



New Jersey Furbearer Management Newsletter Spring 2015

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
Upland Wildlife and Furbearer Project

TRAPPER AND HUNTER SURVEY

This year's survey was conducted in a mixed-mode format (i.e., an online version and the regular hard copy through the mail). If you provided a valid email address when purchasing your trapping license then you should have received an email with a link to the online survey. If you didn't provide an email address, then a hard copy was mailed to the address listed in the Division database. The survey window closed April 30.

A total 353 responses were received (142 by mail, 211 by internet), and it appears that although the number of licensed trappers is increasing, the percentage of trappers responding to the annual harvest survey is decreasing.

Survey results provide important information used to evaluate, plan and improve recreational trapping in NJ. They are also used to estimate harvests for furbearer species, evaluate population trends and calculate the value of trapping to the State's economy.

Proposed changes to Game Code

Proposed changes to the current Game Code pertaining to trapping include a requirement to report an incidental bobcat capture within 24 hours; increased opportunity to trap beaver, otter, mink, muskrat and nutria on pheasant stocked WMAs; addition of coyote harvest via the Automated Harvest Report System; inclusion of a relaxing lock on terrestrial cable restraints having a loop size greater than 4 inches; changes in weasel cable restraint regulations; addition of enclosed foothold traps as a legal trapping device; and use of an air gun to dispatch trapped animals, except muskrat.

Public comments on these and other proposed changes to the Game Code were accepted until May 15, 2015. Over 1500 comments were received from around the country regarding the addition of enclosed foothold traps. Council will likely vote on all amendments (except bear) at their June or July meeting.

About locks and cables

Modern cable restraints provide the trapper with great ability to control the welfare of animals captured. The discussion below concerns only live capture cable restraints set for coyote, fox, opossum, raccoon and skunk. As mentioned above, proposed changes to the Game Code include a requirement for all terrestrial cable restraints to be equipped with a relaxing lock. Relaxing lock is defined as "that component of a live capture cable restraint intended to create and maintain a loop; and that allows the loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut (for example, when the animal stops pulling)". Relaxing locks are *not required* when submerged underwater (i.e., when set for beaver and otter) or when set for mink, muskrat or weasel.

A relaxing lock will close down on the animal when they walk through the snare and are pulling on the cable, but it will release the pressure off the cable stops pulling. Relaxing locks tend to be less some newer locks, like the Micro Lock, can be just as non-relaxing locks. A relaxing lock should be used if live catch an animal; they greatly reduce fur damage by non-relaxing locks. Examples of relaxing locks washer locks, Micro Locks, Relax-a-locks. Many supply catalogs list whether the lock is relaxing or [snare locks](#) for examples.



once the animal aggressive, but aggressive as the you are trying to commonly caused are all of the trapping/snaring non-relaxing - see

The 2 most popular and commonly used cable types used for constructing cable restraints are the 1x19 (19 wires) and 7x7 (49 wires). Generally, the more wires a cable has, the more flexible it is (for example, a 1x19 cable 5/64" in diameter is stiffer than a 7x7 cable of the same diameter). While some trappers believe that stiffer cable may have greater killing potential, others disagree, and there is currently insufficient data to substantiate the importance of cable design on killing potential.

Killing potential is greater for neck-snared animals than for animals captured by the leg, foot, or torso; however, this is not to say that neck-capture prevents the humane live-restraint of animals, according to Best Management Practices data. It should also be noted that for a given amount of force, thinner cables will concentrate this force into a smaller area (i.e., thinner cables will have higher constriction pressure per unit area). For live-restrained animals, thinner cables may increase the risk of injury and trappers using cable restraints would do well to consider using thicker cable sizes to enhance the welfare of captured animals. The inclusion of a relaxing lock is also a good idea regardless of whether the Division adopts the proposed requirement; as such devices reduce a cable restraint's killing potential.



Did You Know? – How Embroidery Improved Your Trapping

“I have a dream - a dream that someday my trap will become the SPCA of the forests,” - Frank Conibear (1896-1988)

The Conibear family emigrated from England to Canada in 1899 eventually becoming the first independent white family to settle in the Northwest Territories Province. Frank established a trap-line on the Talston River which extended nearly 200 miles into the wilderness. A keen naturalist and greatly concerned about the welfare of the animals he sought to capture, he developed the body-gripping trap that has become synonymous with his name. Surprisingly, his inspiration came from a pair of his mother's embroidery hoops! His achievement in improving animal welfare was recognized with a certificate of Merit presented by the American Humane Association in 1961. To read more about this inventive trapper, see the full article in [Arctic Profiles](#).

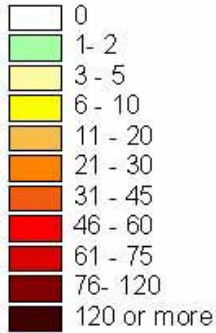


New Jersey Coyotes: Where are they?

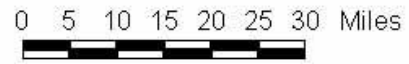
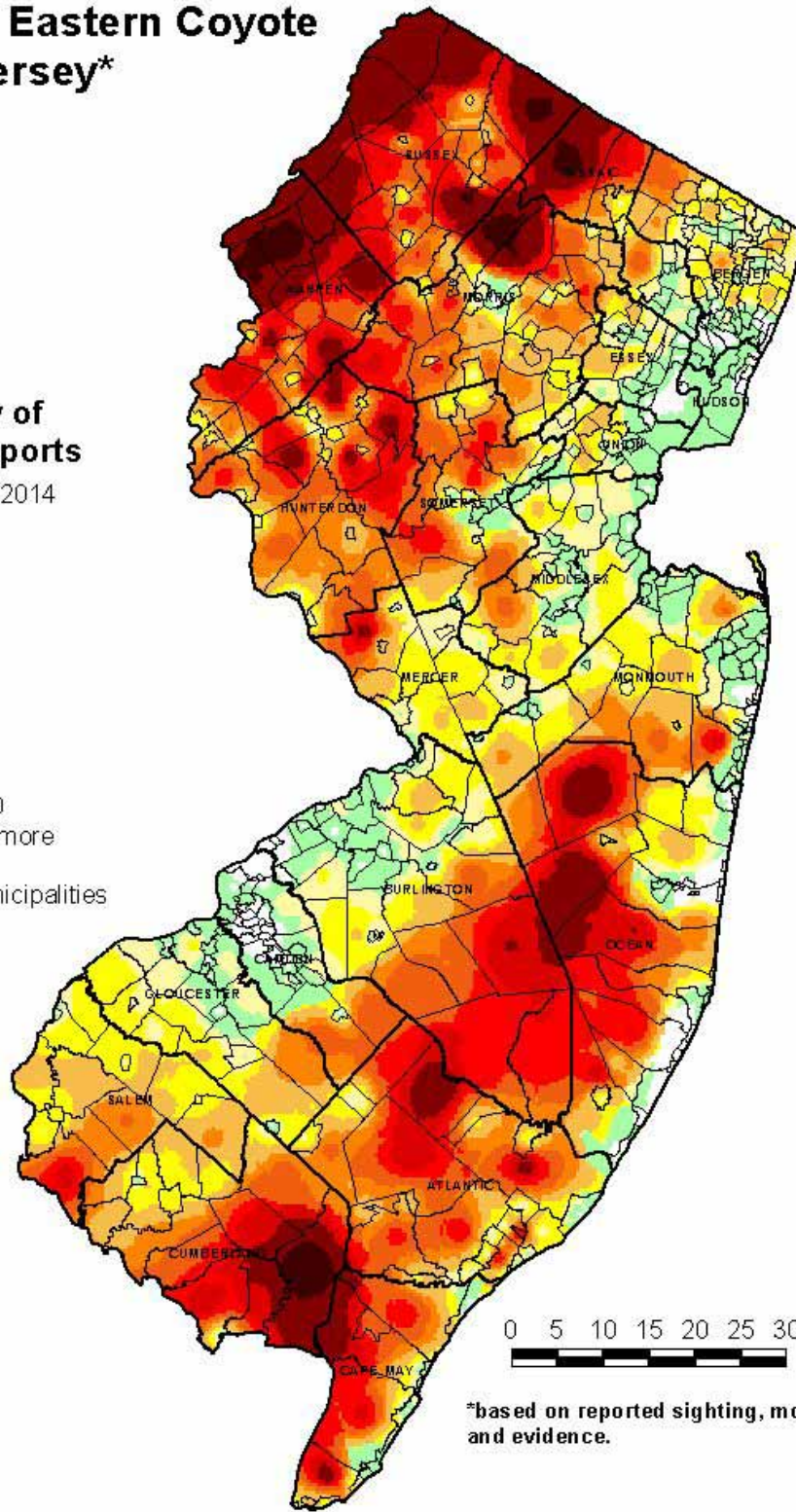
Range of Eastern Coyote in New Jersey*

Frequency of Coyote Reports

as of July 1, 2014



□ NJ Municipalities



*based on reported sighting, mortalities and evidence.

Municipalities with 75 coyote reports* or more

County	Municipality	Number of Reports
Cumberland	Maurice River Township	161
Warren	Blairstown Township	143
Morris	Jefferson Township	140
Sussex	Sparta Township	136
Passaic	West Milford Township	133
Sussex	Vernon Township	131
Warren	Knowlton Township	125
Morris	Rockaway Township	122
Ocean	Manchester Township	116
Sussex	Sandyston Township	112
Ocean	Jackson Township	112
Atlantic	Mullica Township	110
Warren	Hardwick Township**	109
Warren	Allamuchy Township	107
Hunterdon	Clinton Township	106
Sussex	Wantage Township	103
Warren	White Township	103
Sussex	Frankford Township	96
Hunterdon	Union Township	96
Cape May	Lower Township	94
Warren	Mansfield Township	92
Hunterdon	Lebanon Township	92
Hunterdon	Tewksbury Township	91
Sussex	Stillwater Township	89
Cape May	Dennis Township	89
Warren	Hope Township	88
Mercer	Hopewell Township	86
Atlantic	Galloway Township	86
Sussex	Montague Township	85
Warren	Washington Township	79
Ocean	Lacey Township	77
Sussex	Walpack Township	77
Atlantic	Hamilton Township	76
Burlington	Woodland Township	76

*total number of reports since 1939; includes mortalities, sighting and any other incidents.

**Includes Hardwick and Pahaquarry Townships.



Please Remember to Report Your Coyotes!

Coyotes harvested by any method must be reported to a New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife Regional Law Enforcement office within 24 hours.

Regional NJ Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Office phone numbers:

Northern Region Office 908-735-8240

Central Region Office 609-259-2120

Southern Region Office 856-629-0555

Summary of documented coyote mortalities in New Jersey from July 1, 1991 to June 30, 2014.

Fiscal Year	Car	Disease	Bow	Shotgun	ML	Rifle	Box Trap	Cable Restraint	Wildlife Control	Illegal Hunting	Unknown	Total
1992	13	0					0	4	0	0	1	18
1993	25	1					0	6	0	0	0	32
1994	20	1					0	3	0	6	0	30
1995	17	0					0	5	1	0	0	23
1996	17	1					0	2	0	0	1	21
1997	19	2	0	2	2		0	12	0	1	1	39
1998	26	2	1	8	2		2	5	0	0	1	47
1999	25	2	0	5	1		0	1	0	0	2	36
2000	26	1	0	5	2		0	6	0	0	0	40
2001	22	4	5	26	4		0	6	0	0	2	69
2002	27	1	3	16	4		0	8	1	1	0	61
2003	36	1	3	56	5		0	31	1	0	2	135
2004	22	1	12	56	10		0	59	0	0	2	162
2005	34	0	9	59	9		0	46	1	0	2	160
2006	28	1	18	61	12		0	85	2	0	1	208
2007	12	0	5	51	12		0	108	6	0	0	194
2008	15	0	11	44	5		0	90	2	0	0	167
2009	16	0	10	41	12		0	93	2	0	0	174
2010	19	0	9	65	22		0	69	4	0	2	190
2011	11	0	13	62	11		0	171	2	0	0	270
2012	13	0	17	57	13		0	162	8	0	0	271
2013	22	1	10	38	8		0	243	2	0	0	324
2014	10	0	17	52	7	4	0	194	7	0	0	291
2015	14	0	12	60	10	6	0	188	1	0	0	291

Note: 2015 data as of April 14, 2015



New Jersey Fishers

Please report any fisher captures-

- Call: 877-WARNDEP (877-927-6337)

There haven't been any fishers caught in snares or conibears by New Jersey trappers - at least not yet. Three road-killed fishers have been recovered by the Division - all from Sussex County (one each from Lafayette, Sandyston and Montague Townships). Several individuals have recorded photos of fisher on their trail cameras. All known trail cam photos also were from Sussex County.

Furbearer Facts: Canine Distemper

Canine distemper virus (CDV) is one of the most significant diseases of domestic and wild carnivores. It is caused by a highly contagious virus that can infect a variety of species, but is not known to infect humans. Unvaccinated domestic dogs are susceptible to canine distemper and the disease is often fatal, but vaccines provide protection and long-lasting immunity for vaccinated pets. The mortality rate for wildlife species contracting the disease is extremely high.

CDV can infect a wide range of domestic, wild and captive carnivores worldwide.



Canids affected include domestic dogs, coyotes, wolves, and foxes of which the gray fox is the most commonly affected species. Domestic and wild felines, including African lions and tigers have been found to be susceptible to CDV as have raccoons, members of the weasel family (badgers, ferrets, fishers, martens, mink, otters, skunks, weasels, and wolverines), javelinas, and marine mammals. Black-footed ferrets are highly susceptible to the disease, and CDV was a

major factor in the near loss of the species. While the disease may occur at any time of year, CDV is more common in domestic dogs in the winter, and is thought to be more common in juvenile wildlife in spring and summer.

The spread of the disease is caused by close contact between infected individuals, and so its prevalence is exacerbated by dense populations. The virus is usually transmitted via inhalation of infected respiratory droplets or direct contact with secretions from the mouth or eyes. The virus cannot survive very long in the environment, so infection from contact with a contaminated environment is rare, though it may occur. The virus is shed from the skin for up to 90 days after infection, and animals may also shed the virus while showing no clinical signs. At times, the disease can be spread through ingestion of contaminated material, such as feces and urine. CDV is known to cross the placenta of pregnant dogs to unborn offspring, and this is probably true for wildlife also.

Clinical signs may vary depending on the strain of the virus, the environment, the host species and age, among other variables. Some animals will show no outward signs of the disease, have a subclinical infection, and will clear the virus with no signs of illness. In general, juveniles are considered more susceptible (for example, the death rate from CDV in domestic mink kits is 90%) but any age black-footed ferrets and gray foxes are highly susceptible and survival is rare at any age. Clinically ill animals usually exhibit respiratory and intestinal signs including coughing, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, anorexia, exhibit depression, have poor body condition, and have thickened skin on the nose and/or footpads. Thick ocular and nasal discharge is a common clinical sign that often leads to crusting around the eyes and nose. The disease may also cause damage to the central nervous system leading to abnormal behavior, convulsions, paralysis, abnormal head and neck posture, and loss of coordination. Necropsy will often reveal signs of pneumonia including fluid and dark firm areas in the lungs. The spleen will often be enlarged.

A presumptive diagnosis of CDV can be reached based on clinical signs along with the microscopic examination of white blood cells from a blood smear or from ocular

discharge. Laboratory tests are necessary to make a definitive diagnosis. When animals are showing neurological signs, it is very important to differentiate CDV from rabies virus. There is no treatment for canine distemper, but surviving wild animals probably develop lifelong immunity.

Reducing population densities of susceptible wildlife such as raccoons, foxes, and coyotes can help prevent the spread of disease. Highly effective vaccines are available for domestic animals and there have been some successful attempts to vaccinate wildlife (black-footed ferret and southern sea otter), but the usefulness of vaccines for most wildlife is mostly unknown.

Fur Handling Tips

Freezing your fur

- Before freezing any furs make sure each pelt is dry and free of mud and dirt. It's best not to freeze wet pelts.
- When freezing pelts, spread them out in the freezer until they're solid rather than piling them on top of each other. You want them to freeze as fast as possible, to avoid spoilage and you don't want them to freeze together so you can get them apart without thawing.
- If you're going freeze your pelts for only a few weeks, freeze each pelt lying flat. This allows them to freeze faster and thaw faster. It's best to lay the pelts on newspaper or freezer paper until they're frozen so they won't stick together or to things in the freezer.
- If you're going to freeze your pelts for six weeks or longer to either sell or flesh and stretch the pelts later, it's better to roll each pelt tightly, starting with the nose, flesh inside and rolling toward the tail, then lay them in the freezer until each pelt is frozen solid. When the rolled pelts are frozen solid put each pelt into a plastic bag (bread bags are OK, but zip-lock freezer bags are best), then seal the bag and put it back into the freezer.
- When thawing the pelts, do it slowly over a period of a day or two in a cool, dry place such as a shed or garage. Take the pelts out of the plastic bags. Unroll the pelts as they thaw to speed the thawing process, but don't force things or you'll rip out guard hairs and degrade the fur.
- Remember, when you freeze green pelts, you always run the risk of losing value due to spoilage, freezer burn and breakage of guard hairs due to the pelts freezing to each other or the sides of the freezer.



Please report the capture of any bobcat.

- Call: 877-WARNDEP (877-927-6337)

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is the professional, environmental agency dedicated to protecting and managing the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.