

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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MICHIGAN FURBEARER CATCH BY TRAPPERS, 1980-81*

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This report presents estimates of trapper catch of some of Michigan's important furbearers for the 1980-81 trapping seasons. The estimates are generated from responses to mail survey questionnaires sent to a randomly selected sample of holders of trapping licenses and senior hunting licenses, both of which confer authority to trap.

Presented for comparison are the results of similar mail surveys conducted after the 1969-70 and 1970-71 seasons. No mail surveys were conducted or estimates available during the nine year interim period because of rapidly increasing numbers of sportsman's license holders who were authorized to trap during that time period. Since only a very small percentage of them trapped, a mail surveys estimating system was not practical. Somewhat of a similar problem exists at the present time with senior hunting license holders, however, no rapid increase in their numbers is expected.

The species included in this report are the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethica*), mink (*Mustela vison*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), weasels (*Mustela sp.*), red fox (*Vulpes fulva*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). Estimates for beaver (*Castor canadensis*), river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), and bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), are available from mandatory registration counts and can be obtained by writing directly to the Furbearer Management Specialist, Wildlife Division, Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909.

MAIL SURVEY DATA

Survey of Trapping License Buyers

	1969-70	1970-71	1980-81
Questionnaires sent	768	638	1,086
Questionnaires returned	719	595	865
Non-deliverable	11	7	42
Non-response	38	36	179
Percent of delivered questionnaires returned	94%	93%	83%
Trapping licenses sold	7,530	6,161	15,208
Percent of licensees not trapping for included species	11%	10%	7%
Estimated trappers	6,680	5,560	14,120

Survey of Sportsman's License Buyers (1970-71)

Survey of Senior Hunting License Buyers (1980-81)

Questionnaires sent	2,791	664
Questionnaires returned	2,423	591
Non-deliverable	49	14
Non-response	319	59
Percent of delivered questionnaires returned	87%	91%
Sportsman's or Senior Hunting licenses sold	15,170	56,199
Percent of licensees not trapping for included species	89%	97%
Estimated trappers	1,620	1,520

*A contribution of Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, Michigan Project W-124-R.

1980-81 FURBEARER CATCH BY TRAPPERS
WITH COMPARISONS TO 1969-70 and 1970-71 SEASONS

	Number of Trappers			Number of Animals Trapped			Average Take Per Trapper		
	1969-70	1970-71	1980-81	1969-70	1970-71	1980-81	1969-70	1970-71	1980-81
Muskrat									
Region 1	1,000	1,050	2,830	49,120	49,860	144,610	49.1	47.5	51.1
Region 2	880	1,190	3,150	64,490	66,260	136,780	73.3	55.7	43.4
Region 3	4,260	4,000	8,070	292,930	232,280	414,750	68.8	58.1	51.4
TOTAL	6,140	6,240	14,050	406,540	348,400	696,140	66.2	55.8	49.5
Mink									
Region 1	660	690	2,360	5,340	3,490	6,070	8.1	5.1	2.6
Region 2	510	560	2,150	1,830	3,450	10,180	3.6	6.2	4.7
Region 3	1,210	1,330	3,640	3,360	3,110	6,730	2.8	2.3	1.8
TOTAL	2,380	2,580	8,150	10,530	10,050	22,980	4.4	3.9	2.8
Raccoon									
Region 1	430	450	1,480	2,160	1,470	7,390	5.0	3.3	5.0
Region 2	590	570	2,590	5,210	3,420	20,240	8.8	6.0	7.8
Region 3	1,760	1,820	5,360	11,650	8,460	32,770	6.6	4.6	6.1
TOTAL	2,780	2,840	9,430	19,020	13,350	60,400	6.8	4.7	6.4
Opossum									
Region 1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Region 2	160	190	480	680	1,110	3,030	4.3	5.8	6.3
Region 3	1,220	1,440	2,780	9,170	7,580	20,230	7.5	5.3	7.2
TOTAL	1,380	1,630	3,300	9,850	8,690	23,440	7.1	5.3	7.1
Skunk									
Region 1	170	180	420	1,080	2,040	1,750	6.4	11.3	4.2
Region 2	250	220	1,170	1,300	2,220	13,450	5.2	10.1	11.5
Region 3	490	700	1,850	1,400	2,090	10,020	2.9	3.0	5.4
TOTAL	910	1,100	3,440	3,780	6,350	25,220	4.2	5.8	7.3
Weasels									
Region 1	170	150	230	1,070	470	720	6.3	3.1	3.1
Region 2	90	110	210	220	160	300	2.4	1.5	1.4
Region 3	350	220	260	940	350	460	2.7	1.6	1.8
TOTAL	610	480	700	2,230	980	1,480	3.7	2.0	2.1
Red Fox									
Region 1			760			1,550			2.0
Region 2			1,580			7,220			4.6
Region 3			3,600			16,160			4.5
TOTAL			5,940			24,930			4.2
Coyote									
Region 1			990			2,340			2.4
Region 2			480			510			1.1
Region 3			*			*			*
TOTAL			1,490			2,870			1.9

*Indicates a Region where too few of a species are trapped for reliable estimates. Estimates are included in statewide totals.