

Fur-bearer Management Registration Information

Mandatory registration of fisher, lynx and wolverine has been in effect since 1989; river otter was added in 1996 and bobcat in 2006. The information gained allows annual harvest comparisons to be made immediately after the trapping season so required changes in harvest quotas can be made for the next season. The following table provides a comparison of the number of fur-bearers registered during past seasons. More specific information can be obtained from regional Fish and Wildlife Division Area offices (see page 5).

FUR REGISTRATION				
SPECIES	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Lynx	766	1046	1293	1142
Fisher	1198	1337	1334	983
Wolverine	28	37	45	47
Otter	99	183	216	111
Total	2091	2603	2888	2283

Natural Areas and Ecological Reserves

In Alberta, special parcels of public land, such as natural areas and ecological reserves, have been set aside for conservation purposes. Trapping is prohibited within ecological reserves. For information about ecological reserves and natural areas, contact Parks and Protected Areas Division, Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture in Edmonton at 780-427-3582 (toll-free 1-866-427-3582).

Fur Handlers

A person may skin and prepare another person's furs for market, provided the handler maintains on premises records for inspection purposes. These records no longer have to be submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Division. If you have specific questions contact a Fish and Wildlife Division District office (see page 5).

Fisher Head and Wolverine Carcass Collection Program

Mandatory registration of certain pelts of fur-bearers provides valuable information to wildlife managers.

However, there is a need for additional biological information on **fisher and wolverine** to determine the age structure, reproductive capability and general health of these populations.

Fish and Wildlife Division district offices (see page 5) will issue a direct payment of \$5.00 to trappers for each fisher head and wolverine carcass submitted. Each item should be individually labelled with the date of harvest, the trapper's name, and the RFMA number. **In order to provide the greatest benefit, carcasses must be submitted by March 10 of each year.** Your participation in these programs is encouraged and appreciated. The information trappers provide allows quotas to be more accurately set, thus ensuring sustainability of the resource.

Alberta 2010 - 2011 Fur Production Based on Export Permits (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011)

Species	Number of Pelts	Mean Price per Pelt	Total \$ Value
Badger	358	35.76	12,802.08
Beaver	9,743	15.44	150,431.92
Black Bear	70	105.96	7,417.20
Bobcat	14	368.25	5,155.50
Coyote	14,970	47.57	712,122.90
Fisher	1,251	61.02	76,336.02
Fox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver 18 • Cross 28 • Red 920 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A N/A 25.52 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A N/A 23,019.04
Lynx	1,491	116.39	173,537.49
Marten	9,402	73.58	691,799.16
Mink	564	17.12	9,655.68
Muskrat	6,411	5.49	35,196.39
Otter	284	65.98	18,738.32
Raccoon	85	11.01	935.85
Skunk	14	14.22	59.08
Squirrel	9,601	1.16	11,137.16
Weasel (Ermine)	3,822	3.09	11,809.98
Wolf	430	108.06	46,465.80
Wolverine	51	219.41	11,189.91
Total			1,997,809.48

N/A - Price not available

Number of Registered Trappers 1552

Number of Resident Trappers 702

During the 2010 - 11 trapping season, trappers continued to support the ongoing monitoring of the fisher population through fisher carcass collection. The fisher carcass collection program resulted in the analysis of 355 samples from across the province. There were 983 fisher pelts registered this past trapping season, which means approximately 36% of the harvest was submitted for analysis.

From the samples submitted there were 92 adult females and 72 adult males and 97 juvenile females and 94 juvenile males. The

2010-11 season yielded a juvenile to adult female ratio of 2.07 :1. This ratio indicates a lower reproduction rate than the target of 3:1, juveniles to females. As a result of the fisher carcass collection program analysis, there will be no change to the fisher quotas for the 2011-12 trapping season.

The continued support of Alberta trappers is essential so that a meaningful analysis can be completed annually for the provincial fisher population, ensuring the continuation of the resource for future years.

Primeness of Pelts

Furs that are at their peak in quality (their prime) offer trappers the greatest financial return. Successful trappers concentrate their efforts so that they collect most of their furs when pelts are in their prime.

The pelt of a fur-bearing animal is in its prime when the underfur is dense, deep and well covered by the longer guard hair. The leather side should be clear and white or slightly blue, and pliable. Each species reaches its prime during a short period of the season. The grey shading in the following table shows the approximate time of the year when each species is in its prime.

Species	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Badger						
Beaver						
Bobcat						
Coyote						
Fisher						
Fox (Red/Arctic)						
Lynx						
Marten						
Mink						
Muskrat						
Otter						
Squirrel						
Weasel						
Wolf						
Wolverine						

Trapping and Cougar Management

In recent years, the number of cougars accidentally killed by trappers in Alberta has increased. Cougars are carefully managed as a hunted game animal Alberta, and no trapping season exists. In areas where incidental mortality of cougars is high, hunting quotas for cougars may need to be reduced to prevent population declines. As important stewards of Alberta's wildlife resources, trappers should take precautions to limit the number of cougars and other non-target species that are accidentally captured.

Most cougars are captured in snares set for wolves or coyotes, or in large conibears set for lynx, bobcats, or wolverines. Cougars are not trap-shy and are much more easily captured than wary species such as wolves. Therefore, trappers should take steps to reduce the chance that a cougar will find their traps. Avoid placing snares or large conibears in areas where ungulates are wintering. When possible, place your sets in open areas where cougars will feel uncomfortable. Keep snares and traps well away (>200 m) from baits; use canid-specific gland lures, urine, and

scats to lure wolves and coyotes to your sets. If you see cougar tracks near your sets, close the snares or pull the traps until the cougar has moved on. Consider moving your sets to a new area if you're seeing regular cougar activity. By taking these few simple precautions, trappers can reduce the chance that they will accidentally catch a cougar, leaving more of these animals for enjoyment by all Albertans. For more information on cougars and cougar management in Alberta, download the Management Plan for Cougars in Alberta at:

www.srd.alberta.ca/FishWildlife/WildlifeManagement/

Reminder: All cougar harvests (even accidental) must be registered at a Fish and Wildlife Division District office immediately!

Accurate harvest information helps in managing the fur-bearer resource, and ultimately benefits the trapping industry. Your full cooperation is both required and appreciated.