New Jersey Furbearer Management Newsletter

Fall 2017

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Important Upcoming Dates:

- **Trapper Education courses are scheduled. Call 877-2-HUNT NJ for registration and further information.**
  October 14 and 15, Tuckahoe WMA (Lenape Section) in Atlantic County
  October 21 and 22, Hackettstown Fish Hatchery in Warren County
  October 26 and 29, Joint Base MDL in Burlington County
  Register online at www.nj.wildlifelicense.com
  You must attend **both** days of the two-day class!
- **October 1-31 – Application period for beaver and otter permits**
- **Sunday October 1 – NJ Trappers Association annual convention at Space Farms, Beemerville (Sussex Co.)**
- **Sunday November 5 – NJ Fur Harvesters annual convention at Atsion Recreation Area, Shamong (Burlington Co.)**
- **Week of November 6 – Beaver/Otter permit notification (claim your permit by December 4)**
- **Bear, Turkey and Deer Permits - on sale since September 11.**

Remember:

- To trap or use cable restraints a person must have first passed a Fish and Wildlife-approved trapper education course which includes use of cable restraints and carry the certificate while trapping.
- A person must be at least 12 years of age to obtain a trapping license.
- **TAKE A KID TRAPPING!**

In This Issue:

Game Code changes in effect for 2017-18

- The definition of relaxing lock was change to "that component of a live-capture cable restraint intended to create and maintain a loop; and that stops tightening when the captured animal stops pulling against the cable restraint. Cam-locks and spring assisted locking systems are prohibited".
- On Pheasant/Quail designated Wildlife Management Areas:
    - The delayed opening (January 1) for mink, muskrat and nutria has been eliminated and will begin either November 15 (Northern Zone) or December 1 (Southern Zone).
    - Cage traps and enclosed foothold traps may be set for terrestrial furbearers beginning November 15. *Note*: cable restraints **may not** be set on Designated Areas until January 1.
- The number of river otter trapping permits was increased from 115 to 146. *Note*: only some zones received a permit quota increase. See the Beaver and Otter Supplement on the Division's website for specifics.
- Youth trappers aged 12-14 years may use a .22 caliber rifle to dispatch furbearers when accompanied by a licensed adult trapper at least 21 years of age. *Note*: a valid rifle permit is required for both the youth and the adult trapper when using a .22 rifle. Rifle permits are not required when using an air gun to dispatch.
- The trap check time has been amended from "once in every 24 hours" to "once per calendar day" in **tidal waters only**. *Note*: terrestrial and non-tidal water sets must be checked once in every 24 hours.

Fur Market Forecast

Russia is the key to fur market recovery, but may have reservations about engaging in trade with the United States. The economic sanctions imposed against Russia weakens the ruble which weakens their currency and affects their purchasing power and ability to buy North American fur. The culture of wearing fur is still very much alive in Russia but when Russians do not buy fur, the economies of China and Greece, who process and manufacture wild fur for Russia, slow down. Without Russia buying fur recovery of the fur market will take more time. It's a vicious circular cycle that doesn't help trappers anywhere.

I know this is very much a repeat of what we've been hearing for the past two years and it isn't going to make many trappers very happy. However, what was important last year still holds for this year - the New Jersey trapper targeting raccoon, foxes, opossum, muskrat, mink, beaver or otter can expect a tough outlook for fur prices for 2017-18.

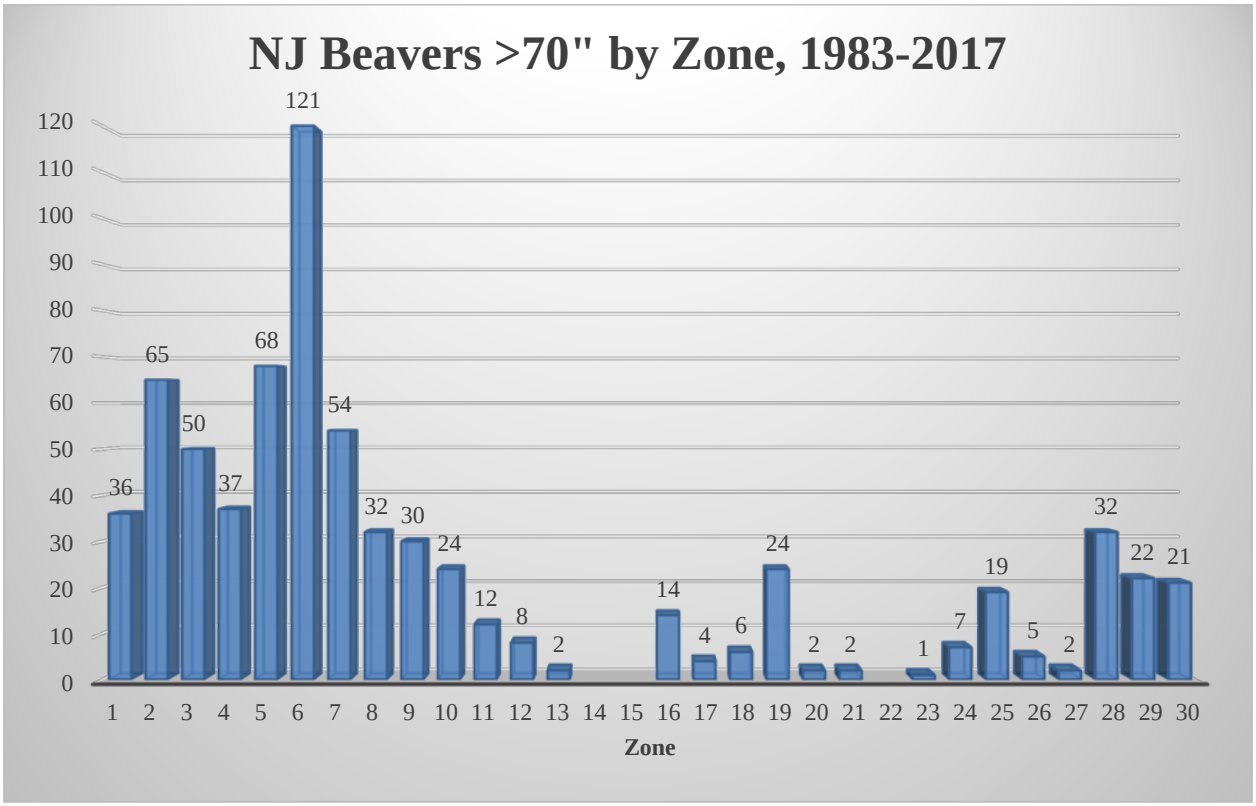
What has been said on these pages for the last few years still stands - in difficult times such as these, only the best furs sell. Low grade and unprimed fur will be near worthless and a waste of your time and effort to process it. Wait until fur is fully prime before even thinking about hanging a cable restraint, setting a body grip or opening the door on a cage trap. Improve your fur handling techniques to get the most return on your hard work!

New Jersey's Biggest Beavers

Often, we're asked where the biggest New Jersey beavers were trapped and when. Using the database of 15,213 beavers trapped from the 1970-71 through the 2016-17 seasons we looked to see how big our beavers were and where the biggest came from. We found 776 records of beaver pelts measuring 70 inches or larger (length + width of the stretched pelt), with a few more than 80 inches – the largest at a whopping 90 inches!

MEASUREMENT (IN.)	APPROXIMATE AGE	SIZE	# BEAVER	PERCENT OF SAMPLE
0-52"	Kits – 24 months	Small	~ 4,415	29.0
53-59"	24-36 months	Medium	~ 2,436	16.0
60-64"	Adult	Large	3,120	20.5
65-70"		Blanket	2,125	14.0
over 70"		Super blanket	776	5.1
	Unknown	???	2,341	15.4
			15,213	100.0

Ninety percent of these big beaver (700) have been harvested since Management Zones were instituted in Fiscal Year 1983. As the graph below illustrates, most of these were taken in the State's northern zones.



Management Zone 6 not only produces the greatest number of Super Blanket beaver, but has also produced the largest beaver we've ever measured! In fact, 80 percent of the biggest 15 beaver have been taken in Zone 6 (see the table on the next page).

New Jersey's 15 Biggest Beavers

YEAR HARVESTED	STREAM	TOWNSHIP	COUNTY	ZONE	PELTSIZE (inches)
1995	WOLF LAKE	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**90**
1992	LUBBERS RUN	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**86**
1993	LUBBERS RUN	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**85**
2001	S BRANCH	WASHINGTON	MORRIS	6	**85**
1993	LUBBERS RUN	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**84**
1997		ROXBURY	MORRIS	6	**84**
2001	MUSCONETCONG	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**84**
1995	WOLF LAKE	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**83**
2007	SILVER LAKE	HARDYSTON	SUSSEX	2	**83**
2007	GARDNERS POND	ANDOVER	SUSSEX	5	**83**
2002	LITTLE	MONTAGUE	SUSSEX	1	**82**
1997		ROXBURY	MORRIS	6	**82**
1995	MUSCONETCONG	BYRAM	SUSSEX	6	**82**
1997	SAND PIT	MT OLIVE	MORRIS	6	**81**
1997	SAND PIT	MT OLIVE	MORRIS	6	**81**

Furbearer Facts: The Raccoon Roundworm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*)

Raccoon roundworm, *(Baylisascaris procyonis)* is a common large roundworm (aka, nematode) found in the small intestinal tract of raccoons, and probably occurs wherever raccoons live. Adult worms measure 15 to 20 cm (6 to nearly 8 inches) in length and 1 cm (.39 inches) in width. They are tan-white in color, cylindrical and taper at both ends. Prevalence of infection may range from very low (<4%) to nearly 100% of all raccoons in a population. The spread of *B. procyonis* usually occurs through ingestion of either an infected intermediate host or roundworm eggs

When an intermediate host (mice, rats, woodchucks, squirrels, rabbits, and birds) is involved, eggs that were swallowed incidentally are ingested, the eggs hatch, and the larvae penetrate the intestines and migrate through the liver and lungs. Then those larvae enter the pulmonary veins, pass into the left side of the heart and are distributed throughout the body. Areas affected are especially the head, neck and/or thoracic areas. The larvae become encysted in small, fibrous nodules in the affected tissue. The affected intermediate host animal will initially exhibit a head tilt and an inability to walk and/or climb properly. As the clinical illness progresses the animal may lose its fear of humans, circle, roll on the ground, fall over, lay on its side and paddle its feet, become totally incapacitated, become comatose, and die. If the intermediate host is eaten by a raccoon, the encysted larvae are released and migrate to the small intestine where they develop into the adult stage.

Infected raccoons shed millions of *Baylisascaris* eggs daily in their feces, and, under the right temperatures and moist conditions, a larva will develop within an egg and can infect an animal in 11-14 days. Raccoons, especially young ones, become infected directly by ingestion of these eggs. This may occur via the mother raccoon's egg-contaminated body or from the den soil or vegetation. Unlike intermediate hosts, infected raccoons may be no clinical or pathological signs observed, but can be confirmed by recovering and identifying the adult worms (postmortem) or by examination of fecal samples to identify characteristic eggs in the feces. Larvae and associated lesions in the brain, eyes, and other tissues can be observed on microscopic examination.

Controlling infections of this parasite requires minimizing contact with areas inhabited by raccoons. Fecal contamination of an area can result in millions of eggs being deposited and therefore available for infection. These eggs are extremely resistant to environmental conditions, being able to survive for several years. Any area contaminated with raccoon feces should be cleaned and the feces, as well as any contaminated feed, straw or hay, burned. Children and pets should be kept away from these contaminated areas until a thorough cleaning has occurred. There are currently no drugs that can effectively kill the migrating larvae in the body. Laser surgery has been successfully performed to kill larvae present in the retina of the eye but the damage caused by the migrating larvae is permanent. Treatment with steroids in intermediate hosts is mainly supportive and is designed to decrease the inflammation.

More than 90 species of wild and domesticated animals and birds have been identified as infected with *B. procyonis* larvae. Fatal or severe central nervous system disorders have been documented for mice, Allegany woodrats, gray and fox squirrels, ground squirrels, woodchucks, nutria, beavers, domestic quail, partridges, pigeons, exotic turkeys, emus, captive cockatiels, captive prairie dogs, foxes, armadillos and porcupines. While infection of individuals may be significant, infection usually has a minimal impact on animal populations. However, some (such as the Allegany woodrat, *Neotoma magister*) are particularly susceptible to infection and this parasite has been identified as the main cause for its extreme declines in New Jersey and elsewhere through its range.

B. procyonis is of public health significance because it can infect humans, causing skin irritations and eye and brain damage due to the random migration of the larvae. There have been a small number of human fatalities involving young children and these fatalities were the result of the child ingesting a large number of eggs. In humans, pathological lesions observed consist of skin irritations and thus create wormlike burrows visible underneath the skin (cutaneous larval migrans) and eye and brain tissue damage (visceral larval migrans) due to the random migration of the larvae. The affected individuals may experience nausea, a lethargic feeling, incoordination and loss of eyesight. Because of the possibility of infection with *Baylisascaris* by raccoons, people are advised not to raise raccoons as pets. Trappers, raccoon hunters or anyone handling raw raccoon fur or anyone working in or around sites where raccoon may have denned should take precautions (wear rubber gloves and practice good personal hygiene) when handling raw fur or raccoon feces, and dispose of fat, etc. which may be a byproduct of fur handing.

Updated Trail Camera Tips

Several years ago, in these pages some trail camera tips were posted. Here's a few updates based on newer camera technology and much more experience. Information on specific camera manufacturers is readily available online, but here are some things you might want to consider:

Camera Types

Trail cameras get their designation from the manner of illumination used in dark situations or night. There are three basic types of trail cameras currently available: white flash, visible Infrared (known as red-glow), and invisible Infrared (known as no-glow, invisible or black flash). There are advantages and disadvantages for each of the trail camera types. The disadvantages are most evident in night-time photos.

The white flash camera has the same conventional strobe type flash as a normal hand-held 35mm or digital camera. These cameras take great color day-time pictures and the white flash allows for clear color photos at night, but can't take video at night. Many animals are alarmed by the bright white flash and may result in a blurred image (see images below) and future avoidance of that site.

Visible and invisible Infrared (IR) cameras use, as their name implies, infrared emitters for illumination at night. Both visible/invisible IR cameras take great color photos during the day, but only allow shades of black/gray/white photos at night. Both also can capture video at night.

With visible IR cameras, the red emitter glow is visible to the human eye and to animals. Clarity of the night-time videos and pictures is very good and amazing pictures can be taken with visible IR (see examples below). Most animals do not react at all to the IR glow. However, coyotes and foxes are two of the animals that do react to the visible IR; coyotes much more than foxes.

Invisible IR camera emitters can't be seen by either humans or animals (even coyote), and make ideal surveillance or security cameras. Night photos may be slightly blurry and lack the good definition produced by the white flash and visible IR cameras (see examples below and compare to visible IR examples above). Continued technological advances will probably overcome this issue.

Here's a great YouTube video showing the reaction of a bobcat to a white flash camera. Notice the bobcat ignores the visible IR camera, but watch its reaction to the flash!

Batteries

Most camera manufacturers design their cameras to work with alkaline batteries. Lithium batteries are much more expensive but the battery life is longer. Either way, use a good quality battery. The cameras were made to function with the maximum voltage. If you choose to use a rechargeable (nickel-metal hydride, or NiMH) lithium battery, keep in mind they store 20% less power (1.2 volts) than non-rechargeable lithium batteries (1.5 volts) and so will stop functioning 20% sooner. For example, a camera needing 8 AA batteries has 12 volts available to the camera when using new alkaline or lithium batteries, but only 9.6 volts available when using rechargeable NiMH batteries, and that is when the batteries are fully charged!

Location, Location, Location

Getting good photos with your trail camera is very much like trapping! The idea is to get a photo of the critter in question. You set up a trail camera using the same basic rules you would when you make a set with a snare, conibear or box trap. There are three simple, key parts, or steps to a good setup. You can have one step without the other but its best that they all work together. Each of the three steps is important, but this isn't rocket science.

First, you need to select a target location, this is site will be exactly where you want animal to be when the camera takes the photo. It's important that this is a place where the target animal feels comfortable. This site is where the animal is going to be, and is also the actual location at which you're going to put your bait if any. I'm sure we've all been told that you can't catch a critter where the critter isn't. This step is just as important here as it is in hanging a cable restraint when trapping!

Second, select the right height for the trail camera. Many trail camera users just simply hang their camera from a fencepost or a tree. They may get good photos, but it's important to think a bit about what is in front of the camera and how it will affect the picture or the trail camera. About eye level or slightly above of the intended target animal is what you want. If you also want photos of larger animals (bear, deer) take that into consideration and set the camera higher.

Third, position the camera close to the target area. Trail camera specifications list a maximum effective distance for the flash or IR emitters (anywhere from 30 to 100 feet). However, remember these distances are a maximum distance under ideal situations and are not realistic if you want to be able to tell what you're looking at in the photo other than a pair of eyes. Position your camera as close as possible to the bait.

Bait

To get a good photo you'll need the animal to stop - if only for a moment. The simplest way to do this is to use a bait that the target animal would find attractive. For deer try apples, corn or a salt block for instance. Another way to get just about any animal to stop and sniff your target location is with scent bait. You can place the bait in a small hole in the ground or you can place some of the scent/bait on a rock. Beaver castor works great for this application. Any animal that walks within smelling distance of the castor scent will stop and check out the site. You *can* set the camera to take photos as the animal passes by on a trail *but* it's harder to get clear, stationary images.

Other tips

- The more images you can take of a subject the better is your chance of getting a good photo. Try setting your camera so that you have no longer than 1 minute or less between pictures. Experiment. Experience will tell you a lot!
- A windy day or night and one blade of grass or a tree limb might generate dozens of photos. When setting up the camera, cut down any vegetation in the camera's view that might trigger the camera.
- Too much sunlight can result in poor exposures. Face your camera north or south, rather than east or west.
- Always keep track of your camera's battery life. Most cameras today have a long battery life (many can last up to a year). If your batteries are low, it's best to change them if you leave your camera unchecked to several weeks at a time.
- Have at least two memory cards for each of your trail cameras. It's easier to just take the used one out and pop in a new one and view the photos at home. Make sure you have a memory card that's big enough to hold as many photos as you'd expect to take between the times you check your camera. Videos use large amounts of space on your memory cards.
- Protect your equipment. Bears can be a big problem for trail cameras. They like to rip them off trees and sometimes trash the entire camera. The nylon strapping *will* hold your camera to the tree, at least temporarily, but it doesn't in any way protect the camera from bears or theft. Buy a metal box. Bolt or screw it to the tree facing the appropriate direction, put your camera inside and then lock it.

Bills in the NJ Legislature

A host of legislative bills are introduced every year. Below is a list of current bills. Those beginning with "A" are Assembly bills; those beginning with "S" are Senate bills; "CR" means Concurrent Resolution. Identical bills (for example, A122/S485) have been grouped together. Bills that have passed committee votes are followed by the date passed, otherwise bills remain in their respective committees.

Number	Description	Introduced	Committee Referred To
A122	Provides for no net loss of DEP lands for fishing, hunting and trapping	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S485		1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
A432	Prohibits use of snares in trapping of wildlife	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S1309		2/8/2016	Environment and Energy
A723	Provides discounted hunting and trapping license, permit and stamp fees for senior citizens	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S585		1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
A997	Provides for discounted resident trapping license fees for senior citizens	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S929		2/4/2016	Environment and Energy

A1157	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and free admission to State parks and forests for individuals with certain types of military service	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
A1387	Requires voter registration forms be made available when applying for hunting, fishing or trapping license	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources (passed 5/19/2016)
A2178	Authorizes State Fish and Game Council to establish number of beaver trapping permits issued annually	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources (passed 9/19/2016 as a Substitute)
A2460	Establishes certain requirements for trapping of snapping turtles	2/4/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
A3049	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and free admission to State parks and forests for individuals with certain types of military service	2/16/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S2126		5/2/2016	Environment and Energy
A3668	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses for volunteer emergency workers and persons with certain types of military service	4/14/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
A3737	Clarifies that Fish and Game Council has sole authority to regulate fishing, hunting and trapping	5/19/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
S472		1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
A4407	Bans manufacture, sale, possession, importation, transportation, or use of certain traps	12/15/2016	Environment and Solid Waste
S2750		11/10/2016	Environment and Energy
S256	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and free admission to State parks and forests for individuals with certain types of military service	1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
S603	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping for certain retired military personnel	1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
S2129	Authorizes free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses for volunteer emergency workers and persons with certain types of military service	5/2/2016	Environment and Energy
ACR25	Determines that F&G Council's proposal to allow use of enclosed foothold traps is inconsistent with plain language and legislative intent of 1984 law banning animal traps of steel-jaw leghold type	1/27/2016	Regulatory Oversight & Reform (passed 10/6/16) (passed Assembly 10/20/16) (received in Senate 11/3/16; referred to Environment and Energy)
SCR11		1/12/2016	Environment and Energy
ACR79	Proposes constitutional amendment to preserve right of people to fish, hunt, trap and harvest fish and wildlife	1/27/2016	Agriculture and Natural Resources
SCR27	Proposes constitutional amendment to preserve right of people to fish, hunt, trap and harvest fish and wildlife	1/12/2016	Environment and Energy

Please Remember to Report Your Coyotes!

Coyotes harvested by any method must be reported to a New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife Regional Law Enforcement office within 24 hours.

Regional NJ Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Office phone numbers:

Northern Region Office 908-735-8240
Central Region Office 609-259-2120
Southern Region Office 856-629-0555

New Jersey Bobcats and Fishers

Bobcats are classified as endangered in New Jersey; they are distributed widely across the northern part of the state. Fishers have returned naturally and through reintroduction efforts in New York and Pennsylvania, to most of their historic range in the northeastern United States. Fishers have been documented in several northern and southern New Jersey counties.

- **There is no open trapping season for either bobcat or fisher in New Jersey, and possession of NJ specimens is not permitted.** Only those bobcat and fisher legally harvested in other states or Canadian provinces (properly documented) may be possessed.
- **If you encounter a live bobcat or fisher captured on your trap line, do not disturb the animal or the set, but immediately notify Fish and Wildlife by calling (877) WARNDEP (877-927-6337).**

A Fish and Wildlife technician will provide further instructions. Call the same number for a dead bobcat or fisher on your trap line; a Fish and Wildlife technician will arrange to pick up the animal. Biological samples will be taken from all bobcat and fisher carcasses. The data collected will be instrumental to under- stand the status of the species populations.

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is *the* professional, environmental agency overseeing the protection and management of the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF
Fish and Wildlife