

Licensed Fur Trappers and Dealers Report  
1983-1984

Legislation enacted in 1974 requires every person who takes furbearing or nongame mammals for profit to purchase a trapping license. As of January 1, 1983, anyone being issued a trapping license must pass a test of trapping competence and proficiency and pay a fee of:

Adult: \$30.00      Juvenile: \$20.00      Nonresident: \$200.00

The price of licenses will be raised \$5 at the beginning of each fiscal year, until the price of an adult license reaches \$50.00.

A total of 1,607 trapping licenses were sold during the 1983-84 trapping season. This is a decrease of 59% from the 3,901 licenses sold for the 1982-83 season and was the first year in the last six where license sales were below 1,800. The major reason for the reduction in licensed trappers was that this was the first full year where a test of trapping proficiency had to be passed to obtain a license and where license fees were increased by 200 percent. However, this level of license sales is well above the 450 to 1,000 licenses sold annually during the period 1950 to 1976. Current fur prices are not likely to encourage license sales to reach 3,000 which was recently the case or which occurred during the 1920's.

	<u>1982-83</u>	<u>1983-84</u>
Licensees who reported trapping effort	1,499	945
Licensees who reported but did not trap or were unsuccessful	667	247
Licensees not reporting	1,735	415
Total licenses sold	3,901	1,607

Revenue received by trappers from the sale of furs during the 1983-84 season, based on average prices paid by fur buyers, was \$1,084,564.94 (Table 1). This was the third season since 1977-78 that the reported fur revenue did not exceed \$2,000,000.00. This is also a 18% decrease in revenue from the 1982-83 trapping season, when a total of \$1,320,981.31 in revenue was received by trappers. The average income per trapper increased 30% from \$881.24 in 1982-83 to \$1,147.68 in 1983-84.

Each year a portion of the fur harvest is reported as unsold. During the 1983-84 season 13% was unsold, compared to 16% unsold during the 1982-83 season. Unsold pelts still have value, and for the purpose of this report they have the same monetary value as marketed pelts. Therefore, the estimated value of the 1983-84 fur harvest was \$1,220,653.20, a decrease of 16.5% from the \$1,462,523.05 of the 1982-83 season.

Bobcats continued to be the most economically important animals providing fur. Although 7,362 export tags were sold for bobcats taken during the 1983-84 season in a program requiring tags for sale or shipment of bobcat furs, holders of trapping licenses only reported the take of 6,378. This is a 14% decrease from the reported take of 7,457 during the 1982-83 season. The average price paid per bobcat was \$101.92, a 4% decrease from the average price of \$105.85 paid during the 1982-83 season. This decreased value of bobcat pelts, as well as the decrease in take, resulted in a 15.7% decrease in the overall value of bobcat pelts during the 1983-84 season.

Muskrats, historically the most economically important furbearer, were third in importance behind the gray fox during the 1983-84 season. The 29% increase in average value of muskrat pelts, and the 1.6% decrease in take, resulted in a 36% increase in the overall value of muskrats. The gray fox was the second most important furbearer, with a 2% decrease in pelt value, and 14.6% decrease in take resulting in a 19% decrease in the overall value of gray foxes. Coyote was the fourth most economically important furbearer, even though there was a 22% decrease in take, and a 26% decrease in average pelt value. Also, the take of raccoon decreased substantially, down 30% from the take during the 1982-83 season, with an additional decrease in the total fur revenue of 27% despite an increase in the average pelt value of 9%.

Once again more muskrats were taken than any other species. The 47,535 muskrats taken during the 1983-84 season represented 60% of the total take, an increase over the 56% that this species represented during the 1982-83 season. The take of all species of furbearers decreased, except for the take of beaver, mink, opossum and spotted skunk, which increased.

Furs were reported taken in all counties except San Francisco County (Table 2).

During the 1983-84 season there were 24 licensed fur dealers and an additional six licensed fur agents. Sixteen licensed fur dealers reported on 1983-84 season activities; 12 of these dealers are from California and four are from other states. In total they bought 65,462 California furs amounting to a total purchase of \$891,801.57 (Table 3). This represents handling 98% of the furs reported sold by licensed trappers. Five of the reporting fur dealers reported buying no fur while three reported buying over \$146,000 in furs, two reported buying \$50,000 to \$78,000, three reported buying \$14,000 to \$20,000, two reported buying \$3,000 to \$10,000, and two reported buying less than \$500 worth of furs. The average prices paid by the reporting dealers is used to calculate the fur value for each species and the value of the furs reported bought by the licensed fur dealers.

Table 1. Number of animals taken, average price paid, and revenue received by species during 1982-83 and 1983-84

1982-83							
Species	Harvest			Fur Value			Revenue
	Sold	Unsold	Total	Maximum	Minimum	Average	
Badger	88	207	295	14.56	.20	7.34	645.92
Beaver	352	330	682	14.16	1.06	7.87	2770.24
Bobcat	6845	612	7457	342.11	4.00	105.85	724543.25
Coyote	7189	1377	8566	110.93	.01	26.28	188926.92
Gray Fox	8395	382	8777	50.00	4.00	30.49	255963.55
Mink	198	56	254	20.00	.41	10.29	2037.42
Muskrat	43458	4523	47981	5.00	.14	2.09	90827.22
Opossum	191	874	1065	4.69	.05	1.29	246.39
Raccoon	5124	571	5695	31.10	.32	10.61	54365.64
Spotted Skunk	69	355	424	5.12	.53	3.96	273.24
Striped Skunk	251	4072	4323	3.01	.01	1.52	381.52
Weasel	4	11	15	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
<b>Total</b>	<b>72164</b>	<b>13370</b>	<b>85534</b>				<b>\$ 1320981.31</b>

1983-84							
Species	Harvest			Fur Value			Revenue
	Sold	Unsold	Total	Maximum	Minimum	Average	
Badger	73	123	196	9.71	.81	5.92	432.16
Beaver	354	385	739	16.50	.48	9.16	3242.64
Bobcat	5991	663	6654	380.00	2.04	101.92	610602.72
Coyote	4996	1382	6378	42.00	.02	19.39	96872.44
Gray Fox	6909	583	7492	38.75	1.00	29.89	206510.01
Mink	219	96	315	25.00	.12	11.28	2470.32
Muskrat	45879	1656	47535	4.20	.42	2.7	123873.30
Opossum	217	1033	1250	1.75	.02	.75	162.75
Raccoon	3423	577	4000	27.00	.35	11.59	39672.57
Spotted Skunk	72	516	588	3.81	1.55	3.36	241.92
Striped Skunk	297	3239	3536	3.06	.50	1.63	484.11
Weasel	2	2	4	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
<b>Total</b>	<b>68432</b>	<b>10255</b>	<b>78687</b>				<b>\$ 1084564.94</b>

Table 2. Number of animals reported taken by licensed fur trappers and by species and county during the 1983-84 trapping season.

County	Badger	Beaver	Bobcat	Coyote	Gray Fox	Mink	Muskrat	Opossum	Raccoon	Spotted Skunk	Striped Skunk	Weasel	Total
Alameda			4	5	17			1	6				33
Alpine	1		15		7					4	3		30
Amador			1	5	6			3	2		3		20
Butte	2	35	21	43	151	3	5555	10	92	61	72		6045
Calaveras		3	73	21	56			15	78		18		264
Colusa		2	38	36	65		4705		51		6		4903
Contra Costa		2		2	1	8	102	6	23				144
Del Norte		3	155	31	49		21		67	5			331
El Dorado		1	19	24	70		1	59	111	3	43		331
Fresno	3	2	248	154	149		589	58	69	1	207		1480
Glenn	3	10	52	35	116		3348	13	64	13	53		3707
Humboldt	1	6	186	51	178	1			592	51	107		1173
Imperial	6		20	56	102				9	1	30		224
Inyo	25	73	165	345	113				6		12		739
Kern	4	19	631	459	357		3	27	81	11	62		1654
Kings	1		54	35	6				8		47		151
Lake			61	51	179	10	753		59	10	47		1170
Lassen	16	53	74	424		63	4329	1	26	32	71	1	5090
Los Angeles	5		365	569	536			28	60	18	50		1631
Madera	2	3	122	36	68			32	58	2	66		389
Marin			30	1	11			10	54		50		156
Mariposa	2		70	182	114		2	23	97		113	2	605
Mendocino			111	19	248	10	81	13	392	9	74		957
Merced		26	3	133	8	30	1676	46	124		60		2106
Modoc	7	17	152	186	2	79	6047		20	6	10		6526
Mono	14	65	101	238	80	1	18		15		3		535
Monterey	10		427	92	277		180	98	48	86	411		1629
Napa			7	18	36				54		15		130
Nevada				7	1								8
Orange			5	47	13						6		65
Placer		21	5	9	21	2	205	3	5				277
Plumas		15	22	120	7	11	227		25	1	18		446
Riverside	6	86	150	187	259		110	39	30	45	91		1003
Sacramento		44	1	4		22	1910	8	36		8		2033
San Benito	6		99	39	41			19	21	31	163		419
San Bernardino	17		533	1014	401		2	13	32	16	65	1	2094
San Diego	7	4	282	270	375			171	37	26	168		1340
San Francisco													0
San Joaquin		37		6	1	13	1327	19	56		10		1469
San Luis Obispo	11		396	141	446			36	52	25	362		1469
San Mateo								1	3				4
Santa Barbara	13		593	135	955			75	67	55	391		2284
Santa Clara				1	3		1	12	21		10		48
Santa Cruz			5	6	4			4	1		4		24
Shasta	3	80	89	245	489	14	6684	73	205	15	110		8007
Sierra		10	3	12	1		1		2		2		31
Siskiyou	20	16	191	190	9	33	5138		153	18	110		5878
Solano			3	3	2	4	1437	4	34		4		1491
Sonoma			85	4	69	2	25	167	348	4	85		789
Stanislaus			18	26	107	4	562	27	101		15		860
Sutter		26	6	2			1397	8	23		6		1468
Tehama	5	56	68	178	246		369	41	160	2	122		1247
Trinity		5	36	79	177	4			63	9	14		387
Tulare			220	143	212			4	61	2	36		678
Tuolumne	1		317	43	95			3	82		3		544
Ventura	5		309	167	532		5	41	42	26	81		1208
Yolo		2	12	26	15		414	5	30		9		513
Yuba		17	1	23	9	1	311	34	44		10		450
Total Animals Trapped	196	739	6654	6378	7492	315	47535	1250	4000	588	3536	4	78687
% Total Take	.25	.94	8.46	8.11	9.52	.40	60.41	1.59	5.08	.75	4.49	.01	

Table 3. California furs purchased by fur dealers licensed in California, 1983-84.

Species	Range of Average Prices	# Furs Purchased	Total Spent
Badger	2.00 - 15.00	30	\$ 177.66
Beaver	5.00 - 15.00	355	3253.24
Bobcat	36.25 - 141.73	4637	472621.88
Coyote	13.00 - 55.00	3275	63505.94
Gray Fox	2.00 - 32.00	6076	181629.74
Mink	8.00 - 13.65	190	2143.51
Muskrat	2.32 - 3.40	47048	127073.59
Opossum	.54 - 1.75	195	147.13
Raccoon	7.52 - 16.24	3536	40995.92
Spotted Skunk	1.58 - 3.54	33	110.94
Striped Skunk	1.00 - 1.76	87	142.02
Weasel	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
<b>Total</b>		<b>65462</b>	<b>\$ 891801.57</b>