

North Carolina Furbearer Management Newsletter



Preliminary Results from 2022-2023 Furbearer Trapping Season

Species	2021-22 Harvest	2022-23 Harvest	% Harvest Change from 21-22 to 22-23
Beaver	12,360	13,709	+11%
Mink	97	131	+35%
Muskrat	2,661	1,463	-45%
Nutria	2,364	1,670	-29%
Otter	2,086	1,766	-15%
Bobcat	1,227	1,193	-3%
Coyote	8,042	5,734	-29%
Gray Fox	1,794	1,433	-20%
Red Fox	1,722	1,138	-34%
Opossum	5,712	6,378	+12%
Raccoon	9,325	9,488	+2%
Skunk	537	599	+11%
Weasel	0	0	0%

See us at the NC Trappers Association Convention!

Come visit the Commission staff at the 2023 NC Trappers Convention to get information on furbearer species, regulations, fox laws, research, our furbearer cooperator program, and much, much more!

When: September 29th and 30th, Building opens at 7:00 a.m.

Where: Smithfield Livestock Auction Arena, 526 County Home Rd., Smithfield NC 27577

For more information: <https://www.nctrapper.org/2023-convention>



This is one of the largest state trapper's conventions in the southeast and is open to the public! In addition to our educational table, there will be trapping demonstrations, fur skinning demonstrations, trapping supply vendors, games for kids, and trap setting contests for youths and adults!

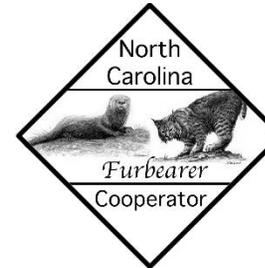


Who to Contact:

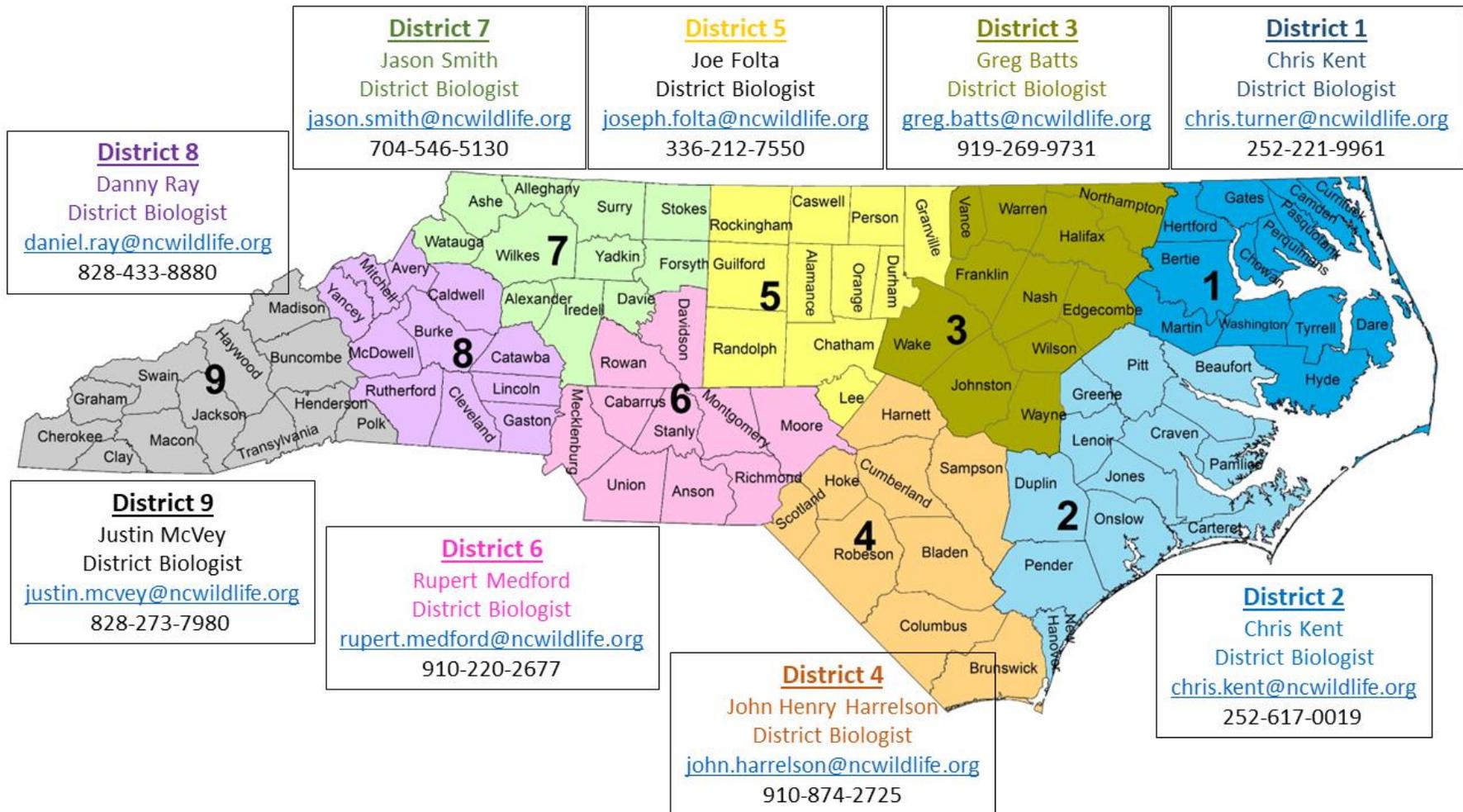
Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions, comments, or to participate in our cooperator programs!



Colleen Olfenbuttel, Certified Wildlife Biologist®
Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist
colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org
919-920-6302



To participate in the *Furbearer Cooperator Program*, contact:
Ashley Hobbs
Wildlife Conservation Biologist
919-698-4655
ashley.hobbs@ncwildlife.org



Advanced Trapping Workshops

The North Carolina Trappers Association (NCTA) offers advanced hands-on trapping workshops. Want to improve your trapping skills? Are you a Wildlife Control Agent that wants to expand into other species besides squirrels? To learn more and for instructions on signing up for either workshop, go to nctrapper.org/advanced-classes

There are two advanced courses coming up!

Advanced Hands-On Coyote Trapping Workshop

Saturday, October 7, 2023

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm

Learn about:

- Open Live Active Trapline
- Coyote Biology/Behavior
- Traps/Anchors/Pan Covers
- Dirthole Variations/Step Down
- Flat/Post Sets—When/Why
- Blind/Multiple Sets—When/Why
- Understanding Sign/Habitats
- Lures/Baits/Urines—When/Why
- Weather/Wind—Dos/Don'ts
- Coyote Laws/Regulations
- Hands-on Checking/Setting Traps

Cost:

\$100 for NCTA members
\$150 for non-members*
*includes one-year NCTA membership

Location:

Franklin County
1 Allen Lane
Youngsville, NC 27596

Instructors:

Jimmy Pierce
Todd Menke

What To Bring:

- Bagged Lunch/Water
- Field Clothes/Rain or Shine
- Preferred Traps/Tools To Practice
- Cameras/Notebook/Pencil

**NORTH CAROLINA
TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TRAPPING



**AN AMERICAN
HERITAGE**

To register: mail checks payable to NCTA
or at: www.nctrapper.org/advanced-classes

Mail to: Todd Menke
2663 Tar River Road
Creedmoor, NC 27522

Questions: minkster1971@gmail.com
(919) 885-6187

Advanced Hands-On Beaver Trapping Workshop

Saturday, February 24, 2024

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm

Learn about:

- Open Live Active Trapline
- Beaver Biology/Behavior
- Traps/Anchors/Pan Tension
- Castor Mound Variations
- Crossover Sets—When/Why
- Blind/Multiple Sets—When/Why
- Understanding Signs/Habitats
- Lures/Baits—When/Why
- Weather/Wind—Dos/Don'ts
- Snaring/Cable Restraints
- Beaver Laws/Regulations
- Hands-on Checking/Setting Traps

Cost:

\$100 for NCTA members
\$150 for non-members*
*includes one-year NCTA membership

Location:

Jordan Lake Boat Ramp
605 Farrington Point Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Instructors:

Dan Hunt
Todd Menke

What To Bring:

- Bagged Lunch/Water
- Chest Waders/Hip Boots
- Field Clothes/Rain or Shine
- Preferred traps/tools to practice
- Cameras/Notebook/Pencil

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Other Trapper Educational Opportunities

The Commission and the NC Trappers Association offer free Trapper Education Courses. In addition to learning trapping regulations, and the basics of trapping techniques, fur handling, and safety, this course qualifies for reciprocity with other states that have mandatory trapper education in order to purchase a trapping license. To view trapper ed courses go to: <https://license.goutdoorsnorthcarolina.com/Event/Calendar.aspx>

To look specifically for trapper ed. courses, click the green **“Search Events”** in the upper left hand corner, then type in “trapper”. Courses are often added throughout the year, especially in spring and summer. Courses are based on availability of our volunteer trapper educational instructors.

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In September 2022, Dan Hunt received the “Trapper Education Instructor of the Year” Award from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

Here he is also accepting the 2022 North Carolina Trappers Association’s “Trapper of the Year” award from fellow trapper education instructor and NCTA Education Coordinator, Todd Menke.

Dan has been a trapper education instructor since 2015 and has certified and instructed over 230 students in 15 classes. He is always the first instructor to volunteer to help other trapper education instructors anywhere in the state. Dan is an advocate for trapper education and encourages others to host classes across the state. He also puts together flyers and other outreach material to promote responsible trapping through education. Congratulations Dan and thank you for all your effort and time to promote responsible trapping.

Pictures from NCWRC Trapper Education Courses



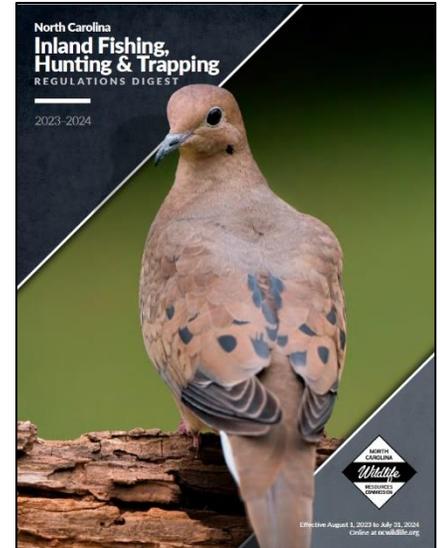
2023-2024 Regulations Digest

Know before you go! Be sure you are aware and understand the rules, regulations, and other guidelines for hunting, trapping and fishing in North Carolina. The 2023-2024 Regulations Digest also has information on game lands and county local laws.

Visit ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Regulations

At this website, you can:

- View the digest on-line;
- Download a pdf version of the Regulations Digest to your computer or smartphone;
- Or request a paper copy by mail.



Trapping Season Reminders

There is a uniform statewide trapping season for all 100 counties from October 1, 2023 through February 29, 2024 for the following species:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| • Armadillo | • Nutria* |
| • Beaver | • Opossum |
| • Bobcat | • Otter |
| • Coyote | • Raccoon |
| • Groundhog | • Skunk |
| • Mink | • Weasel |
| • Muskrat | |

*There is no closed season on nutria east of I-77.

Outside the applicable trapping season, animals can only be trapped under a Depredation Permit. This is a free permit obtained from a Wildlife Enforcement Officer, Wildlife District Biologist, or a Licensed Wildlife Control Agent.

Beaver Note: Landowners whose property is or has been damaged by beavers may take beaver on their property anytime by any lawful method without obtaining a depredation permit. The landowner may obtain assistance from other persons, including licensed trappers, by giving those persons permission to take beaver on the landowner's property. The beaver pelt, carcass, and parts can be sold by licensed trappers.

Resident Lifetime Trapping License

North Carolina residents can purchase a Lifetime Trapping License. The cost is \$300 and all proceeds from the sale of this license will go to the Wildlife Endowment Fund.

As of August 31st, 2023, **393 lifetime trapping licenses** had been sold since Jan. 1, 2020.

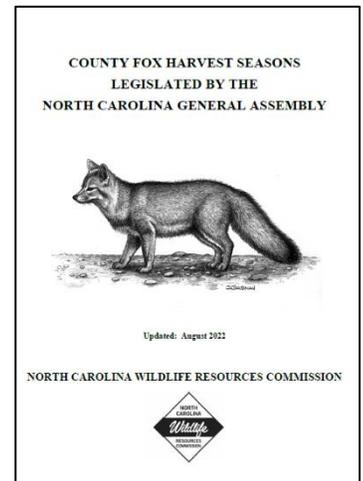


Fox Trapping Seasons

As of September 1st, 2023, the NC General Assembly did not pass any local laws that opened up any new counties to fox trapping.

As a reminder, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission does not have the authority to create fox trapping seasons; only the NC General Assembly has that authority.

There are 55 counties with fox trapping seasons in North Carolina. Outside these 55 counties, you cannot trap foxes during the regulated trapping season and any fox captured must be released in those 45 counties without a fox trapping season.



For more information on fox hunting and trapping seasons, including county-specific restrictions and season dates please go to: ncwildlife.org/foxseasons

Trapping Live Foxes and Coyote

The 2023-24 trapping season marks the 3rd season in which a transportation permit is now needed to possess and sell live foxes and coyotes.

As a reminder, since the 2021-22 trapping season:

- A [transportation permit](#) is now required prior to taking possession of live foxes and coyotes for live sale to licensed fox preserve. Licensed trappers and any individual(s) transporting live foxes and coyotes for live sale shall have a current and valid transportation permit prior to taking possession of the live foxes and coyotes, including removing the animal from the trap.
 - This free permit can be found in the same place as fur tags (see page 8). Go to <http://www.gooutdoorsnorthcarolina.com> and click the “Buy Licenses.” Then select “Regulated Activity Permits” in the middle and scroll down to Fox-Coyote Transport Application.
- Licensed trappers shall keep accurate written records, on a form provided by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, for each fox or coyote sold or transferred to licensed fox preserve.
 - This [report](#) can be found at ncwildlife.org and click Licensing>Other Licenses & Permits>Regulated Activities and Permits>“Fox Coyote Transport Permit Application” and then scroll to bottom for report.
- Live-trapped foxes and coyotes shall not be held for more than 30 days after capture and shall be provided drinking water, food of a type and quantity appropriate for the species, and shelter that protects the foxes and coyotes from direct sunlight and precipitation.



Skulls and Carcasses Wanted



The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Furbearer Team is interested in collecting the following:

Lower jaws from Bobcats and Otters

Carcasses of bobcat, coyote, foxes, mink, muskrat, raccoon, skunk and weasel

Bobcat and otter jaws: We will mail pre-paid envelopes to you for bobcat and otter jaws. The canine tooth will be used to look at the age structure of the harvest.

Carcasses (can be skinned): Additionally, we're hoping to obtain carcasses to collect tissues and organs to gain information on diseases, parasites, genetics, and toxicology exposure. Please contact Ashley Hobbs (information below) to submit a carcass.



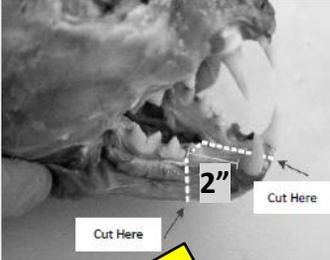
Projects such as these are important, as they help us monitor populations and improve our knowledge of North Carolina furbearers. We feel this information will help us maintain trapping for future generations.

In return for your cooperation, you will receive a furbearer cooperator patch and the age of submitted animals. Thank you in advance!

NCWRC – BOBCAT & OTTER JAW SAMPLE ENVELOPE

1. **USE ONLY ONE (1) ENVELOPE PER ANIMAL.** Only submit animals trapped during the regulated trapping season (no road killed or hunted animals please). If you need additional envelopes, please call 919-609-7226.

2. We need the two (2) bottom canines from each animal; cut the jaw bone with loppers or hacksaw between the lower canines and 1.5 inches back from canine (see photo). Be careful not to cut too close to the canine tooth, so it is not damaged. The root of the tooth is needed to determine age of the animal. **DO NOT** attempt to pull the canine tooth from the jaw because it will break in half.



3. Clean away as much flesh as possible from the sample. **Allow the jaw section to completely dry** before enclosing in this pre-paid sample envelope and mail.

7-DIGIT WRC CUSTOMER # (found on back of pre-paid envelope) _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

DATE HARVESTED: _____ COUNTY OF HARVEST: _____
(if exact date unknown, please provide month and year)

SPECIES (Check one): BOBCAT RIVER OTTER

SEX OF ANIMAL* (Check one): MALE FEMALE UNKNOWN

*Note - The sex of otters and bobcats can be difficult to determine. If testicles are not visible, make an incision in the abdomen of the carcass and examine for presence of uterus and ovaries, which can be found behind the bladder and below the kidneys.

You will receive a cooperator patch and age report for your harvested animals.

Please send in your bobcat & otter jaws by April 30th!!

Cut and dry the portion of the lower jaw containing the canine tooth and its root. To ensure you include the root, cut the jawbone at least 2 in. away from the canine. Follow instructions on pre-paid envelope to ship.

For more envelopes, contact:
Ashley Hobbs
Special Projects Biologist
919-698-4655
ashley.hobbs@ncwildlife.org

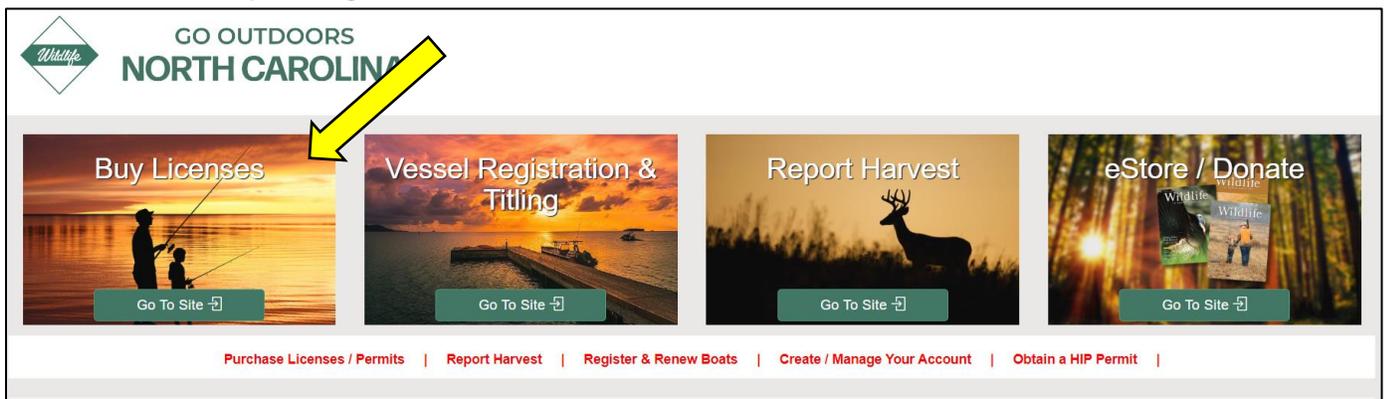
For more information visit:
ncwildlife.org/furcooperator

Ordering Tags on Go Outdoors NC

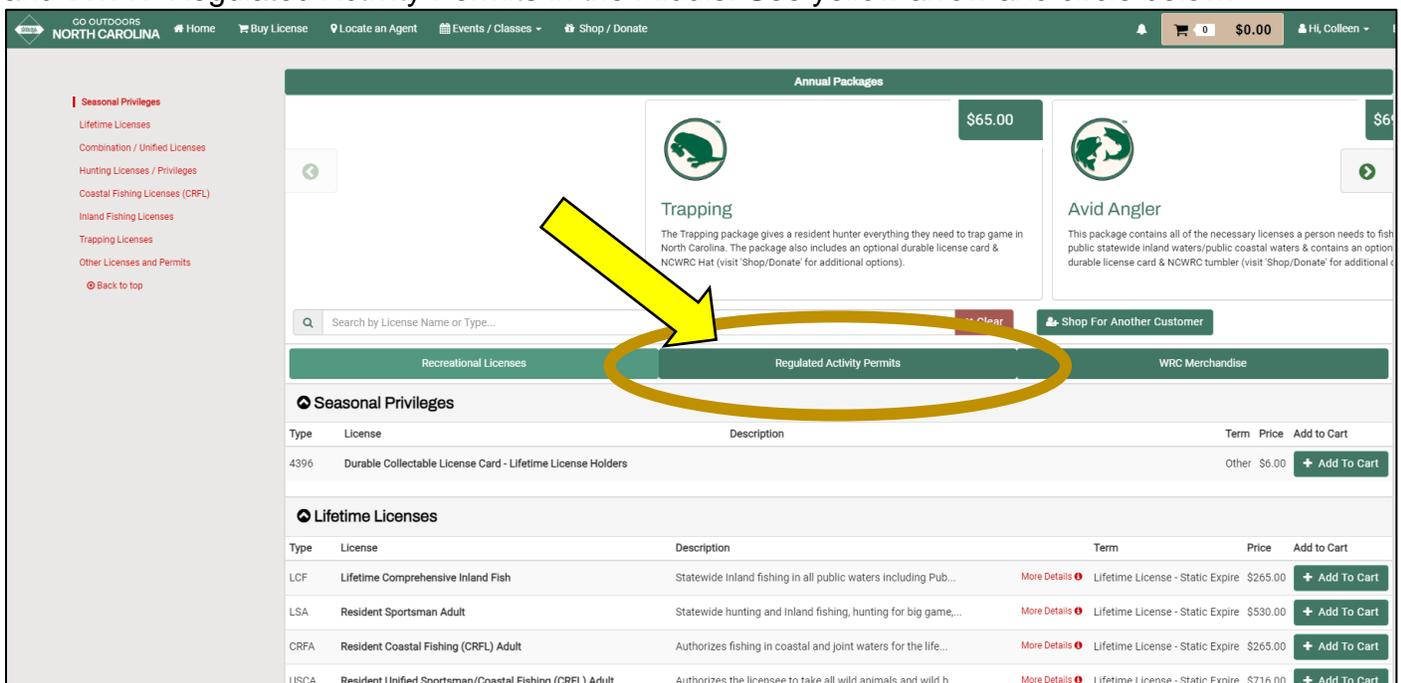
The Commission is using a new licensing system ([Go Outdoors North Carolina](http://www.gooutdoorsnorthcarolina.com)) to issue licenses, permits, vessel registration, and other customer needs. To request bobcat, otter, and/or fox tags, you can call 833-950-0575 or purchase on-line through your Go Outdoors account. You will need your WRC Customer number available to use the website. The number can be located on your hunting, trapping, or fishing license.



Step 1: Go to <http://www.gooutdoorsnorthcarolina.com> and click the “Buy Licenses”. See arrow below pointing to the button.



Step 2: Once you have entered your log-in information, you will be in your own customer portal. Once again, click “Buy Licenses”. You will then go to another screen and select “Regulated Activity Permits in the middle. See yellow arrow and circle below.



Step 3: You are almost done! Scroll down to the bottom of the website and you will see the options for obtaining “Furbearer Tags”. Then click the “Add to Cart” button by the tags you would like to order. Now you can check out!

As a reminder, while otter and bobcats tags are free, state law requires that the Commission to charge \$2.25 per fox tags. Click the tags you want to order and enter the quantity of tags.

Furbearer Tags						
Type	License	Description	Term	Price	Add to Cart	
257	Bobcat Tags	Needed to sell or otherwise transfer ownership of bobcat ca...	Other	Free	+ Add To Cart	
258	Fox Tags	Needed to sell or otherwise transfer ownership of a fox car...	Other	\$2.25	+ Add To Cart	
259	Otter Tags	Needed to sell or otherwise transfer ownership of otter car...	Other	Free	+ Add To Cart	

Selling your Furs

To find where you can sell your fur, we have a “[Selling Fur](#)” section on our website. It has information on local fur dealers, fur pick-up schedules & locations, and fur auctions. This information is updated monthly from December 2023 through February 2024 at ncwildlife.org/sellingfur



Fur dealer inspecting furs at the Virginia State Fur Sale in Wytheville, VA held every March.



Trappers waiting to sell their fur to Groenewold Fur & Wool Co., which has pick-up sites throughout North Carolina every March.



NC fur buyer, Kevin Myers, inspects otter pelts at the Marshall Fur Sale in March.

Trapper Identification Number (TIN)

The Commission issues each trapper a Trapper Identification Number (TIN) at the time they purchase or renew their trapping license. This TIN is printed on your license (see picture on next page for example).

Either the TIN or Wildlife Control Agent (WCA) license number and Commission telephone number (800-662-7137), or the trapper’s name and address can be used on trap tags. The license number issued to licensed WCAs is equivalent to a TIN and can be used on the trap tags. See trap tag examples below.

If a trapper places a trap on the property of another, the Commission is required to disclose the identity of the trapper to the landowner where the trap is located at the landowner’s request.



**North Carolina
Wildlife Resources Commission**

Transaction Date: 07/24/2023



WRC Customer Number: 1234567
Wile E. Coyote
 123 Canid Lane
 COYOTE CITY, NC 27777-1234

Date of Birth: 04/18/1949
 Hunter Education #: Pre July 2013 LH
 Trapper ID #: 12345678

Current NCWRC License	Effective	Expiration
Lifetime Comprehensive Hunt	09/08/2010	N/A
HIP Certification	07/24/2023	06/30/2024
Big Game Harvest Report Card	07/24/2023	06/30/2024
Resident Lifetime Trapping	07/24/2023	N/A

Providing false, fraudulent, or misleading information for the purpose of obtaining these licenses or the use of a fraudulently obtained license is a Class 1 Misdemeanor. (G.S. 113-275 (j))

3 Easy Ways to Report A Big Game Harvest

-  Go Outdoors North Carolina Mobile App, even in outdoor locations that do not have access to internet or cell service!
-  GoOutdoorsNorthCarolina.com. Internet connection required.
-  800-I-GOT-ONE (800-446-8663) to report harvest through automated messaging. Cell service required.
-  Contact 833-950-0575 or biggameregistration@ncwildlife.org

Download the free Go Outdoors North Carolina App





- Purchase or renew a license
- Report a harvest even without cell service
- Store licenses for yourself and others
- Use geolocation features and other cool tools

Violations Reporting

- Wildlife, Inland Fishing, or Boating Violations: 800-662-7137
- Coastal Fishing Violations: 800-682-2632
- Poaching Hotline: 855-WILDTIP

The trapper identification number (TIN) is located below your date of birth on your license card (red arrow), which you can print yourself as a pdf.



Option 1: Trapper’s name and address



Option 2: Trapper Identification Number (TIN) and Commission telephone number (800-662-7137). Note that a WCA license number can also be used on the trap tag.

Number of Licensed Trappers

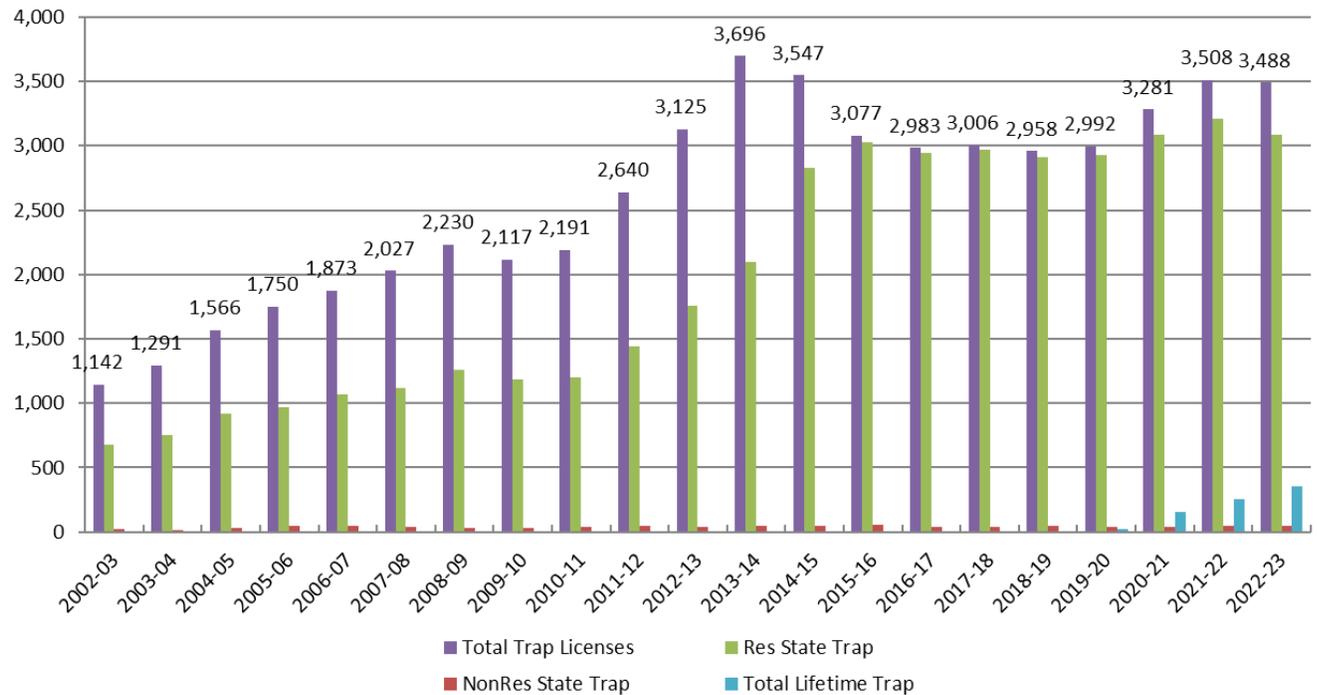


Figure 1. The number of licensed trappers in North Carolina from the 2002-03 trapping season through the 2022-23 trapping season.

During the 2022-23 season, there were 3,488 licensed trappers, a 0.6% decrease in license sales compared to the 2021-22 season (see Figure 1). This was still the 4th highest number of licensed trappers since the 1986-87 season. Despite low pelt prices, trapping license sales continue to remain relatively stable. Wake County had the highest number of licensed trappers (trappers=103), while Clay County had the fewest (trappers=5; Figure 2).

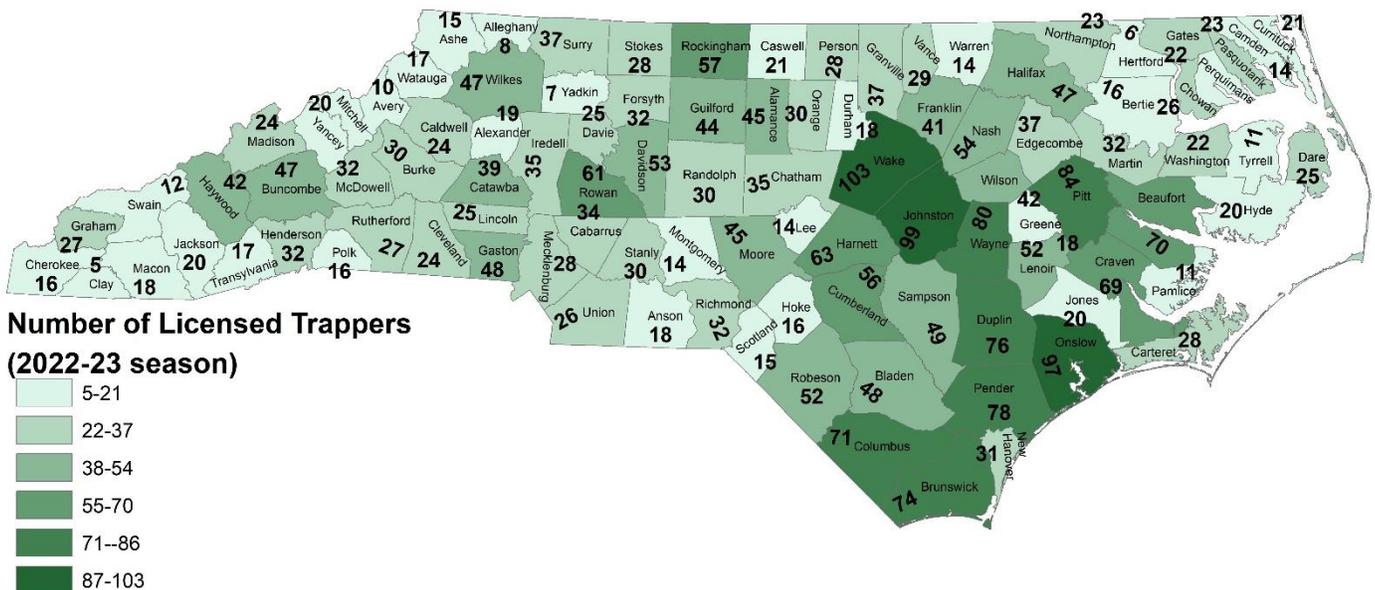


Figure 2. Number of licensed trappers by county of residency during the 2022-23 regulated trapping season.

Want to Talk about Trapping?

Do you want to talk more about regulated trapping with family, friends, colleagues, and the landowners, but don't feel prepared?

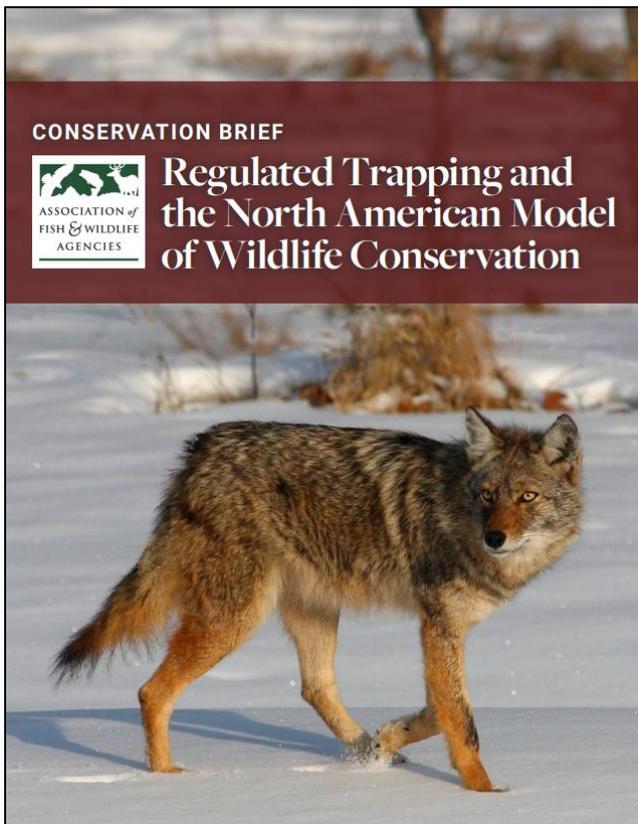
Guess what, there are resources you can use! And studies have shown that people who know a trapper are more likely to have a better understanding of the role of regulated trapping for wildlife management.

The most common source for information about trapping (both positive and negative) comes from television, followed by the internet and newspapers. Consider using your knowledge and experience to be a source of information.

The [US Furbearer Conservation Technical Working Group](#), of which North Carolina is one of two Southeast representatives on this working group, has produced a series of Science Briefs. These are 2-page summaries on common topics and questions related to regulated trapping, including animal welfare, trapping selectivity, trapping and the sustainable use of wildlife, public safety, and more.

These Science Briefs, and other trapping-related reports, can be found at: furbearermanagement.com/furbearer-reports/

This is the same website to look up traps that are BMP traps (see next page).



CONSERVATION BRIEF

Regulated Trapping and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

ASSOCIATION of FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES



ASSOCIATION of FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES

SCIENCE BRIEF

ANIMAL WELFARE

Any discussion on the topic of animal use by humans brings with it moral, ethical, and practical implications. A concern that is always at the forefront of this discussion is animal welfare. We all want to be sure that the animals we use, regardless of the purpose, are given appropriate consideration. The United States and Canada have conducted the most extensive scientific testing of traps in the world to develop Best Management Practices for Trapping (BMPs), a program that ensures that traps are humane, efficient, safe and selective. Standards are applied and enforced to ensure animal welfare.

Agencies have taken action to ensure the highest standard of welfare for captured animals.

When it comes to wildlife in particular, State, Tribal, and Federal Fish and Wildlife agencies in the United States regulate activities that involve the capture or harvest of wild animals through hunting and trapping. Members of the public who participate in hunting and trapping must typically go through education programs, be licensed, and then consent to abide by numerous laws and regulations regarding when, where and how wildlife may be taken and used.

Agencies not only provide education, but they also employ officers to ensure that laws and regulations are strictly enforced. This helps to make certain that wild animals are appropriately cared for. Whether an animal is trapped to reintroduce a population (like a wolf or a river otter), to protect threatened or endangered species (removing predators like foxes and raccoons), to participate in a research project or by regulating and monitoring public trapping programs, agencies strive to make sure that each animal is captured humanely.

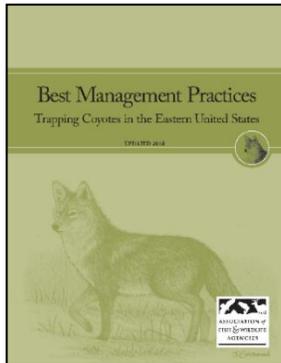
Regulated trapping is a common capture technique used in agency furbearer management programs. Fish and Wildlife agencies in the United States have partnered through U.S. Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to support the welfare of animals captured in traps. When the use of wildlife is involved, agency wildlife professionals are the source of expertise.

Setting a high bar for animal welfare

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) developed the testing protocol and welfare criteria used during the development of Best Management Practices for Trapping in the United States (BMPs) to evaluate trapping devices. Leading wildlife veterinarians and wildlife biologists led this effort within ISO.

Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Trapping BMPs are carefully researched **recommendations** designed to ensure animals are **humanely captured**. Developed as part of the **largest trap research effort** ever conducted, BMPs feature the **latest scientific information** about trapping techniques and equipment, along with practical advice from *experienced trappers* and wildlife biologists.



BMPs are intended to inform people about traps and trapping systems considered to be state-of-the-art in animal welfare, efficiency, selectivity, and practicality.

The BMPs serve as a guide to inform trappers about trap-types they should consider using for capturing a specific furbearer, including bobcats, coyotes, beaver, and raccoons!

Trapping BMPs exist for 22 species of furbearers:
furbearermanagement.com

To make it easy to find a BMP-approved trap, this website has a trap [search portal](#), where you can search for BMP-approved traps by trap-type (e.g., foothold, bodygrip), species, or trap brand.

BMP Trap & Species Search Portal

The database below provides information on traps and species that meet the Best Management Practices criteria. Specific traps, trap type, and species can be searched in the database.

- [▶ Search by Trap](#)
- [▶ Search by Trap Type](#)
- [▶ Search by Species](#)

To only view the results of a specific trap, trap type, or species, type the name into the search bar below. You can select which fields to search (trap, trap type, or species) in the drop down menu next to the search icon to further filter your results.

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Trapping BMPs, combined with Trapper Education Programs, are intended to maintain the integrity of furbearer management programs throughout the nation and to sustain trapping methods now and in the future.