

Licensed Fur Trappers and Dealers Report  
1984-1985

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: \$35.00      Juvenile: \$15.00      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 1,650 trapping licenses were sold during the 1984-85 trapping season. This is an increase of 3% from the 1,607 licenses sold for the 1983-84 season and was the second year in the last seven where license sales were below 1,800. This level of license sales is well above the 450 to 1,000 licenses sold annually during the period 1950 to 1976 but below the 3,000 plus licenses sold annually right before license fees were raised and trappers had to pass a proficiency examination. Current fur prices are not likely to encourage license sales to reach 3,000 in the near future.

	<u>1983-84</u>	<u>1984-85</u>
Licensees who reported trapping effort	945	1,029
Licensees who reported but did not trap or were unsuccessful	247	296
Licensees not reporting	415	325
Total licenses sold	1,607	1,650

Revenue received by trappers from the sale of furs during the 1984-85 season, based on average prices paid by fur buyers, was \$1,381,572 (Table 1). This was the fourth season since 1977-78 that the reported fur revenue did not exceed \$2,000,000.00. This is also a 27% increase in revenue from the 1983-84 trapping season, when a total of \$1,084,564.94 in revenue was received by trappers. The average income per trapper increased 17% from \$1,147.68 in 1983-84 to \$1,342.64 in 1984-85.

Each year a portion of the fur harvest is reported as unsold. During the 1984-85 season 14% was unsold, compared to 13% unsold during the 1983-84 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 1984-85 fur harvest was \$1,528,036.70, an increase of 25% from the \$1,220,653.20 of the 1983-84 season.

Bobcats continued to be the most economically important animals providing fur. Although 8,897 export tags were sold for bobcats taken during the 1984-85 season in a program requiring tags for sale or shipment of bobcat furs, holders of trapping licenses only reported the take of 8,035. This is a 21% increase from the reported take of 6,654 during the 1982-83 season. The average price paid per bobcat was \$121.96, a 20% increase from the average price of \$101.92 paid during the 1983-84 season. This increased value of bobcat pelts, as well as the increase in take, resulted in a 49% increase in the overall value of bobcat pelts during the 1984-85 season.

Muskrats, historically the most economically important furbearer, were third in importance behind the gray fox and coyote during the 1984-85 season. The 19% increase in average value of muskrat pelts, and the 1.5% decrease in take, resulted in a 5% decrease in the overall value of muskrats. The gray fox was the second most important furbearer, with a 17% decrease in pelt value, and 16% increase in take resulting in a 1.7 decrease in the overall value of gray foxes. Coyote was the fourth most economically important furbearer, with a 23% increase in take, and a 15% decrease in average pelt value. The take of raccoon remained stable between 1983 and 1984-85.

Once again more muskrats were taken than any other species. The 46,820 muskrats taken during the 1984-85 season represented 57% of the total take, a decrease from the 60% that this species represented during the 1983-84 season. The take of all species of furbearers increased, except for the take of muskrat, mink, striped skunk, and spotted skunk, which decreased.

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

During the 1984-85 season there were 23 licensed fur dealers and an additional five licensed fur agents. Eleven licensed fur dealers, only 49%, reported on their 1984-85 activities. This is the lowest compliance with the reporting regulations since fur dealers' licenses were required five years ago; compliance always has been above 75%. Of the reporting dealers, seven are from California and four are from other states. They reported buying 38,048 California amounting to a total purchase of \$671,911.49. This represents handling 54% of the furs reported sold by licensed trappers. This represents the smallest portion of California furs sold to licensed fur dealers in the state. Two of the reporting fur dealers reported buying more than \$200,000 in furs and four reported buying \$14,000 to \$62,000 in furs. The average prices paid by the reporting dealers is used to calculate the fur value for each species and the value of furs reported bought by the dealers.

Table 1. Number of animals taken, average price paid, and revenue received by species during 1983-84 and 1984-85

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>

  

1984-85							
Species	Harvest			Fur Value			Revenue
	Sold	Unsold	Total	Maximum	Minimum	Average	
Badger	62	178	240	6.10	.25	3.26	202.12
Beaver	490	414	904	20.05	1.09	9.53	4,669.70
Bobcat	7484	661	8145	368.00	11.00	121.96	912,748.64
Coyote	6188	1656	7844	38.00	7.00	16.41	101,545.08
Gray Fox	8193	519	8712	33.58	5.50	24.74	202,694.82
Mink	210	48	258	22.06	.12	9.36	1,965.60
Muskrat	43092	3728	46820	4.17	.32	2.73	117,641.16
Opossum	267	827	1094	.73	.02	.50	133.50
Raccoon	3681	741	4422	26.00	5.00	10.75	39,570.75
Spotted Skunk	81	283	364	3.27	.25	2.55	206.55
Striped Skunk	334	2759	3093	.78	.29	.58	193.72
Weasel	3	7	10	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.	
<b>Total</b>	<b>70085</b>	<b>11821</b>	<b>81906</b>				<b>\$ 1,381,571.64</b>

Table 2. Number of animals reported taken by licensed fur trappers and by species and county during the 1984-85 trapping season.

County	Badger	Beaver	Bobcat	Coyote	Gray Fox	Mink	Muskkrat	Opossum	Raccoon	Spotted Skunk	Striped Skunk	Weasel	Total
Alameda	1		6	5	28		9	202	67	194	68		580
Alpine	1		12	10	3				1	2	3		32
Amador			5	10	9						8		35
Butte		120	22	16	202	4	2902	11	121	66	135		3599
Calaveras			7	23	67			3	140				240
Colusa		3	111	69	194		6698		71		4		7150
Contra Costa		9		37	2	2	174	8	49				281
Del Norte		7	15	3	42	2		4	54				139
El Dorado			26	18	82	2	161	31	52		52		422
Fresno	21	14	273	170	200	6	556	10	81	2	105		1438
Glenn		30	69	16	209	1	4686	2	68	3	17		5101
Humboldt	2	1	272	21	286			1	675	12	125		1395
Imperial	3		15	46	69				1		2		136
Inyo	11	57	320	425	109	1		1	30	15	21		990
Kern	26	11	696	421	425		15	40	73	20	119		1846
Kings			64	26	2			3			19		114
Lake	1	3	102	91	304	8	509	4	195		21		1238
Lassen	16	44	140	404	420	8	2952		59	6	26		3656
Los Angeles	8		448	629	127			19		1	53	1	1578
Madera	1	3	152	68	127		28	17	14	10	77		483
Marin			20	6	6			1		30	30		71
Mariposa		4	106	116	58		1	1	38		144		489
Mendocino			153	14	224			22	169	20	113		706
Merced		65	186	186	51	38	1326	13	205		88	4	2050
Hodoc	24	36	214	686	14	58	4630	63	42		39		5743
Hono	1	36	311	311	25	1				1	2		492
Monterey	13		493	94	537		71	58	83	79	262		1690
Napa			11	33	14				38				96
Nevada			2	12	8					1			22
Orange			7	13	48					1			69
Placer		30	4	8	35	4	225	12	18	1	13		350
Plumas		50	27	140	224	8	180		14	1			419
Riverside	10		273	620	348	17	167	27	35	21	94	1	1596
Sacramento		28		4	14		1315	11	132		35		1556
San Benito	7		113	39	119		1	7	28	1	84		396
San Bernardino	31		572	822	480			21	50	4	70	2	2053
San Diego	7		201	152	281			36	31	17	107		832
San Francisco		34				5	690	19	52		6		807
San Joaquin	9		421	133	410			44	59	1	200		1277
San Luis Obispo			6		2			2	20		30		30
San Mateo			603	221	637		9	69	58	16	207		1840
Santa Barbara	20		64	31	43			6	14		91		249
Santa Clara			10	19	4						7		47
Santa Cruz			216	262	586			38	7				7770
Shasta	2	26				25	6206		285	18	104	2	48
Sierra		8	12	27	81			1					
Siskiyou		46	372	174	363	28	4992	33	65	9	52		5819
Solano		46		300	73		2709	138	60	1	31		3180
Sonoma	2	30	60	3	67	3	1056	71	244	2	137		656
Stanislaus		44	6	51	73	5	2178	3	66	1	16		1482
Sutter	1	44	1			1	462	62	208	2	114		2305
Tehama		75	16	248	363	17		1	114	2	12		1551
Trinity			71	37	181	1		94	92	10	81		443
Tulare			650	123	480	1	5	7	69	11	23		1537
Tuolumne			93	51	99		15	42	35	10	49		342
Ventura	16		332	382	623		1581	10	13				1504
Yolo		9		24	4	3	371	4	74	1	21		1617
Yuba		35	12		16								561
Total Animals Trapped	233	904	8035	7844	8712	258	46892	1270	4339	558	3093	10	82148
% Total Take	.28	1.10	9.78	9.55	10.61	.31	57.08	1.55	5.28	.68	3.77	.01	

Table 3. California furs purchased by fur dealers licensed in California, 1984-85.

Species	Range of Average Prices	# Furs Purchased	Total Spent
Badger	3.06 - 5.00	3	\$ 9.78
Beaver	5.61 - 18.33	137	1305.61
Bobcat	42.46 - 202.00	3450	420762.00
Coyote	4.82 - 41.05	2133	35002.53
Gray Fox	16.71 - 27.35	4943	122289.82
Mink	5.00 - 13.89	104	973.44
Muskrat	1.80 - 3.32	25036	68348.28
Opossum	.20 - .57	53	26.50
Raccoon	6.59 - 15.60	2154	23155.50
Spotted Skunk	2.36 - 2.98	9	22.95
Striped Skunk	.52 - .72	26	15.08
Weasel	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
<b>Total</b>		<b>38048</b>	<b>\$ 671911.49</b>