	0	Lee	0	0	Scott	1	1
De Kalb	0	0	Livingston	1	1	Shelby	1	0
DeWitt	0	0	Logan	0	0	Stark	0	0
Douglas	0	0	McDonough	1	0	Stephenson	0	0
Du Page	0	0	McHenry	0	1	Tazewell	1	0
Edgar	0	0	McLean	0	0	Union	4	0
Edwards	0	0	Macon	1	0	Vermillion	0	0
Effingham	0	0	Macoupin	0	0	Wabash	0	0
Fayette	0	1	Madison	0	0	Warren	0	0
Ford	1	0	Marion	0	0	Washington	0	0
Franklin	1	0	Marshall	0	0	Wayne	3	2
Fulton	1	1	Mason	1	0	White	0	0
Gallatin	0	0	Massac	0	0	Whiteside	0	0
Greene	1	0	Menard	2	1	Will	3	1
Grundy	0	0	Mercer	1	1	Williamson	1	0
Hamilton	0	0	Monroe	1	1	Winnebago	0	0
Hancock	1	0	Montgomery	0	0	Woodford	2	2

Table 35. Number of trappers who saw otter or signs of otter by the county in Illinois.

County	Saw Otter <i>n</i>	Saw Sign <i>n</i>	County	Saw Otter <i>n</i>	Saw Sign <i>n</i>	County	Saw Otter <i>n</i>	Saw Sign <i>n</i>
Adams	6	11	Hardin	4	5	Morgan	6	7
Alexander	2	1	Henderson	4	5	Moultrie	3	4
Bond	5	5	Henry	8	7	Ogle	4	5
Boone	1	2	Iroquois	6	7	Peoria	2	7
Brown	8	10	Jackson	11	10	Perry	4	4
Bureau	3	3	Jasper	5	5	Piatt	6	5
Calhoun	3	3	Jefferson	5	4	Pike	17	17
Carroll	8	10	Jersey	5	6	Pope	1	1
Cass	7	7	Jo Daviess	6	6	Pulaski	3	3
Champaign	4	5	Johnson	4	2	Putnam	1	1
Christian	2	2	Kane	1	3	Randolph	7	10
Clark	4	4	Kankakee	0	0	Richland	0	0
Clay	7	6	Kendall	0	0	Rock Island	3	4
Clinton	7	7	Knox	11	11	St. Clair	3	6
Coles	3	4	Lake	2	2	Saline	0	1
Cook	0	0	LaSalle	3	2	Sangamon	10	8
Crawford	5	5	Lawrence	4	7	Schuyler	11	12
Cumberland	5	6	Lee	0	0	Scott	7	6
De Kalb	3	4	Livingston	6	7	Shelby	9	8
DeWitt	0	0	Logan	2	6	Stark	2	2
Douglas	3	2	McDonough	5	4	Stephenson	6	8
Du Page	0	0	McHenry	0	3	Tazewell	3	3
Edgar	1	1	McLean	2	4	Union	4	2
Edwards	1	2	Macon	4	2	Vermillion	8	8
Effingham	7	7	Macoupin	5	6	Wabash	2	4
Fayette	6	9	Madison	3	2	Warren	2	3
Ford	4	4	Marion	5	5	Washington	2	2
Franklin	2	2	Marshall	3	2	Wayne	8	8
Fulton	14	13	Mason	12	12	White	2	2
Gallatin	1	1	Massac	0	0	Whiteside	10	12
Greene	3	5	Menard	2	2	Will	2	1
Grundy	2	3	Mercer	3	3	Williamson	3	4
Hamilton	1	1	Monroe	1	4	Winnebago	3	4
Hancock	6	6	Montgomery	3	2	Woodford	4	4

Table 36. Number of trappers who saw bobcat or signs of bobcat by the county in Illinois.

County	Saw		County	Saw		County	Saw	
	Bobcat	Saw Sign		Bobcat	Saw Sign		Bobcat	Saw Sign
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Adams	11	9	Hardin	5	6	Morgan	9	9
Alexander	2	1	Henderson	4	4	Moultrie	1	2
Bond	8	7	Henry	5	6	Ogle	7	5
Boone	1	0	Iroquois	4	2	Peoria	5	6
Brown	14	13	Jackson	15	13	Perry	7	5
Bureau	5	4	Jasper	5	5	Piatt	3	3
Calhoun	6	4	Jefferson	16	13	Pike	23	20
Carroll	7	8	Jersey	13	10	Pope	3	1
Cass	5	4	Jo Daviess	11	10	Pulaski	4	4
Champaign	4	4	Johnson	4	4	Putnam	2	3
Christian	2	1	Kane	0	0	Randolph	17	16
Clark	7	6	Kankakee	2	2	Richland	3	3
Clay	9	8	Kendall	1	0	Rock Island	4	5
Clinton	7	7	Knox	3	9	St. Clair	5	5
Coles	2	1	Lake	1	4	Saline	1	2
Cook	0	0	LaSalle	1	2	Sangamon	11	6
Crawford	10	7	Lawrence	6	3	Schuyler	15	10
Cumberland	8	7	Lee	2	2	Scott	7	7
De Kalb	1	1	Livingston	3	4	Shelby	12	12
DeWitt	1	0	Logan	2	5	Stark	2	2
Douglas	1	1	McDonough	5	4	Stephenson	1	2
Du Page	0	0	McHenry	1	1	Tazewell	4	5
Edgar	2	2	McLean	3	0	Union	4	2
Edwards	1	3	Macon	4	3	Vermillion	6	4
Effingham	7	4	Macoupin	15	13	Wabash	3	3
Fayette	12	12	Madison	9	6	Warren	1	2
Ford	3	2	Marion	8	9	Washington	7	9
Franklin	2	0	Marshall	3	4	Wayne	14	11
Fulton	18	13	Mason	8	8	White	3	4
Gallatin	1	1	Massac	1	1	Whiteside	8	9
Greene	12	11	Menard	4	5	Will	2	4
Grundy	1	1	Mercer	6	5	Williamson	6	4
Hamilton	5	4	Monroe	11	9	Winnebago	6	2
Hancock	8	6	Montgomery	2	2	Woodford	1	3

Table 37. Types of traps owned and used by Illinois trappers.

# of traps	Conibear traps (n = 448)		Foot-hold traps (n = 502)		Modified (padded) foot-hold traps (n = 73)		Cage type live traps (n = 311)		Snares (n = 81)		Other (n = 123)	
	Owned %	Set %	Owned %	Set %	Owned %	Set %	Owned %	Set %	Owned %	Set %	Owned %	Set %
0	-	39.1	-	40.2	-	55.4	-	60.5	-	49.4	-	18.7
1-10	43.3	43.8	35.7	38.8	54.8	32.4	92.0	37.9	32.1	43.2	37.4	52.0
11-20	19.0	9.4	22.1	13.3	27.4	8.1	5.8	1.0	32.1	7.4	24.4	20.3
21-30	12.5	4.9	10.4	5.4	4.1	1.4	-	0.6	14.8	-	17.9	4.1
31-40	4.7	0.4	5.0	0.2	4.1	2.7	0.3	-	9.9	-	4.9	1.6
41-50	6.7	1.8	7.2	1.4	2.7	-	1.3	-	3.7	-	4.9	0.8
51-100	9.2	0.7	13.3	0.6	2.7	-	0.6	-	6.2	-	9.8	2.4
>100	4.7	-	6.4	-	4.1	-	-	-	1.2	-	0.8	-

Table 38. Distribution of active trappers by county trapped most in Illinois based on responses to the 2023-24 Illinois Trapper Survey ($n = 440$).

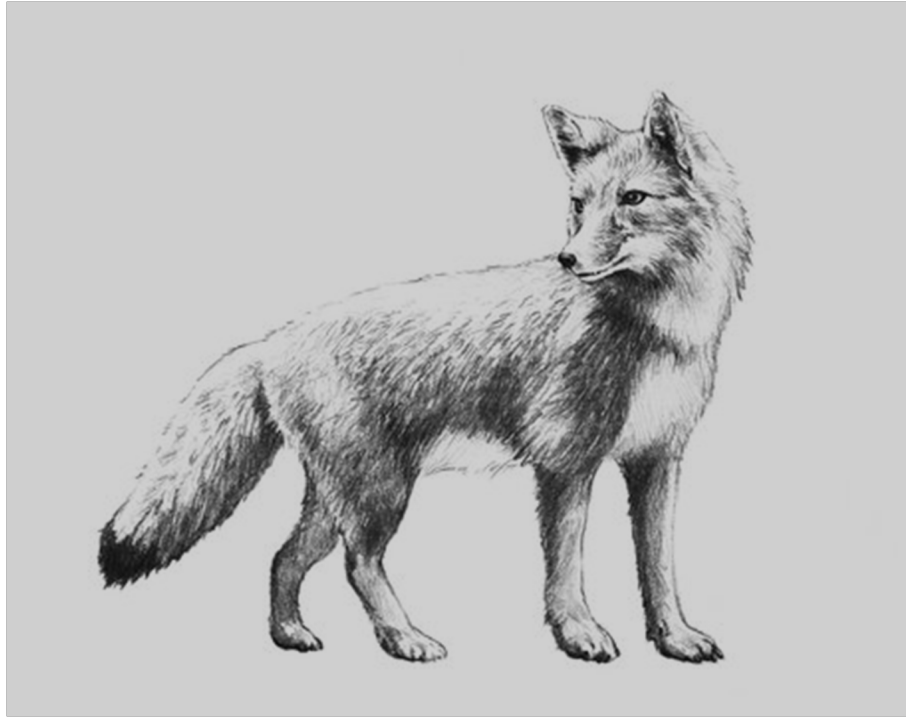
County	<i>n</i>	County	<i>n</i>	County	<i>n</i>
Adams	12	Hardin	1	Morgan	6
Alexander	1	Henderson	3	Moultrie	1
Bond	4	Henry	12	Ogle	11
Boone	3	Iroquois	4	Peoria	4
Brown	8	Jackson	11	Perry	5
Bureau	3	Jasper	3	Piatt	3
Calhoun	1	Jefferson	7	Pike	14
Carroll	9	Jersey	8	Pope	4
Cass	4	Jo Daviess	9	Pulaski	4
Champaign	3	Johnson	2	Putnam	0
Christian	3	Kane	2	Randolph	13
Clark	3	Kankakee	0	Richland	4
Clay	0	Kendall	3	Rock Island	3
Clinton	11	Knox	11	St. Clair	8
Coles	2	Lake	2	Saline	1
Cook	1	LaSalle	5	Sangamon	7
Crawford	1	Lawrence	5	Schuyler	8
Cumberland	5	Lee	3	Scott	3
De Kalb	4	Livingston	6	Shelby	14
DeWitt	1	Logan	2	Stark	2
Douglas	1	McDonough	1	Stephenson	4
Du Page	0	McHenry	4	Tazewell	3
Edgar	0	McLean	4	Union	6
Edwards	3	Macon	3	Vermillion	3
Effingham	2	Macoupin	6	Wabash	3
Fayette	3	Madison	6	Warren	1
Ford	5	Marion	4	Washington	2
Franklin	2	Marshall	3	Wayne	6
Fulton	6	Mason	8	White	1
Gallatin	0	Massac	0	Whiteside	9
Greene	2	Menard	7	Will	7
Grundy	2	Mercer	4	Williamson	4
Hamilton	2	Monroe	4	Winnebago	4
Hancock	4	Montgomery	2	Woodford	6

Table 39. Distribution of respondents by county of residence ($n = 872$).

County	<i>n</i>	County	<i>n</i>	County	<i>n</i>
Adams	19	Hardin	4	Morgan	13
Alexander	1	Henderson	7	Moultrie	3
Bond	4	Henry	21	Ogle	14
Boone	6	Iroquois	8	Peoria	19
Brown	13	Jackson	12	Perry	7
Bureau	11	Jasper	8	Piatt	4
Calhoun	4	Jefferson	10	Pike	19
Carroll	9	Jersey	11	Pope	2
Cass	9	Jo Daviess	12	Pulaski	3
Champaign	12	Johnson	2	Putnam	2
Christian	8	Kane	11	Randolph	17
Clark	3	Kankakee	4	Richland	6
Clay	5	Kendall	4	Rock Island	8
Clinton	14	Knox	12	St. Clair	17
Coles	4	Lake	7	Saline	1
Cook	14	LaSalle	20	Sangamon	19
Crawford	9	Lawrence	7	Schuyler	8
Cumberland	9	Lee	6	Scott	2
De Kalb	9	Livingston	17	Shelby	15
DeWitt	2	Logan	10	Stark	1
Douglas	6	McDonough	3	Stephenson	11
Du Page	7	McHenry	11	Tazewell	15
Edgar	2	McLean	16	Union	6
Edwards	2	Macon	10	Vermillion	5
Effingham	9	Macoupin	12	Wabash	5
Fayette	7	Madison	21	Warren	4
Ford	6	Marion	11	Washington	3
Franklin	4	Marshall	5	Wayne	8
Fulton	14	Mason	9	White	1
Gallatin	0	Massac	2	Whiteside	17
Greene	8	Menard	10	Will	16
Grundy	5	Mercer	7	Williamson	7
Hamilton	3	Monroe	13	Winnebago	8
Hancock	11	Montgomery	2	Woodford	11

Illinois Trapper Survey

2023-24 Season



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Division of Wildlife Resources

&

Illinois Natural History Survey



The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. This study is funded by the federal Wildlife Restoration Fund through your purchase of hunting arms and ammunition.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

All of your responses will be kept confidential.

Please return this survey in the postage-paid return envelope provided.

Section 1. Effort and Harvest. Please answer the following questions about your furbearer trapping and hunting activities during the 2023-24 trapping season in Illinois.

1. Did you set any **traps** for furbearers in Illinois during the 2023-24 trapping season? (Please check **one** response)
 _____ Yes _____ No (If “No,” please go to **Question 9**)

2. Complete each blank for all species **trapped** in Illinois during the 2023-24 season. Report only **your** personal harvested catch. If you trapped with a partner, list only your half of the catch. **DO NOT include animals taken by hunting or any animals which were caught and released.**

Species	Number Trapped	Number Sold in Illinois	Number Sold or Shipped Out of State	Number Not Sold
Muskrat				
Mink				
Otter				
Raccoon				
Opossum				
Red Fox				
Gray Fox				
Beaver				
Skunk				
Weasel				
Coyote				
Badger				
Bobcat				

If needed, please refer to the map on the back of the cover letter to answer questions 3 & 4.

3. In which county did you set traps most often during the 2023-24 trapping season?
 _____ County

4. In which zone do you trap most often? _____ North Zone _____ South Zone

5. How many days (or nights) did you set traps during the 2023-24 trapping season? _____ Days (or Nights)

6. What was the average number of traps you set on your trapline during the 2023-24 season? _____ Traps

7. On which type of land do you set traps **most often**? (Please check **one** response)

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ My own private property | _____ Public state property |
| _____ Private outfitter property | _____ Public federal property |
| _____ Private property not owned by me | _____ Private property owned by my family |

8. Did you sell any pelts outside of Illinois? Yes No (If “No,” please go to **Question 9**)

8a. In what states outside of Illinois did you sell pelts? _____

9. How do you prepare most of the pelts you sell? (Please check **one** response)

Fur on carcass (in the round) Green-skinned furs Stretched and dried

10. Did you sell any pelts or skulls on the craft market? Yes No (If “No,” please go to **Question 11**)

10a. What species did you sell on the craft market? (Please check **all** that apply)

Beaver Mink Ermine Otter
 Coyote Fox Raccoon Other (Please identify): _____

10b. Which did you sell? (Please check **all** that apply)

Pelts Skulls Other (Please identify): _____

10c. In which of the following markets did you sell fur-related products? (Please check **all** that apply)

Flea market Local fairs and festivals
 Online (Etsy, Facebook marketplace, etc.) Other (Please identify): _____

11. Has anyone ever asked you to trap on a property for them? Yes No (If “No,” please go to **Question 12**)

11a. Which of the following groups have asked you to set trap? (Please check **all** that apply)

Landowner wanting predator control to protect wildlife
 Landowner wanting predator control to protect livestock
 Landowner wanting nuisance control for property damage (ponds, fields, etc.)
 Hunters/hunting club wanting predator/furbearer control
 Other (Please identify): _____

11b. How often are you asked to trap on someone else’s property? (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

11c. Which of the following species have you been asked to target? (Please check **all** that apply)

Coyotes Foxes Bobcats Small predators (weasel, mink)
 Raccoon Muskrat Beaver Other (Please identify): _____

11d. Did you trap on any property during 2023-24 at the request of a landowner? Yes No

12. How many of the following types of traps did you use on your trap line during the 2023-24 season?

Type of trap	Number owned	Number set	Number purchased in 2023-24
Conibear or body-gripping traps	_____	_____	_____
Standard foot-hold traps	_____	_____	_____
Modified (Soft-catch, padded, etc.) foot-hold traps	_____	_____	_____
Cage-type live traps	_____	_____	_____
Snares (Restricted to water use only)	_____	_____	_____
Other type (Please identify): _____	_____	_____	_____

Section 2. Hunting Furbearers. The following section is about hunting furbearers. Please answer the following questions to help us understand furbearer hunting by trappers.

1. Did you **hunt furbearers** with a gun or bow and/or dogs in Illinois during the 2023-24 season?

_____ Yes _____ No (If “No”, please go to **Question 5**)

1a. On which type of land did you hunt furbearers? (Please check **one** response)

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ My own private property | _____ Public state property |
| _____ Private outfitter property | _____ Public federal property |
| _____ Private property not owned by me | _____ Private property owned by my family |

2. Did you hunt furbearers with dogs in Illinois during the 2023-24 season? _____ Yes _____ No

3. Please report your **hunting** effort and harvest in Illinois for the following furbearer species. Include only the days or nights that you hunted, game you observed (saw), and game you personally harvested in Illinois. Do not count animals you were not able to retrieve or that were trapped. Count partial days or nights hunted as 1 day.

Species Targeted	Number of Days Hunted	Number Observed While Hunting	Number Harvested by Hunting	County Hunted <u>Most</u> Often
Raccoon				
Opossum				
Red Fox				
Gray Fox				
Bobcat				
Woodchuck				
Coyote				
Skunk				

4. Did you hunt furbearers after sunset during 2023-24 season? _____ Yes _____ No (If “No,” please go to **Question 5**)

4a. Which of the following techniques or equipment did you use during your night hunt? (Please check **all** that apply)

- Thermal imaging equipment Electronic calls Hunting with dogs
 Hand-held or gun-mounted light Baiting Night vision equipment
 Other (Please identify): _____

4b. Which furbearer species did you target while hunting after sunset? (Please check **all** that apply)

- Raccoon Red Fox Gray Fox Bobcat
 Coyote Skunk Other (Please identify):

5. Do you feel you can safely hunt furbearers after sunset in Illinois? Yes No

Section 3. Wildlife Sightings. Illinois wildlife biologists are interested in your observations of the following furbearer species. Information you provide will help IDNR manage Illinois wildlife to ensure healthy, sustainable populations.

1. Did you catch any bobcats during 2023-24 season? Yes No (If “No,” please go to **Question 2**)

- 1a. How many bobcats did you catch? _____ caught
- 1b. How many bobcats did you release? _____ released
- 1c. Were you targeting bobcats when you trapped one? Yes No
- 1d. If you did not target bobcats, for what species were you trapping? _____

2. How satisfied are you with the number of bobcats in Illinois? (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

Very Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neutral	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory
1	2	3	4	5

3. Please give your opinions about the number of **bobcats** in Illinois by circling the number that matches your response.

	Far Fewer	Fewer	Slightly Fewer	Same Amount	Slightly More	More	Far More
In 2023 there were an estimated 23,000 bobcats in Illinois, do you feel there are fewer or more bobcats currently in Illinois?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Over the next 5 years would you prefer fewer or more bobcats living in Illinois?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Over the past 5 years have you seen fewer or more signs of bobcats in the areas you trap?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. Which of the following **best** describes the amount of **otter sign** in the **past 5 years** in the area where you trap most? (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

Decreased Considerably	Decreased	Stayed the Same	Increased	Increased Considerably
1	2	3	4	5

5. Please use the table below to report your observations for the following species. Please provide the county(ies) where you observed animal signs or observed animals. If you saw no signs or no sightings of the species listed, please check “Did not observe”.

		County Where Observed	County Where Observed
Signs of badger(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Sightings of badger(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Signs of gray fox(es)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Sightings of gray fox(es)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Signs of otter(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Sightings of otter(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Signs of bobcat(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____
Sightings of bobcat(s)	_____ Did not observe	_____	_____

Section 4. Trapper Education. Please answer the following questions about trapper education and information in Illinois.

1. Did you attend any trapping association meetings or conventions during the past 12 months?

_____ Yes _____ No (If “No,” please go to **Question 2**)

1a. How many did you attend? _____ meetings/conventions

2. Have you ever taken a formal trapper’s education course offered by the IDNR or the resource management agency in another state? _____ Yes _____ No (If “No,” please go to **Question 3**)

2a. Why did you take a trapper’s education course? (Please check **all** that apply)

_____ It was required _____ I wanted to take it _____ Other (Please identify):

3. Have you ever visited the trapper education website (www.TrapperEd.com)? _____ Yes _____ No

4. Have you ever visited the IDNR’s fur hunting and trapping website? (<https://dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/trapping.html>)

_____ Yes _____ No

5. Have you ever referenced any of the best management practices (BMPs) for trapping furbearers (<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-inspires/furbearer-management>)?

Yes No

5a. How familiar are you with the BMPs for trapping? (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

Not at All Familiar	Slightly Familiar	Moderately Familiar	Very Familiar	Extremely Familiar
1	2	3	4	5

5b. With which of the following furbearer specific BMPs are you familiar? (Please check **all** that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Badger	<input type="checkbox"/> Beaver	<input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat
<input type="checkbox"/> Coyote	<input type="checkbox"/> Foxes	<input type="checkbox"/> Mink	<input type="checkbox"/> Muskrat
<input type="checkbox"/> Opossum	<input type="checkbox"/> Raccoon	<input type="checkbox"/> Skunk	<input type="checkbox"/> Weasel

6. Have you ever used trapper BMPs as a guide for which traps to use?

Yes No (If “No”, please go to **Question 7**)

6a. Do you **currently** use trapper BMPs as a guide for which traps to use?

Yes No

7. Have you ever purchased traps because of trapper BMPs recommendations?

Yes No

Section 5. Communication. Please answer the following questions about IDNR communication efforts.

1. Do you have Internet access in your home? Yes No

1a. If “Yes,” do you have high-speed Internet access? Yes No

2. Would you like reminders to renew your hunting license each year? Yes No

2a. If “Yes,” how would you like to be reminded? (Please check **all** that apply)

Text Email Social media

3. Would you like reminders about permit due dates? Yes No

3a. If “Yes,” how would you like to be reminded? (Please check **all** that apply)

Text Email Social media

4. Have you missed a permit application deadline because you did not know it was due? Yes No

5. Do you receive announcements from IDNR in your email?

Yes Not now, but I used to get them No

6. Did you sign up for email announcements from IDNR? Yes No

7. Would you use a free mobile-phone application provided by the IDNR to store an electronic copy (PDF) of permits and licenses instead of being required to have a paper copy?

Yes No

8. Would you use a smart phone application to report harvests if it were available? Yes No

9. Did you purchase any Illinois hunting licenses/permits online for the 2023-24 hunting season?

Yes No (If "No," please go to **Section 6**)

9a. Please indicate your satisfaction with the overall experience of purchasing Illinois hunting licenses/permits online? (Please circle **one** number that matches your response)

Very Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neither	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory
1	2	3	4	5

Section 6. Background Information. The following questions provide important information to help us understand more about the people who trap in Illinois. Please tell us about yourself by completing the following questions. All responses will be kept confidential.

1. Please give your age. Years

2. What is your county of residence? County

3. How many years have you been trapping in Illinois? Years

4. How old were you when you started trapping? Years

5. Did you purchase a furbearer license in another state during the 2023-24 season? Yes No

5a. If "Yes," please list which states:

6. Did you purchase an Illinois hunting license during 2023? Yes No

7. Have you ever mentored a new trapper? Yes No

8. Do you know of anyone who does not trap, but is interested in trapping? Yes No

8a. If "Yes," what are their ages?

9. In the **past 5 years** has your trapping effort for **any game species**: (Please check **one** response)

Increased Stayed the same Decreased

Comments:



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!
Please return this survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Appendix B



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Trapper,

Your name was selected from the list of 2022-23 Illinois trapping license purchasers. We are asking you to provide information about your trapping activities during the 2023-24 trapping season in Illinois.

Even if you were not successful or did not trap in Illinois during the 2023-24 seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you.

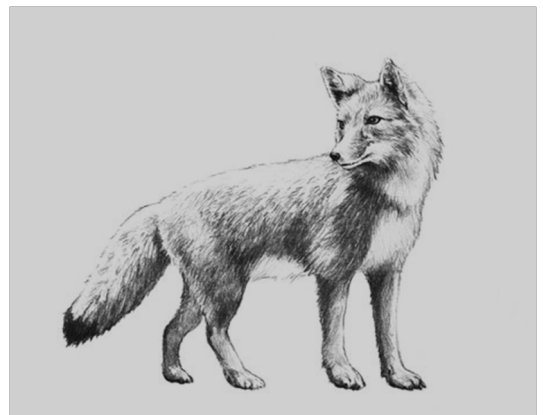
The information you and other selected trappers furnish our biologists is vital for proper furbearer management and allows us to safeguard furbearer populations while maximizing trapping opportunities. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.** Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage paid envelope provided.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121 or email us at laurenjs@illinois.edu. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



Appendix C



Dear Illinois Trapper,

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire about your trapping activities in Illinois. We have not yet received your response. **If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is very important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Trapper,

Your name was selected from the list of 2022-23 Illinois trapping license purchasers. We are asking you to provide information about your trapping activities during the 2023-24 trapping season in Illinois.

Even if you were not successful or did not trap in Illinois during the 2023-24 seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you.

The information you and other selected trappers furnish our biologists is vital for proper furbearer management and allows us to safeguard furbearer populations while maximizing trapping opportunities. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.** Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage paid envelope provided.

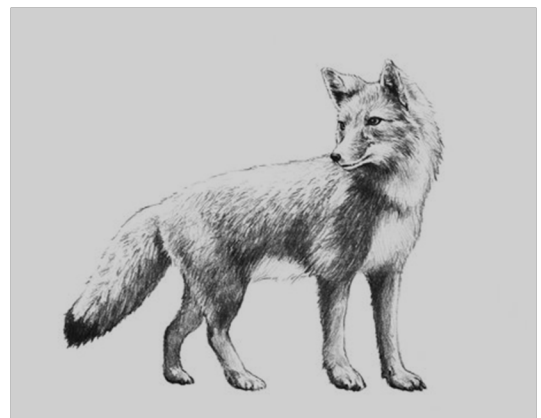
You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121 or email us at laurenjs@illinois.edu. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



Appendix E



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Trapper,

Your name was selected from the list of 2022 Illinois trapping license purchasers. We are asking you to provide information about your trapping activities during the 2023-24 trapping season in Illinois.

Even if you were not successful or did not trap in Illinois during the 2023-24 seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you.

The information you and other selected trappers furnish our biologists is vital for proper furbearer management and allows us to safeguard furbearer populations while maximizing trapping opportunities. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.** Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage paid envelope provided.

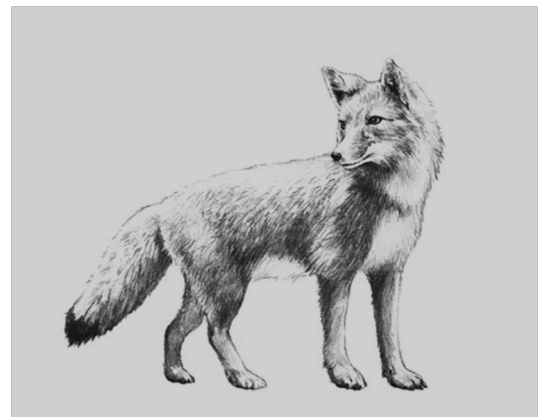
You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121 or email us at laurenjs@illinois.edu. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



Appendix F

FURBEARER TRAPPING SEASON DATES AND LIMITS						
SPECIES	ZONE	DATES	LIMIT	ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS		
Raccoon	Statewide	10 Nov 2023 - 15 Feb 2024	None			
Opossum						
Striped Skunk						
Weasel (Least and Long-tailed)						
Mink						
Muskrat						
Fox (Red and Gray)						
Coyote						
Badger				North	2 per person per season	
				South	1 per person per season	
Bobcat	See Bobcat Zone map	One by permit only	Must possess a Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit BEFORE attempting to harvest a bobcat. Must purchase Bobcat Registration Permit within 48 hours of taking a bobcat. Taking bobcats in closed zone is prohibited.			
Beaver	Statewide	10 Nov 2023 - 31 Mar 2024	None			
River Otter	Statewide	10 Nov 2023 - 31 Mar 2024	5 per person per season			
Woodchuck (Groundhog)	Statewide	1 Jun - 30 Sep 2023	None			

FURBEARER HUNTING SEASON DATES AND LIMITS			
SPECIES	DATES	HOURS	ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS
Raccoon Opossum Fox (Red and Gray) Bobcat	10 Nov 2023 - 15 Feb 2024	Open 24 hours and season begins ½ hour before sunrise on opening day and closes ½ hour after sunset on closing day. See Archery Restrictions	During Archery Deer Season, bow hunting hours for raccoon, opossum, fox, coyote, and striped skunk will be ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset
Woodchuck	1 Jun 2023 - 31 Mar 2024 Closed during first and second firearm deer seasons <u>in counties open to firearm deer hunting.</u>	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	Must possess a Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit BEFORE attempting to harvest a bobcat. Limit one bobcat per person per season. Must purchase Bobcat Registration Permit within 48 hours of harvesting a bobcat. Taking bobcats in a closed zone is prohibited.
Coyote	Year round Closed during the first and second firearm deer seasons <u>in counties open to firearm deer hunting.</u>	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. No time restriction 10 Nov 2023 - 15 Mar 2024	Hunters with unfilled firearm deer permits may harvest coyotes during firearm deer seasons with weapons legal for deer hunting ½ before sunrise to ½ after sunset.
Striped Skunk			There is no limit on foxes, coyote, opossum, raccoon, striped skunk and woodchuck.