



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY



Human Dimensions Research Program Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET Illinois Trapper Survey: 2006-2007 Season

Objective: To survey furbearer (11 species of mammals) trappers annually to determine activities, harvest, characteristics, and opinions in Illinois.

Methods: 1,172 Illinois resident trapping license purchasers (2006-2007 series) were sent mail-back questionnaires in March-May 2007. We received 859 useable responses for a 73% return rate.

Highlights of results: Key findings of this survey were as follows:

- Resident trapping license sales increased 52% from 2005-2006 (2,414 licenses) to 2006-2007 (3,660 licenses).
- Of the 859 license purchasers in our sample, 671 (78%) set traps for furbearers in Illinois during the 2006-2007 season. The active trappers set an average of 25 traps for an average of 28 days/nights during the 2006-2007 season.
- Participation in trapping was highest for raccoon (2,548 estimated trappers), followed by muskrat (1,670 trappers), opossum (1,619 trappers), and beaver (1,214 trappers).
- An estimated 93,819 raccoon were taken by trappers in Illinois in 2006-2007. In descending order, trappers took an estimated 66,297 muskrats, 22,617 opossum, 11,104 beaver, 6,553 coyotes, 4,768 striped skunks, and 3,784 mink, in 2006-2007.
- Estimated total trapper harvest (all species combined) increased from 92,835 furbearers in 2005-2006 to 210,395 furbearers in 2006-2007, a 127% increase.
- The pelts from 183,619 (87%) of the furbearers harvested in 2006-2007 were sold.
- An estimated 1,197 licensed trappers hunted furbearers with firearms and/or dogs in 2006-2007. Total harvest by hunting trappers was estimated at 23,730 furbearers, primarily raccoon (17,969) and coyotes (4,687).
- Thirteen trappers reported trapping or shooting gray fox, and 100 trappers saw gray fox, in a total of 59 counties, in 2006-2007.
- River otter were seen by 162 trappers, and otter sign was observed by 197 trappers, in a total of 84 counties, in 2006-2007.
- Bobcats were seen by 102 trappers, and bobcat sign was observed by 123 trappers, in a total of 69 counties, in 2006-2007.

For more information:

For full text of this and other Human Dimensions reports and surveys, please go to
www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwpe/hd/