



State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife Wild Pig Take Report 2013 – 2014



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Wildlife Branch

1010 Riverside Parkway

West Sacramento, CA 95605

Executive Summary

Tag return for successful pig hunters is mandatory and provides the data comprising this report. In the 2013-2014 hunting season, tag sales increased 1.8 percent from the 60,349 tags sold in 2012. Furthermore, 3,408 wild pigs were reported taken, representing a 15.5 percent increase in the number of successful tags returned from the 2012 season of 2,950. A total of 61,447 wild pig tags were issued making overall successful tag return 5.5 percent. The top six counties for pig harvest were: Kern (22.1%), Monterey (18.3%), San Luis Obispo (9.8%), Mendocino (7.6%), Sonoma (5.5%) and Tehama (4.4%). These six counties accounted for about 67.7 percent of reported take.

Of the reported take, 53.1 percent (1,808) indicated a male was taken, 46.0 percent (1,569) indicated a female was taken, and 0.9 percent (31) left the sex portion of the tag blank. Dogs were reported being used on 4.4 percent (151) of returned tags. Finally, 93.3 percent (3,181) of all returned tags indicated that they hunted wild pigs on private land.



Photos courtesy of CDFW Deer Program

Introduction

The primary goal of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (Department) wild pig management program is to minimize damage to California's native plants and animals, park and recreational activities, and agricultural operations from the foraging habits of wild pigs. To attain this goal, the Department seeks to enhance hunting opportunities as a means of reducing these threats. This program was developed in accordance with the state's policy regarding wildlife resources (Fish and Game Code Section 1801), which states the following goals:

- a) To provide for the beneficial use and enjoyment of wildlife by all citizens of the state;
- b) To perpetuate all species for their intrinsic and ecological values;
- c) To provide for aesthetic, educational, and non-appropriative uses;
- d) To maintain diversified recreational uses of wildlife including sport hunting;
- e) To provide for economic contributions to the citizens of the state through the recognition that wildlife is a renewable resource; and
- f) To alleviate economic losses or public health and safety problems caused by wildlife.

In order for the state to meet these goals, the Legislature has delegated the power to regulate the take and possession of wild pigs, among other wildlife, to the California Fish and Game Commission. The Commission, in consultation with Department staff, reviews the factors which may affect meeting the aforementioned goals.

In 1957, wild pigs became a game species in California. Wild pig hunting was regulated with annual seasons and bag limits. In 1992, wild pig license tags were established to aid in the effective monitoring of wild pig populations. In 2012, the use of the Automated License Data System (ALDS) was implemented to further streamline the tag issuance process and give hunters the option to report take online. Currently, there are no daily bag or possession limits for hunting wild pigs, and the season occurs year-round. Regulations regarding hunting require the reporting of any successful take on a wild pig tag with a request that unsuccessful hunters also report on their tag.

Summary of 2013 – 2014 Wild Pig Hunting Regulations

Wild pig season opened on July 1, 2013 at the start of the license year and ran continuously until the end of the license year on June 30, 2014. Individuals were able to purchase an unlimited number of tags throughout the season, and the daily bag and possession limits were also unlimited. There were no restrictions on the age or breeding status of animals that were legal for take. The use of dogs for pursuing wild pigs was also permitted. The 2013 – 2014 wild pig season ran its full length with no closures.

Results of 2013 - 2014 Wild Pig Hunting Season

Tag Sales

During the 2013 – 2014 wild pig season, 61,447 tags were sold (Figure 1). This was up 458 tags from the previous year, constituting an increase of 15.5 percent in pig tag sales. This total consisted of 51,986 resident tags (2.0 percent increase), 1,192 non-resident tags (0.4 percent decrease), and 8,269 lifetime license tags (0.9 percent increase). Since the 2000 season, tag sales increased from a low in the 2000 license year with 44,671 until the 2006 license year where sales then fluctuated between 55,000 and 62,000 tags.

Total Take and Sex Composition

In total, 3,408 wild pigs were reported taken during the 2013 – 2014 season (Figure 2). Overall reported take was down 458 pigs from 2012. Of the returned tags, 53.1 percent (1,808) reported sex of the animal as male, 46.0 percent (1,569) as female, with the remaining 0.9 percent (31) not reporting sex. As is typical, harvest composition generally reflects a nearly 1:1 sex ratio with males taken at a slightly higher proportion.

Figure 1. Wild Pig Tag Sales (July 2000 - June 2014)

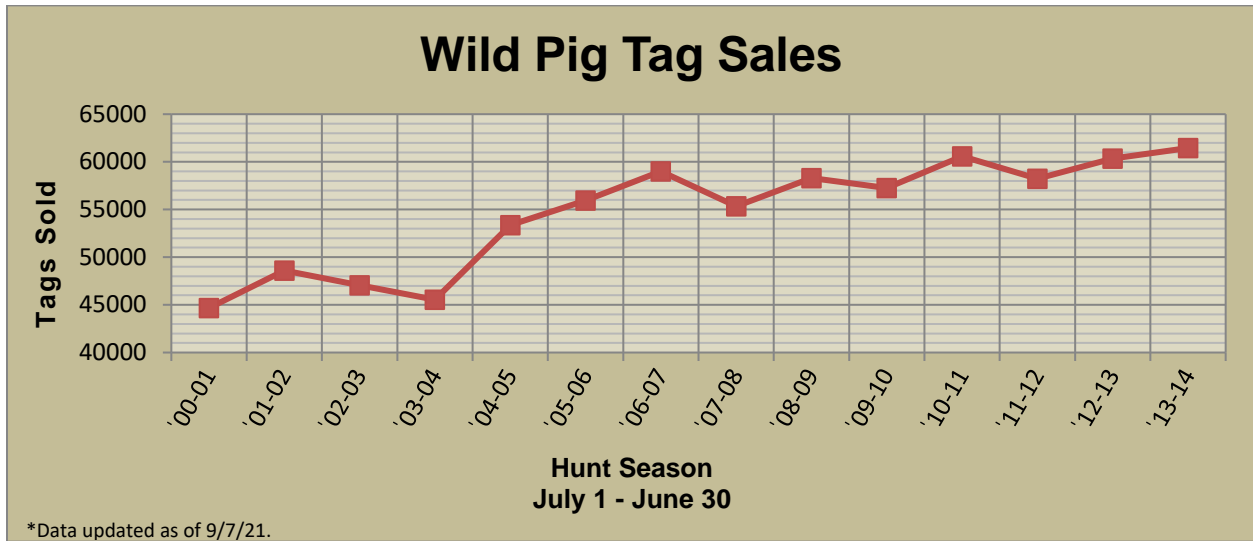
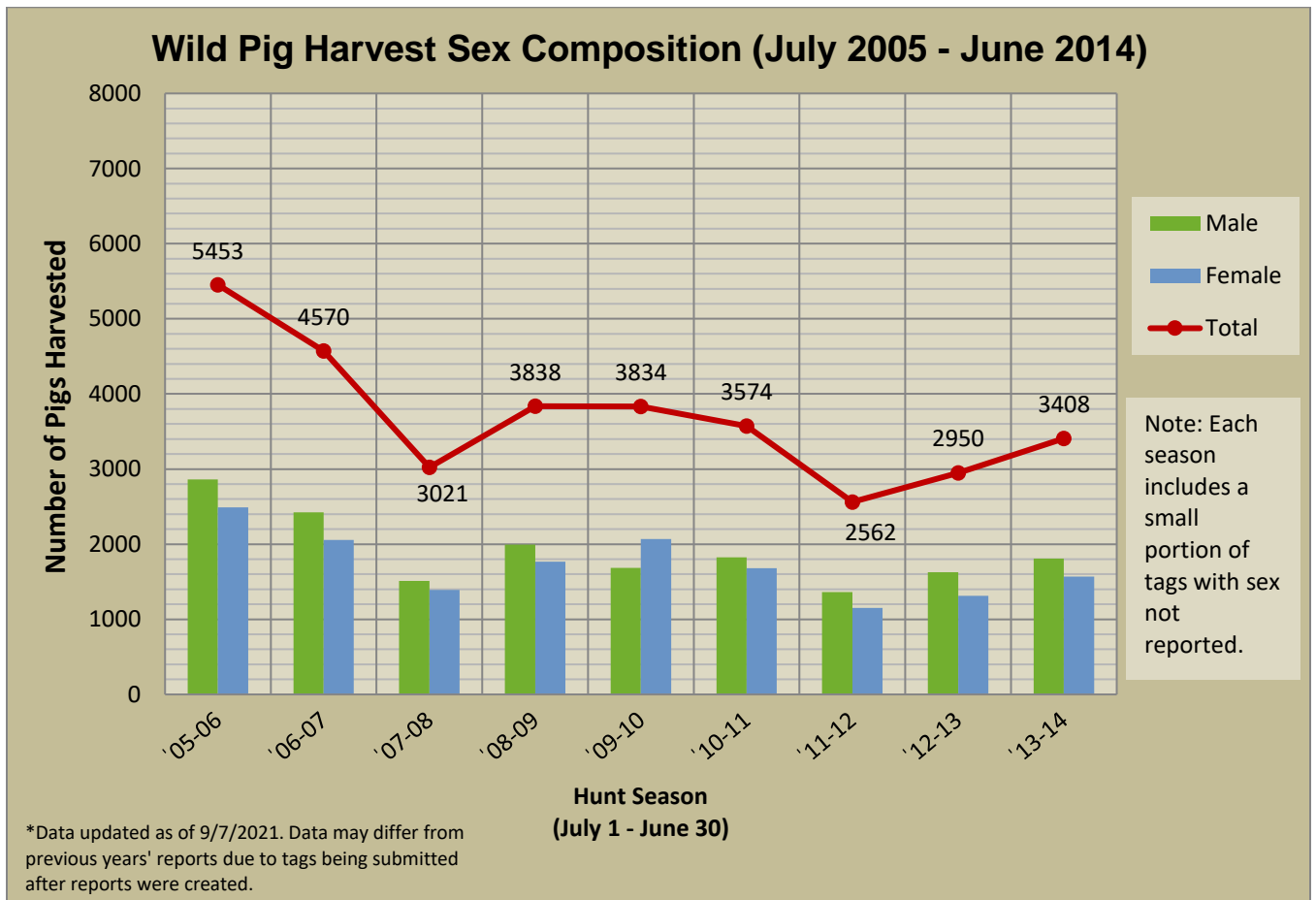


Figure 2. Wild Pig Harvest Sex Composition (July 2005 – June 2014)



Methods of Take

California wild pig hunters are allowed several legal methods of take which are valid at any point during the season including rifle, archery, pistol, shotgun, muzzleloader, and crossbow. Overall 91.5 percent (3,118) reported using a rifle, 5.0 percent (172) reported using archery equipment, 1.3 percent (43) reported using a pistol, 1.4 percent (48) reported using a shotgun, and less than 1 percent reported using a muzzleloader (10), or crossbow (7) (Figure 3). There were 10 (0.3%) successful tags that did not indicate method. Additionally, the use of dogs to assist in taking pigs is also a legal practice. A total of 4.4 percent (151) reported using dogs to aid in taking their pig (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Wild Pig Harvest Method of Take (July 2013 – June 2014)

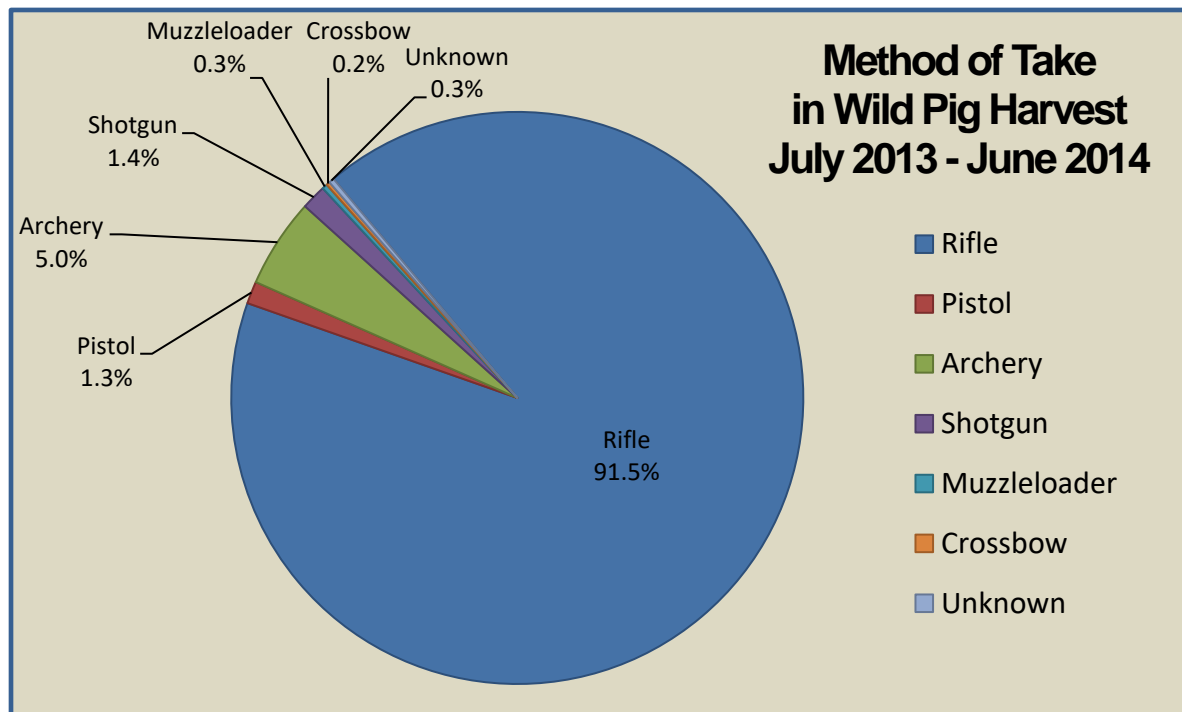
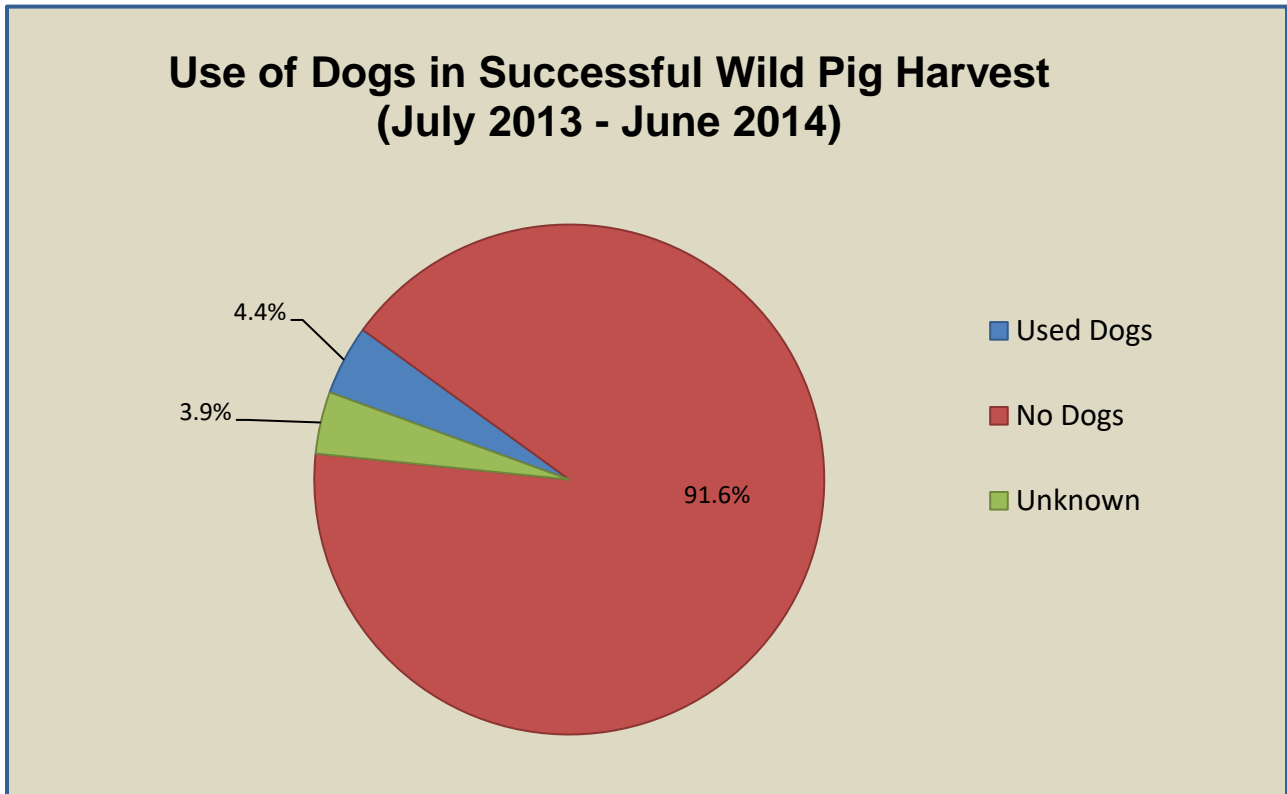


Figure 4. Use of Dogs in Successful Wild Pig Harvest (July 2013 – June 2014)



Location of Take

Pigs were reported to be harvested in 43 of California's 58 counties in the 2013 – 2014 license year (Table 1). Six counties accounted for approximately 67.7 percent of all take reported during the 2013 – 2014 season. These six counties were: Kern (22.1%), Monterey (18.3%), San Luis Obispo (9.8%), Mendocino (7.6%), Sonoma (5.5%) and Tehama (4.4%).

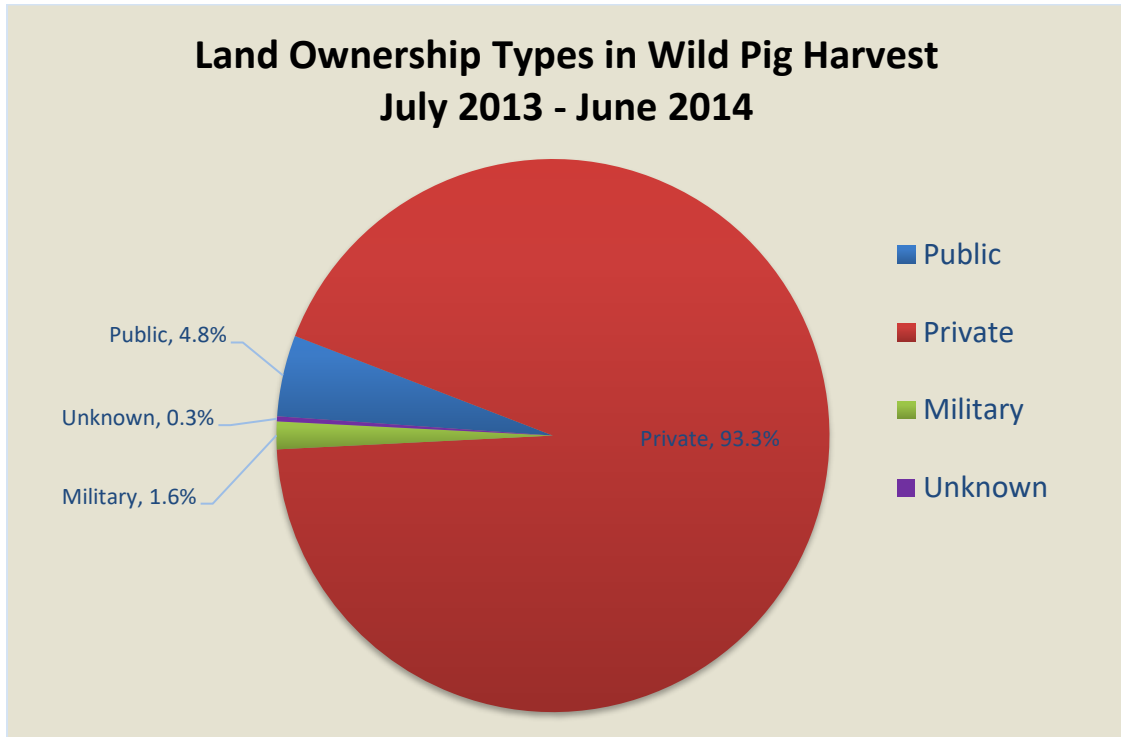
Across the entire state, 93.3 percent (3,181) of wild pigs were reported being taken on private land (Figure 5), while only 4.8 percent (162) were reported being taking on public land. An additional 1.6 percent (55) were harvested on military land, leaving 0.3 percent (10) unreported.

Table 1. Reported Wild Pig Take by County (July 2013 – June 2014)

County	Pigs Harvested
Alameda	22
Butte	6
Calaveras	3
Colusa	108
Contra Costa	3
Fresno	92
Glenn	53
Humboldt	24
Kern	752
Kings	13
Lake	90
Los Angeles	2
Madera	42
Mariposa	27
Mendocino	258
Merced	29
Monterey	625
Napa	44
Nevada	6
Placer	9
Riverside	3
San Benito	140

County	Pigs Harvested
San Bernardino	3
San Diego	9
San Joaquin	4
San Luis Obispo	335
Santa Barbara	62
Santa Clara	82
Shasta	39
Sierra	1
Siskiyou	9
Solano	25
Sonoma	187
Stanislaus	32
Sutter	10
Tehama	149
Trinity	4
Tulare	88
Tuolumne	1
Unknown	2
Ventura	5
Yolo	5
Yuba	5
Total	3408

Figure 5. Reported Wild Pig Harvest on Land Ownership Types (July 2013 – June 2014)

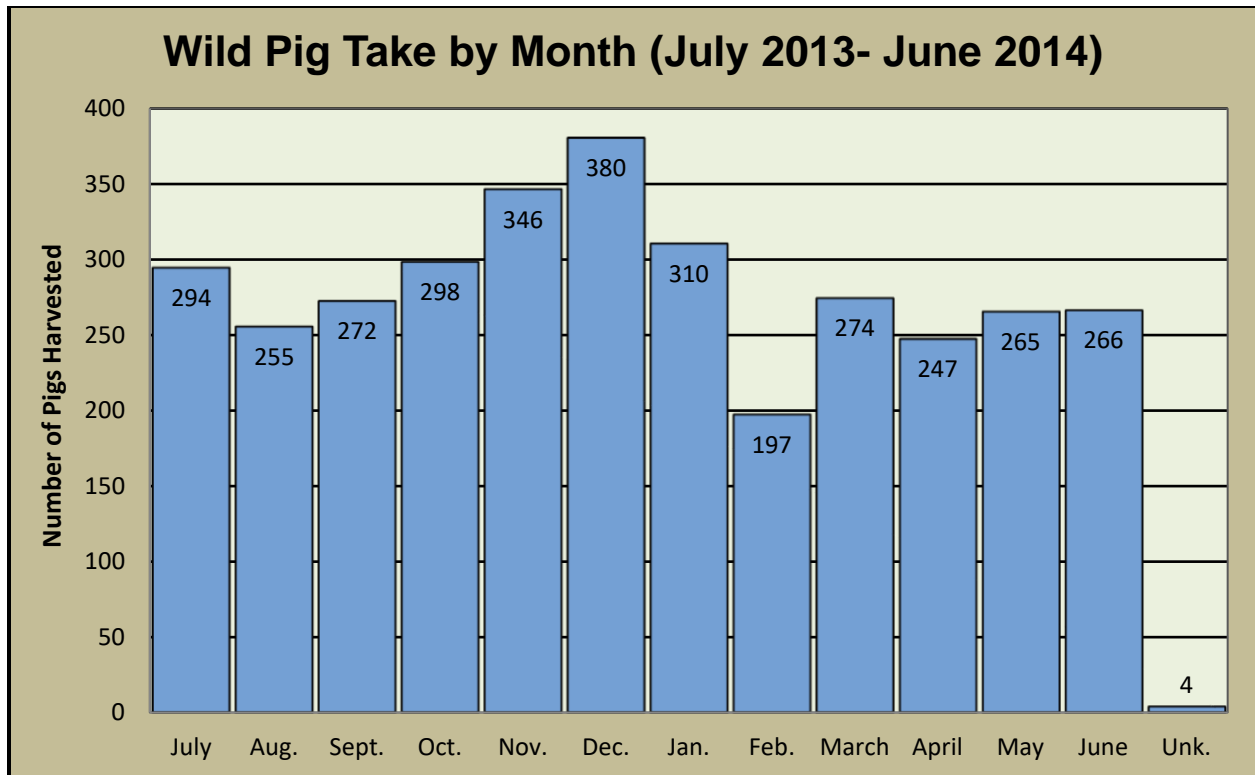


Timing of Take

Wild pig season is continuous, year-round. Because wild pigs are not migratory and do not hibernate, they are often consistently available for hunting, although localized events such as extreme hunting pressures, weather conditions, and variation in land use throughout the year can affect pig behavior, occurrence, and harvest. Pig harvest showed an upward trend September through December, decreasing through February, and becoming steady through spring.

The month with the lowest reported wild pig harvest for the 2013 - 2014 hunting season stood at 197 for the month of February. There were 4 tags that did not indicate a kill date (Figure 6).

Figure 6. 2013-2014 Reported Wild Pig Take by Month



Discussion

Wild pigs occur throughout a large portion of California and can be extremely destructive to property, especially while engaged in their rooting foraging behavior. The Department will continue to monitor wild pig take annually and adjust take regulations as necessary in order to meet the goals laid out by Fish and Game Code Section 1801.

