

## **2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey**

### **Summary**

Mail questionnaires were sent to 916 trappers requesting harvest, recreational and socio-economic information for the 2008-09 trapping season. The mean age of licensed trappers sampled was 45.8 years. Resident trappers live in every county of the state and have a tendency to reside in rural areas. The majority of licensed NJ trappers (51.3 percent) are affiliated with one or both statewide trapping organizations. Trapping is a lifelong activity and respondents had a mean 3.0-26.8 years of prior trapping experience depending on the target species. Annual expenditures on trapping equipment and supplies during 2008-09 were estimated at \$249,210 (mean \$270 per trapper) and overall investment was estimated at \$2.49 million (mean \$2,697 per trapper). The number of active trappers was estimated at 575, with most trappers targeting raccoon (60.8 percent), muskrat (54.0 percent), red fox (40.4 percent) and beaver (24.8 percent). Survey results estimated that 28,089 muskrats, 4,921 raccoons, 2,504 red fox, 108 gray fox, 817 opossum, 180 skunks, 573 mink and 7 weasels were harvested during the 2008-09 season. According to mandatory coyote and beaver-otter check station reports, trappers harvested 523 beaver, 39 river otter and 93 coyote. The total estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 harvest was \$175,839 based on reported fur sales.

This survey was conducted as part of **Job III-B. Hunter and Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey**. This job is included within **Grant Number W-68-R-13, New Jersey Wildlife Research and Management: Project III. Upland Wildlife and Furbearers**.

### **Methods**

New Jersey instituted an electronic licensing system in June 2006. A listing of 2008 trapping license purchasers was obtained from the system vendor, Automated License Systems, Inc. (ALS). The 2008 file contained 916 unique records, including qualified Youth trappers licensed in previous years. Age and demographic analyses were completed on all 916 individuals.

A survey packet was mailed to 940 trappers by April 1, 2009 (including prior Youth Trappers and Farmers). Seventeen questionnaires (1.8 percent) were returned by the postal authorities as undeliverable and 923 were presumed delivered. Trapper group affiliation, prior experience and activity were based on the 401 (43.4 percent) responses that were correctly completed and returned by May 15, 2009.

Harvest and economic data analyses were based on the 250 survey respondents (27.1 percent) that actively participated in the 2008-09 trapping season.

### **Results**

#### **Age**

The age class of licensed trappers (as of 15 November 2008) is presented in Table 1. Ages ranged from 12 to 88 years, with a mean age of  $45.8 \pm 0.5$  SE years in 2008-09. The simple majority of the 2008-09 sample (15.3 percent) was between 45 and 49 years of age. Estimates of trapper numbers by age class for 2007-08, 2006-07 and 2005-06 are presented for comparison purposes.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

Table 1. Age class of licensed trappers sampled during the 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest Survey

Age Class	Licensed trappers (2008-09)	Percent of 2008-09 sample	Licensed trappers (2007-08)	Licensed trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of trappers (2005-06)
<16	57	6.2%	22	15	21
16 to 19	37	4.0%	21	14	7
20 to 24	23	2.5%	23	21	16
25 to 29	36	3.9%	33	29	30
30 to 34	52	5.7%	47	37	33
35 to 39	76	8.3%	57	58	68
40 to 44	101	11.0%	119	101	92
45 to 49	140	15.3%	126	105	100
50 to 54	112	12.2%	89	81	71
55 to 59	88	9.6%	92	77	57
60 to 64	99	10.8%	80	71	40
65+	95	10.4%	90	69	59
Unknown	0	0.0%	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>596</b>

### Gender

Information on trapper gender was obtained from the database provided by ALS. Nearly all (883 or 96.4 percent) of 2008 license holders were male and 26 (2.8 percent) were female. Based on prior survey results, an estimated 586 males and 24 females were licensed trappers in 2004, compared to 593 males and 17 females licensed in 2003.

### Occupation

Information on trapper occupation was not solicited during the current survey. Occupations for 77.1 percent of 2004-05 respondents could be categorized into three of the nine groupings: Trade (33.7 percent), Professional (22.9 percent) and Retired (20.5 percent). These three groups constituted 68.2 percent of the 2003-04 responses.

### Residency

The estimated number of resident trappers by county (2008 v. 2007, 2006 and 2005) is presented in Table 2. Nearly all (97.9 percent) of licensed trappers are New Jersey residents, while non-resident trappers resided in neighboring Delaware (1), New York (3) and Pennsylvania (15). Resident trappers live in every county of the state and have a tendency to reside in predominantly rural areas. The majority (54.2 percent) of New Jersey's resident trappers live in Cumberland, Salem and Sussex counties (32.1 percent) or Burlington, Gloucester and Warren Counties (22.1 percent).

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

Table 2. The number of licensed resident trappers in New Jersey, by county

County	Number of trappers (2008-09)	Percent of 2008-09 database	Number of trappers (2007-08)	Number of trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of trappers (2005-06)
Atlantic	41	4.6%	44	29	25
Bergen	27	3.0%	27	23	26
Burlington	77	8.6%	43	42	33
Camden	32	3.6%	26	20	20
Cape May	36	4.0%	39	30	26
Cumberland	105	11.7%	106	88	42
Essex	7	0.8%	3	5	5
Gloucester	59	6.6%	61	58	44
Hudson	3	0.3%	1	2	2
Hunterdon	40	4.5%	32	22	29
Mercer	22	2.5%	16	14	16
Middlesex	24	2.7%	29	23	23
Monmouth	33	3.7%	30	29	16
Morris	34	3.8%	44	29	38
Ocean	54	6.0%	40	24	20
Passaic	33	3.7%	26	28	17
Salem	94	10.5%	81	77	75
Somerset	17	1.9%	13	10	10
Sussex	89	9.9%	76	71	85
Union	8	0.9%	6	6	1
Warren	62	6.9%	47	43	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>587</b>

### Affiliation

New Jersey has two statewide trapping organizations, the New Jersey Fur Harvesters (NJFH) and the New Jersey Trappers Association (NJTA). Affiliation of respondents in either organization is presented in Table 3. A large percentage (47.4) of survey respondents is affiliated with one (18.7 percent NJTA, 18.7 percent NJFH) or both (11.0 percent) of these organizations. A small percentage (8.7) belong to a national trapping organization (e.g., Fur Takers of America, National Trappers Association). Most (48.6 percent) respondents were unaffiliated with any trapping organization. Based on survey results, an estimated 218 trappers were NJTA members, 218 trappers were NJFH members and 370 trappers were unaffiliated in 2008. The current reported membership of the NJTA is 230 (J. DeStephano, personal communication 12 July 2009) and 269 for the NJFH (J. Mounier, personal communication 13 July 2009). It should be noted that each organization lists members who may not be licensed to trap in New Jersey or family memberships that include more than one licensed trapper.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

Table 3. Affiliation in New Jersey trapping organizations

Affiliation	Estimated number of trappers (2008)	Estimated number of trappers (2007)	Estimated number of trappers (2006)	Estimated number of trappers (2005)
NJ Fur Harvesters	171	157	142	98
NJ Trappers Association	171	187	170	210
Both NJFH and NJTA	91	57	52	82
Unknown		5		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>390</b>
Unaffiliated in NJ	37	372	321	206
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>777</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>596</b>
No response	445	14	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>916 licensees</b>	<b>791 licensees</b>	<b>697 licensees</b>	<b>596 licensees</b>

### Prior Experience

Prior to the 1972-73 season, it was unlawful to trap any fur-bearing animal without possessing a Trapping and Firearm Hunting License. This requirement did not apply to occupant farmers and their immediate family members and to bona fide residents of the State under 14 years that required no license to trap according to state law. A separate Trapping License was provided for residents (age 12 and older) and non-residents (age 14 and older) in 1972. A previous year's license or a certificate showing successful completion in a trapper education course has been required since 1978. Junior Trapping Licenses were required for residents between the ages of 12 and 15, inclusive, from 1980 through 1999. Since 2000, trapping licenses are required for all persons age 16 year or older. Survey respondents indicated years of trapping experience prior to the 2008-09 season for each target species ranging from 0 to 74 years (Table 4).

Table 4. Years of experience of licensed trappers prior to the 2008-09 trapping season

Year of prior experience	Beaver	Coyote	Gray fox	Mink	Muskrat	Opossum	Raccoon	Red fox	River otter	Skunk	Weasel
0 years	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-5 years	44	55	16	28	48	28	97	74	11	7	2
6-10 years	14	5	0	7	14	2	14	9	5	0	0
11-15 years	9	0	2	2	14	0	12	5	5	2	0
16-20 years	7	0	5	2	16	2	16	7	2	0	0
21-25 years	2	0	2	0	2	5	5	2	2	0	0
26-30 years	9	2	5	9	18	5	21	16	0	0	0
31-35 years	5	5	5	2	21	5	12	11	0	0	0
36-40 years	0	0	0	2	16	0	12	5	0	0	0
41-45 years	2	0	2	0	14	2	5	5	0	0	0
46-50 years	0	0	0	5	21	2	2	0	0	2	0
+ 50 years	2	0	0	2	21	2	7	0	0	5	0
Unknown	46	32	34	32	106	57	150	99	23	23	5
<b>Mean Experience</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Est. Active Trappers</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>7</b>

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

### License Buyers

The Division's electronic licensing system, administered by Automated Licensing Systems (ALS), was fully functional since calendar year 2007. According to ALS, 894 trapping licenses were issued for calendar year 2008 compared to 799 trapping licenses for calendar year 2007. A breakdown of license sales is presented in Table 5.

*Table 5. Summary of trapping license sales, 2008*

License type	2008 Issuance	Percent of 2008 Total	2007 Issuance	Percent of 2007 Total
Non-resident	7	0.8%	5	0.6%
Resident	735	82.2%	689	86.2%
Resident (Disable Veteran)	104	11.6%	79	9.9%
Youth (< 16 years of age)	48	5.4%	26	3.3%
Total	894	100.0%	799	100.0%

### Active Trappers

Two hundred fifty respondents (62.3 percent) participated in trapping activities during the 122-day, 2008-09 season that began 15 November 2008 and concluded 15 March 2009. An estimated 575 trappers were active during the 2008-09 season.

### Trap Types

Steel-jawed leghold type traps, such as coil springs and long springs, have been prohibited in New Jersey since 1985. Box traps, Conibear™ traps, diver traps and body-gripping cable restraints are currently legal for use, and active trappers seldom utilize one trap type to the exclusion of all others. Conibear™ traps were used by the majority of active respondents (73.9 percent), followed by cable restraints (62.8 percent), box traps (46.4 percent) and diver traps (19.3 percent). Based on survey responses, there were an estimated 1,530 box, 9,446 Conibear™, 638 diver and 8,420 cable restraints in operation during 2007-08. Trap type usage information was not solicited in the 2008-09 survey instrument.

### Expenditures and Investment

Active survey respondents spent an average \$285 on items such as gasoline, food, clothing, trapping equipment and supplies (but excluding license and permit fees) during 2008-09, and had an average total investment of \$2,839. Inactive survey respondents spent an average \$107 during 2008-09, and had an average total investment of \$1,991. Total investment of all trappers is estimated at \$2.47 million. The NJDFW received an \$28,671 in revenue from license sales and \$3,425 in permit sales and application fees during calendar year 2008 (total revenue \$32,096).

### 2008-09 Fur Harvest

A summary of the 2008-09 fur harvest is presented in Table 6 and Table 7. An estimated 37,856 animals from eleven game species open for trapping were harvested. No nutrias were reported by survey respondents. Nearly all (93.8 percent) of the animals harvested consisted of muskrat (74.2 percent), raccoon (13.0 percent) and red fox (6.6 percent). The raw fur value of these four species represents 89.4 percent of the total raw fur value, estimated at \$175,848 at the local level. Information by species is also presented.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

Table 6. New Jersey fur harvest by species, 2008-09

Species	Number of 2008-9 active respondents	Estimated number of active trappers (2008-09)	Mean experience (years)	Mean days trapped (2008-09)	Estimated total trap-nights	Estimated harvest	Estimated value (US\$)
Beaver	62	143	12.0	17.3	13,396	523 <sup>1</sup>	7,508
Coyote	43	99	5.9	50.5	152,454	93 <sup>2</sup>	884
Gray fox	31	71	16.6	33.8	52,010	108	2,110
Mink	40	92	16.4	27.4	40,566	573	4,569
Muskrat	135	311	26.8	20.7	418,855	28,089	91,621
Nutria	0	Unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0
Opossum	48	110	16.0	33.6	44,723	817	1,501
Raccoon	152	350	15.1	29.3	161,281	4,921	38,001
Red fox	101	232	12.7	41.8	331,313	2,504	27,666
River otter	21	48	8.9	19.4	2,677	39 <sup>1</sup>	1,255
Skunk	17	39	25.4	43.5	20,900	180	703
Weasel	3	7	3.0	21.7	417	7	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>575</b>				<b>37,856</b>	<b>175,839</b>

<sup>1</sup> Harvest as reported at mandatory beaver and otter check stations

<sup>2</sup> Harvest as reported by mandatory call-in to regional Division Law Enforcement offices

Table 7. Estimated New Jersey fur harvest by county and species, 2008-09

County	Beaver <sup>1</sup>	Coyote <sup>2</sup>	Gray fox	Mink	Muskrat	Opossum	Raccoon	Red fox	River otter <sup>1</sup>	Skunk	Weasel
Atlantic	17	7	2		2,136		147	32	2		
Bergen		4	2	14	1,352	67	265	21		23	
Burlington	102	7	2	5	563	53	260	35	4	58	4
Camden	10	2			74		35			2	
Cape May		11		5	2,052		534	55	8		
Cumberland		16	7	7	9,512	246	638	41	7	7	
Essex					14						
Gloucester	23		2		3,026	81	447	35	4	2	
Hudson					213						
Hunterdon	14	2	9	69	146	12	274	925			
Mercer	15				81		60	94			
Middlesex	5				23	12	37	12		2	
Monmouth	47			28	167	18	184	104		14	
Morris	55	2		28	290	2	41	87	3		
Ocean	36	16	12		169	48	145	55	1		
Passaic	10	2		12	174	39	173	23			
Salem	14	4	5	5	5,626	23	334	25	4	9	
Somerset			16	39	587	69	550	537		44	1
Sussex	126	11	21	99	700	67	258	104	5	7	
Union											
Warren	49	12	23	262	944	69	391	412	1	12	1
Unknown			7	2	239	12	150	7			
<b>Total</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>28,089</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>4,921</b>	<b>2,504</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>1</sup> Harvest as reported at mandatory beaver and otter check stations

<sup>2</sup> Harvest as reported by mandatory call-in to regional Division Law Enforcement offices

## **2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey**

### **Changes in Trapping Season Lengths and Regulations**

No changes were enacted regarding season lengths or other regulations for the 2008-09 season.

### **Comments**

The 200809 survey did not ask recipients how many years of trapping experience they had prior to 2008-09, the days they trapped during the entire season or the landownership of lands trapped due to space and budgetary considerations. Answers to these questions have not varied greatly over recent years, and may be asked at periodic time in future surveys for comparison purposes.

### **Remarks**

Twenty-four other individuals applied for special beaver and/or otter permits, but were not on the list of 2008 license buyers provided by ALS. Therefore, the number of licensed trappers during the 2008-09 season was determined to be a minimum of 940.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

### **Beaver** (*Castor canadensis*)

The beaver trapping season was 26 December 2008 – 09 February 2009 (46 days), except on the 23 State Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where beaver trapping was permitted from 01 January – 09 February 2009 (40 days). A special, beaver trapping permit was required in addition to a trapping license. Two hundred fifty applications were received for the 186 available permits. Most permits were awarded via lottery (183), but only 159 permits were actually claimed and 8 permits were sold over-the-counter bringing the total issuance to 167. Ninety trappers (53.9 percent) were successful in harvesting at least one beaver and 29 trappers (17.4 percent) were successful in harvesting the permit bag limit of eight beavers. Successful trappers were required to present their beaver pelts for examination at regional check stations on Saturday, 21 February 2009. Permit holders harvested 479 beavers. Thirteen site-specific permits were issued and resulted in the harvest of 44 beavers, bringing the total 2008-09 harvest to 523. Additional information on the 2008-09 beaver harvest may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Performance Report W-68-R-13 Job III-C entitled Beaver Distribution and Population Trends and River Otter Harvest.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 62), there are 143 active beaver trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 12.0 years of experience trapping beaver. Active respondents trapped a mean 17.3 days using a mean 5.2 traps per day and 72 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. The majority of the harvest (85.1 percent) was taken by the 330 Conibear™ trap. Snares accounted for 10.7 percent of the harvest. Total trap-nights were estimated at 13,396 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 3.90/100 trap-nights (25.6 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single beaver). The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$14.36 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 beaver harvest was \$7,508 based on reported fur sales.

### **Coyote** (*Canis latrans*)

The eastern coyote trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). State regulations require successful trappers to report their harvest to a regional, Division Law Enforcement office within 24 hours. Ninety-three coyotes were reported by trappers in 2008-09. Additional information on coyotes may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Final Report W-68-R-10 Job III-D entitled Occurrence and Distribution of the Eastern Coyote in New Jersey.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 43), there are 99 active coyote trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 5.9 years experience trapping coyote. Active respondents trapped a mean 50.5 days using a mean 20.3 traps per day and 90 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 152,454 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 0.06/100 trap-nights (1,639.3 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single coyote). The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$9.50 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 coyote harvest was \$884 based on reported fur sales.

### **Gray fox** (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

The gray fox trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 31), there are 71 active gray fox trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 16.6 years experience



## **2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey**

trapping gray fox. Active respondents trapped a mean 33.8 days using a mean 15.9 traps per day and 79 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 52,010 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 0.21/100 trap-nights (480.8 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single gray fox). An estimated 108 gray fox were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$19.50 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 gray fox harvest was \$2,110 based on reported fur sales.

### **Mink (*Mustela vison*)**

The mink trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days) in the Northern Zone, 01 December 2008 – 15 March 2009 (106 days) in the Southern Zone, and 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days) on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases. Based on active survey respondents (n = 40), there are 92 active mink trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 16.4 years experience trapping mink. Active respondents trapped a mean 27.4 days using a mean 13.7 traps per day and 74 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 40,566 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 1.41/100 trap-nights (70.8 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single mink). An estimated 573 mink were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$7.97 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 mink harvest was \$4,569 based on reported fur sales.

### **Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)**

The muskrat trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days) in the Northern Zone, 01 December 2008 – 15 March 2009 (106 days) in the Southern Zone, and 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days) on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases. Based on active survey respondents (n = 135), there are 311 active muskrat trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 26.8 years experience trapping muskrat. Active respondents trapped a mean 20.7 days using a mean 45.5 traps per day and 86 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 418,855 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 6.71/100 trap-nights (14.9 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single muskrat). An estimated 28,089 muskrat were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$3.26 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 muskrat harvest was \$91,621 based on reported fur sales.

### **Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*)**

The Virginia opossum trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 48), there are 110 active opossum trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 16.0 years experience trapping opossum. Active respondents trapped a mean 33.6 days using a mean 9.4 traps per day and 93 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 44,723 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 1.83/100 trap-nights (54.7 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single opossum). An estimated 817 opossum were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$1.84 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 opossum harvest was \$1,501 based on reported fur sales.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

### **Raccoon** (*Procyon lotor*)

The raccoon trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 152), there are 350 active raccoon trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 15.1 years experience trapping raccoon. Active respondents trapped a mean 29.3 days using a mean 12.7 traps per day and 87 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 161,281 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 3.05/100 trap-nights (32.8 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single raccoon). An estimated 4,921 raccoons were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$7.72 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 raccoon harvest was \$38,001 based on reported fur sales.

### **Red fox** (*Vulpes vulpes*)

The red fox trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 101), there are 232 active red fox trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 12.7 years experience trapping red fox. Active respondents trapped a mean 41.8 days using a mean 20.0 traps per day and 82 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 331,313 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 0.76/100 trap-nights (132.3 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single red fox). An estimated 2,504 red fox were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$11.05 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 red fox harvest was \$27,666 based on reported fur sales.

### **River otter** (*Lontra canadensis*)

The river otter trapping season was 26 December 2008 – 09 February 2009 (46 days), except on the 23 State Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where otter trapping was permitted from 01 January – 09 February 2009 (40 days). A special, river otter trapping permit was required in addition to a trapping license. Two hundred ten applications were received and all 106 available permits were issued via the lottery. Thirty-nine trappers (36.8 percent) were successful in harvesting the season bag limit of one otter. Successful trappers were required to present their otter pelts for examination at regional check stations on Saturday, 21 February 2009. Additional information on the 2008-09 river otter harvest may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Performance Report W-68-R-13 Job III-C entitled Beaver Distribution and Population Trends and River Otter Harvest.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 21), there are 48 active otter trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 8.9 years experience trapping river otter. Active respondents trapped a mean 19.4 days using a mean 2.5 traps per day and 62 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. The majority of the harvest (69.2 percent) was taken by a 330 Conibear™. Snares accounted for 12.8 percent. Total trap-nights were estimated at 2,677 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 1.46/100 trap-nights (68.6 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single otter). The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$32.17 and the estimated value of the 2008-09 otter harvest was \$1,255 based on reported fur sales.

## 2008-09 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

### **Striped skunk** (*Mephitis mephitis*)

The striped skunk trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 17), there are 39 active skunk trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 25.4 years experience trapping skunk. Active respondents trapped a mean 43.5 days using a mean 9.3 traps per day and 94 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 20,900 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 0.86/100 trap-nights (116 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single skunk). An estimated 180 skunks were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$3.92 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 skunk harvest was \$703 based on reported fur sales.

### **Long-tail** (*Mustela frenata*) and **Short-tail** (*M. erminea*) **weasel**

The weasel trapping season was 15 November 2008 – 15 March 2009 (122 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2009 (75 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 3), there are seven active weasel trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 3.0 years experience trapping weasel. Active respondents trapped a mean 21.7 days using a mean 3.0 traps per day and 67 percent of respondents trapped within their resident county. Total trap-nights were estimated at 417 and the catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 1.66/100 trap-nights (60 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single weasel). An estimated 7 weasels were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$3.00 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2008-09 skunk harvest was \$21 based on reported fur sales.

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**ANNUAL NEW JERSEY TRAPPER SURVEY, 2008-09**

Reports are **DUE ON OR BEFORE APRIL 30**. Please submit your report **WHETHER OR NOT ANY TRAPPING WAS DONE OR ANY FUR WAS TAKEN**. This report is for animals taken **BY YOU ONLY** during the legal trapping season. If you have any questions, please call (609) 748-2058 or (908) 735-7040.

**NJ County of Residence** \_\_\_\_\_  
(If non-resident, provide State)

**Did you trap:** Yes No (Circle one)

**Please check if a member of:**

**Age as of 15 Nov 2008:** \_\_\_\_\_ years

**Did you take fur:** Yes No (Circle one)

NJFH \_\_\_\_\_  
NJTA \_\_\_\_\_  
Nat'l Org \_\_\_\_\_

In the table below, please indicate each **COUNTY** you trapped, **and:**

1) the number of each species taken; 2) the number of traps actually set for the species you caught; 3) the number of nights the traps were set  
For **each species** trapped for, please indicate the number of years you have trapped for species and the total amount received for raw pelts, if known.

SPECIES	COUNTY TRAPPED:			COUNTY TRAPPED:			COUNTY TRAPPED:			# YEARS	TOTAL \$
	HARVEST	# TRAPS	# NIGHTS	HARVEST	# TRAPS	# NIGHTS	HARVEST	# TRAPS	# NIGHTS		
BEAVER											\$
BOBCAT											\$
COYOTE											\$
FISHER											\$
GRAY FOX											\$
MINK											\$
MUSKRAT											\$
NUTRIA											\$
OPOSSUM											\$
RACCOON											\$
SKUNK											\$
WEASEL											\$

Excluding license & permit feed, how much would you estimate spending on trapping related activities this past season? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How much would you estimate you have invested in trapping equipment and supplies since you began trapping? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you, the survey is now complete. Please return the survey to: NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Trapper Survey, 26 Rt. 173 West, Hampton, NJ 08827. The Division values your input and the information you provide. If you would like a copy of the survey results, email a request to the Wildlife Biologist at [Andrew.Burnett@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:Andrew.Burnett@dep.state.nj.us) and type "Trapper Survey Results" in the Subject bar.

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