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FUR CATCH IN THE UNITED STATES, 1957

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Branch of Wildlife Research
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

The State game and conservation commissions have again cooperated, as in past years, in the preparation of this annual report of the wild fur catch for the 1956-57 season. Its purpose is to picture the trend in the commercial use of wild fur animal pelts produced in the United States. The States are unable to give exact data for all species; some compilations are made from the reports of resident fur buyers, and the numbers of pelts sold outside the State are unknown. The size of the catch is estimated in many cases.

In comparing the fur catch with the previous season it should be noted that Connecticut and Vermont were unable to give data for 1956-57. Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, and Wyoming have made limited reports, if any, for several years.

In contrast, the States which report on a greater number of species in 1956-57 are Delaware, Maine, New Jersey, New York, South Dakota, and Utah. With allowance made for these additional data, the species which show an increase in 1956-57 over the previous season are badger, bobcat, coyote, fox (gray, red, and cross), mink, muskrat, nutria, otter, and raccoon. On the other hand, the larger decreases are in beaver and opossum. While the take of fur seal pelts, 93,618, is less than in 1956, it is well above the approximate average of 65,000 pelts from 1940 to 1956. More States have reported the take of squirrel.

The 1956-57 season was marked by greater use of a variety of furs, many being used for trimmings. European buyers bought mink, muskrat, opossum, otter, coat raccoon, skunk, and the fine dark beaver. Wild mink met the competition of ranched types, which continued to dominate the New York fur market. Dyers collaborated with manufacturers by bringing out new colors, especially on muskrat, sheared raccoon, and beaver, and designers created attractive styles.

WILD FUR ANIMAL CATCH BY STATES, 1956-57

STATE	Badger	Bassarisk (Ringtail cat)	Beaver	Bobcat	Fisher	Fox				Fur Seal	Lynx (Canadian)
						Blus	Gray, Red and Cross	Silver	White		
Alabama.....	.....	.....	455	25	...	..	50	..	...	.....	.....
Alaska.....	.....	.....	14,350	.....	...	20	950	40	500	.....	2,200
Pribilof Is.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	5/ 93,618	.....
Arizona 1/.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Arkansas.....	.....	.....	.....	32	...	..	563	..	...	.....	.....
California.....	13	171	2,247	276	...	..	449	..	...	.....	.....
Colorado.....	473	11	6,465	2,283	...	..	408	..	...	.....	.....
Connecticut 1/.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Delaware.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Florida.....	.....	.....	.....	400	...	..	1,000	..	...	.....	.....
Georgia.....	.....	.....	550	1,500	...	..	19,000	..	...	.....	.....
Idaho.....	23	.....	7,139	346	...	..	7	..	...	.....	.....
Illinois 1/.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Indiana.....	4	.....	116	.....	...	..	147	..	...	.....	.....
Iowa.....	153	.....	2,874	.....	...	..	2,075	..	...	.....	.....
Kansas.....	77	.....	2/ 20	1	...	..	74	..	...	.....	.....
Kentucky.....	.....	.....	.....	3	...	..	388	..	...	.....	.....
Louisiana.....	.....	.....	.....	31	...	..	76	..	...	.....	.....
Maine 4/.....	.....	.....	13,949	695	53	..	230	..	...	.....	4/
Maryland.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	223	..	...	.....	.....
Massachusetts.....	.....	.....	261	.....	...	..	20	..	...	.....	.....
Michigan.....	349	.....	7,674	880	...	..	27,629	..	...	.....	1
Minnesota.....	1,146	.....	14,806	449	...	..	15,656	..	...	.....	283
Mississippi.....	.....	.....	650	85	...	..	480	..	...	.....	.....
Missouri.....	.....	.....	3,927	15	...	..	827	..	...	.....	.....
Montana.....	183	.....	9,812	808	...	..	136	..	...	.....	45
Nebraska.....	987	.....	7,717	68	...	..	622	..	...	.....	.....
Nevada 1/.....	.....	.....	5,000	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
New Hampshire 5/.....	.....	.....	1,613	37	...	..	32	..	...	.....	2
New Jersey.....	.....	.....	95	.....	...	..	1,163	..	...	.....	.....
New Mexico.....	500	125	1,000	1,000	...	..	1,500	..	...	.....	.....
New York.....	.....	.....	6,351	.....	189	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
North Carolina.....	.....	.....	.....	23	...	..	252	..	...	.....	.....
North Dakota.....	285	.....	2,220	46	...	..	349	..	...	.....	.....
Ohio.....	1	.....	.....	.....	...	..	834	..	...	.....	.....
Oklahoma.....	26	.....	.....	25	...	..	139	..	...	.....	.....
Oregon.....	3	4	12,212	544	...	..	151	..	...	.....	.....
Pennsylvania.....	.....	.....	3,864	.....	...	..	29,665	..	...	.....	.....
Rhode Island.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	666	..	...	.....	.....
South Carolina.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	395	..	...	.....	.....
South Dakota.....	.....	.....	483	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Tennessee.....	.....	.....	.....	17	...	..	346	..	...	.....	.....
Texas.....	5	5,524	.....	3	...	..	372	..	...	.....	.....
Utah.....	76	.....	3,234	627	...	..	87	..	...	.....	.....
Vermont 1/.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
Virginia.....	.....	.....	36	14	...	..	504	..	...	.....	.....
Washington.....	21	.....	11,153	1,674	...	..	78	..	...	.....	.....
West Virginia.....	.....	.....	351	.....	...	..	202	..	...	.....	.....
Wisconsin.....	NOS	.....	9,192	321	...	..	38,354	..	...	.....	2
Wyoming 1/.....	.....	.....	8,530	.....	NOS	..	.....	..	...	.....	.....
TOTAL.....	4,325	5,835	158,346	12,228	242	20	146,099	40	500	93,618	2,533

NOS - No open season.

1/ The following States unable to give fur-catch data: Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, and Vermont. Nevada and Wyoming report beaver only.

2/ California: Catch of muskrat includes 1,800 Colorado River muskrat (sandrat).

3/ Kansas: Beaver (20) taken on complaint basis; no open season.

WILD FUR ANIMAL CATCH BY STATES, 1956-57

STATE	Marten	Mink	Muskrat	Nutria	Opossum	Otter	Raccoon	Skunk	Squirrel	Weasel	Wolf ^{6/}	Wolverine
Alabama.....	3,560	7,950	66	400	212	5,350	130	.....	25	.....	...
Alaska.....	3,650	35,000	84,000	.....	.....	3,300	.....	.....	.....	1,500	6/ 1,100	200
Pribilof Is....
Arizona <u>1/</u>
Arkansas.....	20,395	13,422	.....	18,192	.....	53,112	3,857	.....	20	.....	.....
California.....	2,906	2/ 75,595	1	154	142	2,220	883	.....	25	170	...
Colorado.....	39	202	35,330	.....	4	.....	312	1,003	.....	82	6,733	...
Connecticut <u>1/</u>
Delaware.....	25	36,000	.....	1,000	100	2,500	200	.....	200	.....	.....
Florida.....	100	.....	.....	1,000	500	3,000	400	.....	.....	.....	.....
Georgia.....	3,500	3,000	.....	45,000	350	50,000	1,500	.....	.....	.....	.....
Idaho.....	366	3,370	91,080	.....	.....	77	335	35	.....	1,045	58	.....
Illinois <u>1/</u>
Indiana.....	7,978	264,762	.....	3,610	.....	87,718	777	.....	719	.....	.....
Iowa.....	9,706	79,108	.....	2,062	.....	58,944	5,107	.....	263	24	.....
Kansas.....	1,460	22,994	.....	2,705	.....	24,085	7,880	375,000	1	.....	.....
Kentucky.....	10,745	89,069	.....	5,265	.....	10,967	1,001	.....	377	.....	.....
Louisiana.....	62,872	1,589,433	543,160	5,056	5,261	72,522	526	.....	.....	.....	.....
Maine <u>4/</u>	23	4,750	31,500	.....	.....	570	5,070	140	25,650	1,000	.....	.....
Maryland.....	671	207,177	2	1,015	149	8,680	1,018	.....	215	.....	.....
Massachusetts....	1,253	75,725	.....	.....	158	3,544	188	.....	133	.....	.....
Michigan.....	21,558	456,127	.....	41,314	577	208,960	10,596	975,000	11,399	6/ 3,866	.....
Minnesota.....	47,880	120,434	.....	338	264	13,052	11,195	.....	38,055	6/ 1,602	.....
Mississippi.....	12,000	9,100	200	7,300	100	14,600	590	.....	35	.....	.....
Missouri.....	8,682	67,139	.....	26,999	.....	122,991	4,605	.....	23	9	.....
Montana.....	494	7,964	28,663	.....	.....	62	468	2,329	.....	962	100	4
Nebraska.....	10,239	112,538	.....	3,431	.....	20,838	6,344	.....	203	4,065	.....
Nevada <u>1/</u>	NOS	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
New Hampshire <u>5/</u>	957	9,430	.....	.....	102	1,218	15	.....	67	.....	.....
New Jersey.....	310	50,100	.....	1,800	30	566	3,300	266	660	.....	.....
New Mexico.....	25	4,000	.....	.....	.....	600	2,000	.....	10	2,500	.....
New York.....	301	299,040	.....	1,250,380	.....	.....	.....
North Carolina...	5,186	95,544	26	2,703	687	25,168	143	.....	209	.....	.....
North Dakota.....	24,811	113,197	.....	.....	.....	10,866	7,424	.....	6,265	12	.....
Ohio.....	6,802	550,052	.....	6,298	.....	185,803	2,864	.....	2,075	.....	.....
Oklahoma.....	2,233	4,951	.....	13,026	.....	17,560	16,197	.....	.....	20	.....
Oregon.....	35	3,315	34,391	.....	33	282	1,372	169	.....	94	194	.....
Pennsylvania.....	7,792	609,639	.....	6,103	.....	52,000	9,896	.....	6,420	.....	.....
Rhode Island.....	294	9,271	.....	.....	20	380	252	.....	42	.....	.....
South Carolina...	1,973	1,240	.....	3,122	32	3,080	98	.....	.....	.....	.....
South Dakota.....	13,512	11,220	.....	.....	.....	12,936	9,450	.....	2,939	.....	.....
Tennessee.....	5,868	81,827	.....	9,504	.....	16,480	6,664	.....	87	.....	.....
Texas.....	2,371	1,226	44	2,389	48	12,049	883	.....	.....	.....	.....
Utah.....	NOS	308	79,514	.....	.....	.....	.....	76	.....	.....	443	.....
Vermont <u>1/</u>
Virginia.....	1,504	85,830	.....	3,334	298	11,404	4,254	.....	123	.....	.....
Washington.....	614	6,571	56,943	.....	.....	824	2,649	441	.....	353	667	.....
West Virginia.....	809	23,028	.....	1,195	.....	6,697	1,020	.....	134	.....	.....
Wisconsin.....	37,771	555,500	.....	2,359	574	47,302	6,181	1,435,590	23,770	6/ 1,786	.....
Wyoming <u>1/</u>	NOS	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	NOS
TOTAL.....	5,221	399,228	5,877,049	543,499	216,711	15,020	1,476,438	131,631	4,061,886	100,170	6/ 23,349	204

4/ Maine: Calendar year 1956 except bobcat (1956-57); a few Canadian lynx included with bobcat. 23 marten taken illegally and turned in to State.

5/ New Hampshire: Calendar year 1956.
Pribilof Islands: Official take of fur seals calendar year 1957.

6/ Timber wolf: Alaska, 900; Michigan, 7; Minnesota, 511; and Wisconsin, 1.
Total: Timber wolf, 1,419
Coyote, 21,930