



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FUR TRAPPING STILL ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY FASHION DEMANDS

Mink and muskrat for milady's fur coat continue to be the important items sought from American trap lines, according to latest compilation of fur catch figures by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior.

However, fur trapping in the 1955-56 season generally returned poor profits to those who plied that trade because fashion was still reluctant to accept most of the long-haired furs. At present efforts to revive the demand for the neglected furs are meeting with success and there is hope that this condition may soon be corrected.

The muskrat continues to lead the field because of its numbers and because it is acceptable to those who buy fur garments. More than five and a half million of these animals were taken in 1956, about 400,000 more than in 1955.

Louisiana, with 57,142 mink pelts and 1.8 million muskrat skins, led the nation in production. Minnesota was second in mink production with 47,880. Wisconsin was third in mink with 38,513 and second in muskrats with 641,955. Total mink harvest was approximately 349,000 skins, about 50,000 less than 1955.

The racoon harvest of 978,000 was only slightly below the 1955 figure. The opossum take was down a little but still topped a quarter of a million. The beaver catch was close to 180,000, a little under the figure for 1955.

The gray timber wolf, as distinguished from the common coyote or brush wolf, still shows up in the trap lines with Alaska harvesting 930; Michigan 24; New Mexico trappers took the most bobcats, 2,075, with Georgia second with 1,500. The total take was 8,292.

Other figures for 1956 fur harvesting are: Badger, 3,880; bassarisk (ring-tailed cat), 10,892; lynx, 3,204; marten, 5,763; otter, 12,927; skunk, 116,858; squirrel, 56,004; weasel, 96,493; wolverine, 356.

The fur seal harvest for 1956 was 122,826, nearly twice the usual number. This, however, is not a trap line activity but an annual harvest responsibility conducted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on the Pribilof Islands off Alaska.

State-by-State data on the fur catch for 1956 is contained in Wildlife Leaflet 388. This leaflet may be obtained free of charge from the Division of Information, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

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