

New York *Furbearer Update*

Fall 2019

*Each dot on this map represents
a trapper education course
in 2018.*

*Would you like to see more
courses offered in your area?*

Consider Becoming a Trapper Education Instructor!

To find out more, visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9189.html or
call 1-888-HUNT-ED2 (1-888-486-8332) today!



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

During the 2018 season, trappers voluntarily submitted about 500 fisher carcasses across the state. Stomachs, livers, and female reproductive tracts were extracted for further analysis. Stomach contents are currently being identified by students at Finger Lakes Community College and livers are being stored at Cornell University to be analyzed for diseases and/or contaminants in the future. Reproductive tracts will be analyzed at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) to evaluate potential reproductive differences in fisher across the state.

DEC also partnered with staff from University of Rochester, Seneca Park Zoo, Cornell University, and SUNY-ESF to collect biological and DNA samples from nearly 70 carcasses of river otter, fisher, and bobcat. Most of the animals were roadkill or incidentally trapped and submitted to DEC by licensed trappers. Usable pelts were saved for educational use. Incidental captures should be reported to your regional DEC wildlife office.

Thank you to all the trappers who voluntarily submitted your carcasses and made this work possible! We appreciate your continued cooperation in helping us conduct this important research. Please keep in mind we will be collecting fisher carcasses again this year.



Report Your Furbearer Sightings!

DEC wants to learn more about the occurrence of various furbearers throughout New York such as bobcat, otter, fisher, marten, weasel, and snowshoe hare. Your observations help biologists understand the distribution and abundance of these elusive or inconspicuous mammals.

You can report your observations online and even include photos! Visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/30770.html or e-mail us at wildlife@dec.ny.gov for more information! Thanks for your help!

Attention Beaver Trappers

Would you like the opportunity to trap more beaver?

Many people who have beaver problems do not know someone who traps.

We are creating a list to connect landowners with trappers willing to remove beaver free-of-charge.

Your contact information will not be made public, but will be referred to landowners in your area who are looking for help.

Contact your Regional Wildlife Office to sign-up today!

DEC recently completed the first year of a fisher camera survey in central and western New York. Previously surveyed areas (2013-2015) were resurveyed to monitor the effects of the limited trapping season opened in 2016. New sites were added to help document range expansion. A total of 584 sites were surveyed across DEC Regions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Surveys consisted of a trail camera at a baited site to draw-in fisher from the surrounding area. Select sites also used hair snares to collect DNA samples for population size estimation.

Percent of Sites with Fisher Observation					
Statewide	R4	R6	R7	R8	R9
66%	66%	64%	78%	49%	69%

Surveys will continue in 2020 and 2021 and will require a large amount of beaver for bait. If anyone is willing to provide bait, please contact your closest regional office so arrangements can be made. We greatly appreciate any help in acquiring bait for these surveys!



Figure 1. Fisher detections: R4 (top) and R8 (bottom).

Fisher Tooth Collection

The 2018 season marked the third year of mandatory fisher tooth submission. Teeth were extracted and prepped by DEC wildlife staff and sent to Matson's Laboratory in Montana. Lab personnel count the cementum rings much the same way that you can count the growth rings of a tree. The result is age-at-harvest for each individual sampled.

Combining age, sex, and effort data with harvest data (pelt-sealing) increases our ability to monitor populations, detect changes, and continue providing opportunity for the harvest and enjoyment of fisher for generations to come. We thank you for your assistance and support with collecting these valuable data. We could not do it without you!

Fisher Age Distribution - 2017

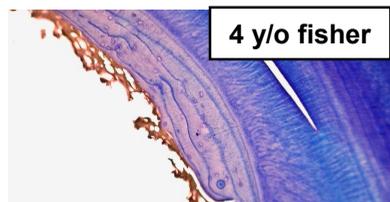
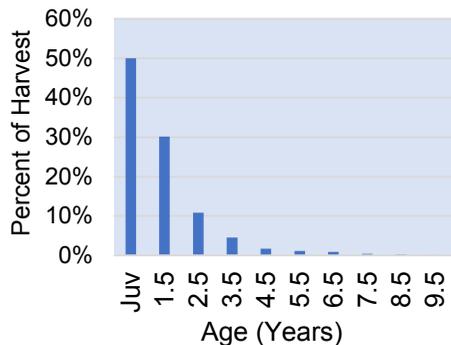


Photo courtesy of Matson's Laboratory

Trapping plays an important role in wildlife management. Many people have not been exposed to trapping. Unfortunately, trapping practices are commonly misunderstood and perceived to be cruel and inhumane. Use the key messages below to effectively communicate the role of regulated trapping.

1. Regulated trapping does not cause wildlife to become threatened or endangered.
2. Trapping is managed through scientifically-based regulations that are strictly enforced by trained conservation enforcement officers.
3. State wildlife agencies continually review and develop rules, regulations, education programs, and capture methods that consider animal welfare.
4. Regulated trapping provides many benefits which may include:
 - Reducing wildlife damage to crops and property;
 - Reducing threats to human health and safety.
5. Most of the animal can be used – for clothing, food, and other useful products.



Tips to Avoid Incidental Pet Captures

There are many ways you can prevent non-target captures if you choose wisely!

Location! Location! Location!

Do: Choose a location obstructed by an overhanging bank, log, etc. that will restrict a dog but not the target animal.

Do not: Set where pet sign is present.

Do not: Trap near houses, roads and hiking trails if avoidable.

Trap Type

Do: Use BMP recommended traps for target animals.

Do: Use foot-encapsulating traps for targeting raccoons whenever possible.

Do: Use cage traps when appropriate.



Set Type

Do: Use elevated (4ft+) or restricted entry type sets.

Do: Use blind sets with no bait or lure.

Bait and Lure

Do: Use sweet type baits and lures.

Do: Keep bait covered from all angles.

Do not: Use bait with pet food.