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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release SUNDAY, JULY 9, 1944.

The fur catch in the United States and Alaska last year was worth approximately \$100,000,000 to trappers. Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, announced today after a survey of State and Territorial statistics.

At least 19½ million animals were taken by trappers during the year and this figure may be considerably below the actual take since a number of states do not keep accurate records of the catch. Dr. Gabrielson declared,

Louisiana, in the number of pelts taken, far out-ranked all other states, with a total of 4,470,498. This was due to the tremendous muskrat population found along the many miles of creeks, rivers, and bayous in the state. Out of Louisiana's total take of pelts, 4,076,785 were muskrat.

Minnesota was in second place with a take of 1,667,794 fur animals, followed by Wisconsin with 1,559,207, North Dakota with 1,403,233, Michigan with 895,540, Maryland 800,000 and Pennsylvania 779,681.

Although nearly half the furs sold in this country before the war were imported and these imports, except for karakul, rabbit, and a few other species have been much reduced, the U. S. fur trade is still brisk. The Bureau of Internal Revenue collected \$54,925,218 in taxes on sales of fur and fur-trimmed apparel sold at retail during 1943. This sum, representing a 10 percent tax, indicates that retail sales of fur apparel for the year amounted to nearly \$550,000,000.

The tax collection report shows that New York led the country in fur-apparel sales, followed in order by Illinois, California, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Maryland, New Jersey, Minnesota, Connecticut, Wisconsin, and Indiana. Such sales were up in most states and in some, where new war industries had been located, sales nearly doubled.

Regulations governing the trapping of fur animals are made by the individual states, and not by the Federal government. In some states either no information as to the number and kinds of animals trapped is required by the State government or such information is meager. For this reason estimates as to the annual take of fur animals for the country as a whole are necessarily inexact.

A detailed resume of the fur catch in each of the reporting states is now available as Wildlife Leaflet 253 from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Chicago 54, Illinois.