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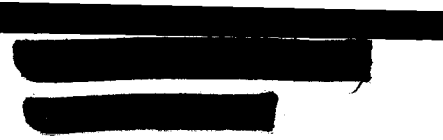
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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

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Federal Aid Project No. W-49-R-30

Study XV: Wildlife Harvests

Job No. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1982-83

By

G. F. Hubert, Jr.

pg 9. % of all-state
permits sold, by
~~region~~ wildlife
management unit



David Kenney, Director

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

S. W. Harrison
P-R Coordinator

M. Conlin, Supervisor
Div. of Fish & Wildl. Re

18 July 1983

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JOB COMPLETION REPORT
SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NO. W-49-R-30

STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1982-83

ABSTRACT: The Illinois Department of Conservation licensed 241 individual fur buyers (224 residents; 17 non-residents) during 1982-83, a 2.1% increase from 1981-82. The number of trapping licenses issued was estimated at 16,013, down 13.0%. The estimated number of raccoon hunters increased 23.6% to 53,355.

Reports required of all licensed fur buyers were used to determine the annual furbearer harvest and its value to fur-takers during the 1982-83 season. Based on a 97.93% response from individual buyers, the total harvest of the 10 open season furbearers was estimated at 670,212 pelts, a decrease of 11.5% from 1981-82. Total value of the harvest decreased 41.3% to \$5,931,454.40. Muskrats (Ondatra zibethicus) and raccoons (Procyon lotor) were the two most important species accounting for 88.04% of the total pelt harvest and 85.49% of its value. The harvest of nine species decreased compared with the previous season. Only the weasel (Mustela frenata, M. rixosa) catch increased. The harvest declines for striped skunk (Mephitis mephitis), red fox (Vulpes vulpes), gray fox (Urocyon cinereoargenteus), and coyote (Canis latrans) may have been influenced by population changes. Other harvest drops were influenced by lower pelt prices and adverse water trapping conditions during the early part of the season.

The following table summarizes the 1982-83 statewide harvest:

Species	Estimated harvest	Average pelt price per pelt	Estimated total value to fur-takers
Muskrat	297,872	\$ 2.75	\$ 819,148.00
Mink	17,768	\$13.90	\$ 246,975.20
Raccoon	292,189	\$14.55	\$4,251,349.90
Opossum	35,548	\$ 0.95	\$ 33,770.60
Red fox	9,780	\$30.40	\$ 297,312.00
Gray fox	5,943	\$26.35	\$ 156,598.05
Beaver	2,517	\$ 4.95	\$ 12,459.15
Striped skunk	341	\$ 1.50	\$ 511.50
Weasel	74	\$ 0.50	\$ 37.00
Coyote	8,180	\$13.85	\$ 113,293.00
Totals or Mean	670,212	\bar{x} = \$ 8.85	\$5,931,454.40

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JOB COMPLETION REPORT

SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT No. W-49-R-30

STUDY XV: Wildlife Harvests

JOB NO. 3: Fur harvest survey, 1982-83

OBJECTIVE: To collect information on the annual fur-taker harvest of all open season furbearers in Illinois and its economic value.

PROCEDURES: Numbers of wild fur pelts taken in Illinois and sold by furtakers during the 1982-83 seasons were estimated from fur purchase reports required of all fur buyers licensed by the Department of Conservation (Fig. 1). Approximately 15 days before the muskrat trapping season opened, all buyers were mailed fur purchase report forms and written instructions to maintain records of their transactions throughout the season. The reports of raw furs purchased were to be submitted no later than 20 March 1983. Buyers failing to report by that date were mailed a reminder notice by 1st class mail on 15 April 1983. Only original pelt sales were used to avoid duplication. An adjustment factor of 3.5% was used to account for out-of-state pelt sales (Hubert 1983a). Average pelt prices for all sizes and grades were estimated from price data supplied by representative buyers during and after the open seasons. Numbers and distribution of fur buyer permittees and trapping pressure were determined from license sales records obtained from the License and Regi-Title Section, Illinois Department of Conservation. Fur hunting pressure was estimated from the number of raccoon, red fox, and coyote hunters in the post-season hunter harvest survey, Federal Aid Project W-49-R-30, Study XV, Job No. 1.

Information about the history of beaver (Castor canadensis) harvest regulations was obtained from official Department of Conservation files. These records were supplemented by a review of the published Illinois Revised Statutes and Laws at the University of Illinois library. Special beaver trapping license data were obtained from the Department's License and Regi-Title Section in Springfield.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

1982-83 Fur Seasons

The 1982-83 fur-bearing mammal seasons varied from 30 to 359 days in length (Table 1). Trapping seasons for all species except beaver, red fox, gray fox, and coyote were 45 days long with the northern management zone

opening 19 days before the southern zone (Fig. 2). Red fox, gray fox, and coyote could be legally trapped for 30 days statewide beginning 30 November. Beaver trapping season was 96 or 106 days in length depending on zone and opened simultaneously with all other species except fox and coyote. A 56- or 58-day hunting season was in effect for raccoon and opossum (Didelphis marsupialis); opening dates varied by zone. The statewide hunting season lasted 60 days for fox and 359 days for striped skunk and coyote. No bag limits were in force for any furbearer.

The weather during the month of November was generally favorable for all fur-taking activities except water trapping. Average temperatures ranged from normal to 2 degrees (4 degrees F) above normal throughout the state. During mid-November when the main fur seasons opened in the northern zone, temperature readings were above normal with some new maximum records being set. However, by the end of the month below normal readings were being recorded in all areas except the southern 1/4 of Illinois. Monthly precipitation was above normal over the entire state, especially in the northern half which had more than double the normal amount. The largest above normal variation was in the west-central section. Rainfall was moderate to heavy during the first half of the month with amounts ranging from 1.3 to 5.1 cm. A dry period was experienced during the next two weeks in the north, but the south received 2.5 to 5.1 cm of rain. The excessive November precipitation greatly hampered trapping efforts early in the season when most of the water trapping activity normally occurs. As a result, the November harvest of "trapped only" furbearers such as muskrat and mink (Mustela vison) was reduced. The catch of species taken by hunters and trappers such as the raccoon may also have been suppressed, but to a lesser extent.

Fur-taking conditions in general and water trapping conditions in particular tended to be good in mid-December, but poor to fair early and late in the month. Average monthly temperatures ranged from 3 to 5 degrees (7 to 9 degrees F) above normal throughout the state. The southeastern section had the largest above normal variation (5 degrees C above normal). Many new maximum records were set as temperatures climbed into the 16 to 26° range (60 to 78° F) for brief periods. Precipitation was also well above normal and some areas set new precipitation totals for December. From the 6th through the 8th extremely heavy rainfall was recorded in several sections (some received more than 15 cm in 24 hours). Numerous rivers and streams rose to record levels. Rainfall was light during mid-month, but was heavy near the end. Up to 2.5 cm of snow fell on parts of northern and central Illinois on December 7th and 8th and again on the 15th. The abnormal precipitation had an adverse impact on water trappers, especially in the southern zone. The general lack of snow reduced fox and coyote hunting activity, but permitted night hunters and land trappers to operate throughout the month with more or less typical success.

The weather in January varied from poor to good for fur-taking. Monthly temperatures averaged from 1 to 4 degrees (1 to 7 degrees F) above normal throughout much of the state. The extreme south, however, recorded normal readings. The warm trend that had started in December continued through the third week of January when minimum readings dropped to near -18° (0° F) in the north. In the fourth week temperatures fell below normal in all

sections of Illinois. Precipitation was light during the first, second, and fourth weeks with most of the rain and snow being recorded in the third week. On January 21st, 2.5 cm of snow fell over the northern two-thirds of the state. The same area received another 2.5 to 15 cm of snow on the 29th. Once again, the absence of snow and above normal temperatures made fox and coyote hunting difficult for most of the month. These same conditions allowed a continuation of night hunting and water trapping during a period when these pursuits are usually next to impossible. Unfortunately, a large percentage of night hunters and trappers cease to be active late in the season whether or not conditions are suitable.

The weather during the 1982-83 season can be summarized as below average for water trapping and canid hunting, and average to above average for land trapping and night hunting. The above normal temperatures and excessive amounts of rainfall in November and December coupled with a general lack of snow during December and early January decreased the effectiveness of water trappers early in the season, but produced harvest conditions well above average late in the year. In general, night hunters and land trappers benefitted from the weather although their mobility and effectiveness was periodically limited by the heavy rains. The absence of cold, snowy weather until late in January greatly reduced the activity of canid hunters particularly in northern and central Illinois. Overall, the muskrat, mink, raccoon, and opossum catch by trappers as well as the harvest of foxes and coyotes by canid hunters was probably depressed by the weather. The beaver catch may also have been reduced in part by adverse trapping conditions early in the season. The harvest of raccoons and opossums by night hunters and the canid catch by land trappers was more or less typical.

Trends in Fur License Sales

Records of fur buyer permits sold by the License and Regi-Title Section, Illinois Department of Conservation, for 1982-83 were compiled prior to mailing out fur purchase report forms and instructions. A total of 241 individuals purchased 248 fur buyer permits during 1982-83. This represents a 2.1% increase from 1981-82 in the number of persons licensed. Of the 241 buyers, 224 were residents and 17 were non-residents. The 224 residents bought 231 permits (Table 2). Just under 68% of all resident buyers were headquartered in the Northwest Hills, Western Prairie/Forest, Grand Prairie, and Southern Plain management units (Table 2, Fig. 3). Fur buyer distribution within the state is not indicative of furbearer or fur harvest distribution.

Trapping licenses issued statewide in 1982-83 numbered approximately 16,013 (16,005 resident, 8 non-resident - 1 July 1983 estimate), a decrease of 13.0% from the previous year (1981-82 revised estimate of trapping license sales = 18,397). The decrease occurred throughout the state and was not confined to specific management units. The decline may have been due in part to the substantial decrease in the average pelt prices for 9 of the 10 species surveyed, especially muskrat and raccoon. Raccoon hunter numbers increased 23.6% from an estimated 43,172 in 1981-82 to 53,355 in 1982-83 (Ellis 1983). The change is likely due to sampling variation. As in previous seasons, most of these hunters were in the southern, western, and northwestern management units (Fig. 3). The number of red fox hunters decreased 26.9% to an estimated 16,357, and the estimated number of coyote hunters dropped 13.6% to 27,262 (Ellis 1983). Both declines may be attributed

in part to the virtual lack of tracking snow and above normal temperatures throughout much of the winter. Opossum hunters were estimated to number 20,057 during the past season (Ellis 1983).

Fur Buyer Fur Purchase Survey

Reports of raw furs purchased had been submitted by 236 of the 241 (97.93%) individual fur buyers when the survey was closed out on 31 May 1983. Of these, 31 stated they did not buy any pelts during the 1982-83 season. The five buyers who failed to report were assumed to have purchased raw furs at the same rate as the buyers who submitted records of their activities.

An estimated total of 670,212 pelts was harvested and sold by Illinois fur-takers during the 1982-83 season (Table 3). This estimate includes an adjustment factor of 3.5% to account for out-of-state pelt sales (Hubert 1983a). No allowance was made for pelts harvested by hunters and trappers that were not sold.

Muskrats and raccoons were the two most important furbearers in terms of harvest and value (Table 3). Together these species accounted for 88.04% of the total pelt harvest and 85.49% of its value. Other top-ranking species included mink, opossum, red fox, and coyote. The 1982-83 pelt harvest was valued to fur-takers at \$5,931,454.40, about \$4,175,000 less than the previous year (Table 4).

The total fur harvest for 1982-83 represented an 11.5% decrease in pelts taken compared with the 1981-82 season (Table 4). All changes were affected by the slight decrease in allowance for out-of-state pelt sales in 1982-83. Also, as noted above, about 2,400 fewer trapping licenses were sold. Major declines (>25%) in the mink, opossum, red fox, beaver, and striped skunk harvests occurred. The decreases for mink and beaver were due primarily to declines in average pelt prices coupled with difficult water trapping conditions during the early part of the season. The opossum catch probably dropped due to weather variations which reduced opossum movements and made this species less vulnerable to harvest. A slight decline in opossum pelt price may also have played a role, but a population decline appears unlikely (Hubert 1983b). In contrast, the lower skunk catch can be attributed to a continuing population decline (Hubert 1983c), weather variations, a drop in average pelt price, and a continued lack of interest on the part of fur-takers and buyers. The major drop in the red fox harvest was probably the combined result of much lower pelt prices, fewer fox-takers, and poor hunting conditions. However, a decline in the statewide red fox population compared with the previous year should not be discounted.

Minor drops (5 to 25%) in the muskrat, raccoon, gray fox, and coyote harvests were recorded in 1982-83 (Table 4). Census data are not available, but apparently the 1982 statewide muskrat population was similar to that in 1981. Therefore, the decline in the muskrat take can be attributed to the 36% decline in pelt price, the poor water trapping conditions early in the season that were mentioned above, and the reduction in trapping pressure. The probable causes for the drop in the raccoon harvest are the same as those for muskrat. The lower gray fox and coyote catches no doubt resulted from poor harvest conditions and lower pelt prices which reduced harvest

pressure. However, slight population declines may also have been involved.

A major increase (>25%) in the weasel harvest took place between 1981-82 and 1982-83 (Table 4). However, the change is not meaningful. Weasel harvest and population data are limited. Most weasels seem to be trapped incidentally to other species. Pelt prices remain low and no interest in weasels exists.

The total value of the 1982-83 fur harvest was \$4,175,106.65 (41.3%) less than the previous season (Table 4). The change was due to a combination of the decrease in total pelt harvest (especially for muskrats, raccoons, and opossums) and substantial declines in the average prices paid for muskrat, raccoon, and red fox. Average pelt prices for 9 of the 10 species surveyed declined. The 1982-83 average pelt prices reflect a more stable market demand for the long-haired furs of raccoon, red fox, and coyote, and a continued reduction in demand for the short-haired furs of muskrat and mink. After a 6-year period of greatly inflated pelt prices the market values for most wild furs are beginning to return to realistic levels. As a whole, the prices paid for all major species in Illinois remained good.

Distribution of Harvest Among Fur-takers

The distribution of the fur catch between hunters and trappers is traditionally a source of controversy. Also, this aspect of the annual harvest is potentially important in the establishment of sound regulations and the evaluation of management programs. During the 1982-83 season, the percentage of animals harvested by hunters was monitored for two species as a part of certain furhouse studies in Federal Aid Project W-49-R-30. Also, the present survey requested licensed fur buyers to estimate the portion of pelts purchased from hunters for the six fur-bearers that could be legally harvested by hunting or trapping methods.

The percentage of total harvest taken by hunters for species which may be hunted or trapped under current regulations ranged from 8.4% for striped skunk to 76.8% for raccoon (Table 5). By applying the estimates from furhouse investigations and fur buyer estimates for canids and skunks to the 1982-83 harvest figures, the number of pelts taken by hunters was estimated to be 261,861 or approximately 39.1% of the total harvest for the year. As stated earlier, there were an estimated 53,355 raccoon hunters and 16,013 licensed trappers during the 1982-83 season. Excluding fox hunters, coyote hunters, opossum hunters, and canid chasers, fur hunters made up 76.9% of all Illinois fur-takers. These hunters harvested 39.1% of all pelts taken. The average fur hunter harvested 4.9 pelts valued at \$66.62 compared with the average trapper who took 25.5 pelts worth \$148.44. The distribution of harvest emphasizes the greater efficiency of trappers as well as the higher monetary rewards of trapping. The 1982-83 distribution values were similar to previous seasons (Hubert 1981, 1982).

Fur Auctions

During the 1982-83 season, four fur auctions were held in Illinois compared with two the previous year (Table 6). All were organized by local chapters of the Fur-takers of America. The first took place on

28 November 1982, and the last on 2 January 1983. These four auctions resulted in the sale of over 3,069 pelts worth in excess of \$36,000. Prices paid at such fur auctions are normally higher than the statewide averages. The 1982-83 sales were no exception. For example, the mean prices paid at the second New Berlin sale for muskrat, red fox, and coyote were \$2.87, \$37.64, and \$23.58, respectively. However, no furs were sold on-the-carcass, the majority were from trapped animals, and most were stretched and dried. The four auctions accounted for approximately 0.45% of all Illinois pelts marketed during the past season.

1975-1982 Fur Harvest Trends

Statewide furbearer harvest trend data for the years 1975 through 1982 are presented in Tables 7 through 12. During the 8-year period, total estimated pelt harvests based on fur buyer surveys ranged from 520,032 in 1976 to 948,392 in 1979, and averaged 752,598. No allowances for out-of-state pelt sales were made in 1975 or 1976. Out-of-state sales adjustments for the last six seasons have averaged 4.2%. Since 1975, the harvests of most species have undergone major fluctuations.

History of Beaver Trapping Regulations

The beaver was first afforded protection by state statute on 8 July 1933 (Table 13). Prior to that date no regulations concerning the harvest of beaver existed in Illinois. The first modern day beaver trapping season was held from 1 through 15 December 1951. Subsequent seasons have ranged from 15 to 133 days in length depending on year and zone. A special beaver trapping license and/or pelt tags were required from 1951 through 1954, and seasonal bag limits were in effect from 1951 through 1958. In general, beaver harvest regulations have been steadily liberalized over the past 30 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This investigation provides the only source of harvest and value data for all 10 open season species of furbearers. The information serves as a base for assessment of population trends and regulatory management. The fur harvest survey should be continued.

No alterations in the length or timing of the current furbearer seasons or management zones are recommended based on the data contained in this report. The maintenance of stable seasons and zones permits more realistic year to year comparisons of harvest information and associated biological data are easier to interpret. However, additional recommendations for harvest regulations are contained in the job reports for certain related furbearer studies. Those recommendations should also be considered.

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PREPARED BY: G. F. Hubert, Jr.
Furbearer Biologist
Special Projects Section
Div. of Fish & Wildl. Res.

APPROVED BY: J. A. Tranquilli
Supervisor
Special Projects Section
Div. of Fish & Wildl. Res.

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Table 1. Illinois fur-bearing mammal seasons for 1982-83.

Species	Hunting seasons ^a		Trapping seasons	
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone
Muskrat, Mink, Weasel	Closed	Closed	15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Raccoon, Opossum	15 Nov-13 Jan	25 Nov-23 Jan	15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Striped Skunk	Continuous open season		15 Nov-29 Dec	25 Nov- 8 Jan
Beaver	Closed	Closed	15 Nov-28 Feb ^b	25 Nov-28 Feb
Red Fox, Gray Fox	30 Nov-31 Jan	30 Nov-31 Jan	30 Nov-29 Dec	30 Nov-29 Dec
Coyote	Continuous open season		30 Nov-29 Dec	30 Nov-29 Dec

^a Raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, and coyote hunting closed 24 hrs. on 19 and 20 Nov. and 10 and 11 Dec. and until 6 PM on 21 Nov. and 12 Dec. during firearms deer season. Red fox and gray fox hunting closed 24 hrs. on 10 and 11 Dec. and until 6 PM on 12 Dec. during firearms deer season.

^b Those portions of Jo Daviess, Carroll, Whiteside, and Rock Island counties lying west of Illinois Rt. 84 and US Rt. 20, from Interstate-80 north to the Wisconsin line were open to beaver trapping from 15 Nov.-29 Dec. 1982 only.

Table 2. Summary of resident fur buyer permits issued in Illinois for the 1982-83 season.

Wildlife management unit	Number of individual permittees	License type	
		Retail	Wholesale
Northwest Hills	21 (9.4) ^a	19	3
Northeast Moraine	17 (7.6)	15	2
Mississippi Border-North	15 (6.7)	13	2
Mississippi Border-South	20 (8.9)	15	6
Western Prairie/Forest	24 (10.7)	24	1
Central Sand Prairie	3 (1.3)	3	0
Grand Prairie	63 (28.1)	48	17
Southern Plain	44 (19.7)	33	12
Wabash Border	14 (6.3)	12	3
Shawnee Hills	3 (1.3)	2	1
Totals	224 (100.0)	184	47

^a Numbers in parentheses are percentages of statewide total.

Table 3. Composition of estimated fur harvest in Illinois and value to fur-takers during 1982-83 season.

Species	Total pelts ^a		Total value	
	Number	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Muskrat	297,872	44.44	\$819,148.00	13.81
Mink	17,768	2.65	246,975.20	4.16
Raccoon	292,189	43.60	4,251,349.90	71.68
Opossum	35,548	5.30	33,770.60	0.57
Red Fox	9,780	1.46	297,312.00	5.01
Gray Fox	5,943	0.89	156,598.05	2.64
Beaver	2,517	0.38	12,459.15	0.21
Striped skunk	341	0.05	511.50	0.01
Weasel	74	0.01	37.00	-
Coyote	8,180	1.22	113,293.00	1.91
Totals	670,212	100.00	\$5,931,454.40	100.00

^a Includes 3.5% allowance for out-of-state pelt sales.

Table 4. Comparative fur harvest data for Illinois, 1981-82 vs. 1982-83.

Species	Number of pelts taken		Change in harvest from		Average pelt price per pelt		Total value to fur-takers (dollars)		Change in value from	
	1981-82 ^a	1982-83 ^b	1981-82	1982-83	1981-82	1982-83	1981-82	1982-83	1981-82 (dollars)	1982-83 (dollars)
Muskrat	325,415	297,872	-27,543	(-8.5) ^c	\$4.30	\$2.75	1,399,284.50	819,148.00	-580,136.50	(-41.5)
Mink	24,478	17,768	-6,710	(-27.4)	\$17.45	\$13.90	427,121.10	246,975.20	-180,145.90	(-42.2)
Raccoon	314,963	292,189	-22,774	(-7.2)	\$22.50	\$14.55	7,086,667.50	4,251,349.90	-2,835,317.60	(-40.0)
Opossum	55,729	35,548	-20,181	(-36.2)	\$1.05	\$0.95	58,515.45	33,770.60	-24,744.85	(-42.3)
Red fox	13,533	9,780	-3,753	(-27.7)	\$46.75	\$30.40	632,667.75	297,312.00	-335,355.75	(-53.0)
Gray fox	7,649	5,943	-1,706	(-22.3)	\$28.75	\$26.35	219,908.75	156,598.05	-63,310.70	(-28.8)
Beaver	4,145	2,517	-1,628	(-39.3)	\$6.40	\$4.95	26,528.00	12,459.15	-14,068.85	(-53.0)
Striped skunk	840	341	-499	(-59.4)	\$2.15	\$1.50	1,806.00	511.50	-1,294.50	(-71.7)
Weasel	53	74	+21	(+39.6)	\$0.50	\$0.50	26.50	37.00	+10.50	(+39.6)
Coyote	10,390	8,180	-2,210	(-21.3)	\$24.45	\$13.85	254,035.50	113,293.00	-140,742.50	(-55.4)
Totals	757,195	670,212	-86,983	(-11.5)	\bar{x} = \$13.35	\bar{x} = \$8.85	10,106,561.05	5,931,454.40	-4,175,106.65	(-41.3)

^a Includes 4.9% allowance for out-of-state sales.

^b Includes 3.5% allowance for out-of-state sales.

^c Numbers in parentheses indicate percent change between years.

Table 5. Estimated percentage of annual harvest taken by hunters for selected furbearers in Illinois, 1982-83.

Species	Estimated percentage of harvest taken by hunters	
	Furhouse studies	Fur buyer estimates ^a
Raccoon	76.8 (Hubert 1983d) ^b	61.4
Opossum	70.8 (Hubert 1983b)	48.2
Red fox	-	37.4
Gray fox	-	47.2
Striped skunk	-	8.4
Coyote	-	70.9

^a Based on present study.

^b Authority listed in parentheses.

Table 6. Distribution of raw pelts sold at four fur auctions in Illinois, 1982-83 season.

Species	Auction location (date)				Totals
	Elizabeth (28 Nov 1982)	Elizabeth (12 Dec 1982)	New Berlin (19 Dec 1982)	New Berlin (2 Jan 1983)	
Muskrat	950	324	389	1,663	(54.2) ^a
Mink	28	16	41	85	(2.8)
Raccoon	415	143	533	1,091	(35.6)
Opossum	55	6	14	75	(2.4)
Red fox	7	7	95	109	(3.6)
Gray fox	0	3	20	23	(0.7)
Striped skunk	0	0	7	7	(0.2)
Coyote	0	3	13	16	(0.5)
Total pelts	1,455	502	1,112	3,069	(100.0)

Detailed data not available;
approx. 400 pelts sold.

^a Numbers in parentheses are percentages of total pelts sold.

Table 7. Muskrat, mink, and weasel trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Season opening		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollars)			
	date (season length in days)		harvest		per pelt (dollars)			
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Muskrat	Mink	Muskrat	Mink	Weasel	
1975	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	445,737	18,009	181	2.90	6.00	0.50
1976	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	256,315	14,253	311	4.44	13.95	0.54
1977	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	300,314	12,910	147	5.10	13.20	0.60
1978	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	422,354	19,814	147	5.00	15.20	0.65
1979	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	460,674	22,971	145	6.35	20.15	0.50
1980	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	421,585	26,607	85	6.50	18.90	0.60
1981	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	325,415	24,478	53	4.30	17.45	0.50
1982	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	297,872	17,768	74	2.75	13.90	0.50

Table 8. Beaver trapping season, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Northern zone	Southern zone		
1975	6 Dec (85)	6 Dec (85)	2,337	4.50
1976	18 Dec (80)	18 Dec (80)	1,548	7.00
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	2,425	7.00
1978	15 Nov (90)	25 Nov (90)	3,386	7.25
1979	10 Nov (111)	20 Nov (101)	7,345	14.40
1980	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	7,338	10.60
1981	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	4,145	6.40
1982	15 Nov (106)	25 Nov (96)	2,517	4.95

Table 9. Raccoon and opossum hunting and trapping seasons, harvests and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollar)	
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone	Raccoon	Opossum	Raccoon	Opossum
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	310,593	49,874	14.00	1.10
1976	13 Nov (54)	13 Nov (64)	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	187,377	42,153	17.17	1.21
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	237,315	46,198	18.00	2.05
1978	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	292,728	25,097	27.25	2.65
1979	10 Nov (34)	20 Nov (37)	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	381,006	38,626	25.50	3.35
1980	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	314,777	46,710	19.40	1.45
1981	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	314,963	55,729	22.50	1.05
1982	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	292,189	35,548	14.55	0.95

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 10. Red and gray fox hunting and trapping seasons, harvest, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest		Average price per pelt (dollars)	
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone	Red fox	Gray fox	Red fox	Gray fox
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	11,247	7,132	34.00	16.00
1976	20 Dec (45)	17 Nov (52)	27 Nov (41)	4 Dec (41)	7,206	6,166	45.61	27.67
1977	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,715	9,086	47.45	31.05
1978	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,582	9,525	61.50	42.95
1979	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	14,136	10,547	48.40	43.80
1980	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,965	8,716	44.80	36.40
1981	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	13,533	7,649	46.75	28.75
1982	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (60)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)	9,780	5,943	30.40	26.35

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 11. Striped skunk hunting and trapping seasons, harvest, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Hunting season opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Northern zone	Southern zone	Northern zone	Southern zone		
1975	8 Nov (63)	15 Nov (64)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)	-	1.00
1976	Closed	Closed	13 Nov (55)	20 Nov (55)	821	2.25
1977	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,503	2.20
1978	15 Nov (60)	25 Nov (60)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,633	2.55
1979	10 Nov (34)	20 Nov (37)	10 Nov (30)	20 Nov (30)	3,111	2.60
1980	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	1,625	2.00
1981	15 Nov (56)	25 Nov (58)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	840	2.15
1982	Continuous (359)	Continuous (359)	15 Nov (45)	25 Nov (45)	341	1.50

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

Table 12. Coyote hunting and trapping seasons, harvests, and pelt price data for Illinois, 1975-1982.

Year	Hunting seasons opening date (season length in days) ^a		Trapping season opening date (season length in days)		Estimated harvest	Average price per pelt (dollars)
	Statewide	Northern zone	Southern zone	Southern zone		
1975	1 Sep (175)	8 Nov (69)	15 Nov (70)		2,833	8.00
1976	1 Sep (175)	27 Nov (41)	4 Dec (41)		3,882	16.07
1977	1 Sep (175)	1 Sep (45) ^b 30 Nov (30)	1 Sep (45) ^b 30 Nov (30)		7,678	16.75
1978	1 Sep (175)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)		9,891	31.35
1979	Continuous (359)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)		9,831	22.85
1980	Continuous (359)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)		8,412	19.25
1981	Continuous (359)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)		10,390	24.45
1982	Continuous (359)	30 Nov (30)	30 Nov (30)		8,180	13.85

^a Hunting season closed during firearms deer season.

^b Split trapping season; season total length = 75 days.

Table 13. Beaver trapping regulations in Illinois, 1915-1981.

Year	Zone	Season length (days)	Bag limit	Special regulations
1915-16 through 1932-33	Statewide	Continuous open season	None	Not protected by state statute
1933-34 through 1950-51	Statewide	Continuous closed season	n/a	First protected by state statute on 8 July 1933
1951-52 through 1952-53	Statewide	1-15 Dec. (15)	10 per year	Special license (\$5) and pelt tags (\$1 ea.) ^a required, 10 ft. rule
1953-54 through 1954-55	Statewide	1-15 Feb. (15)	10 per year	Pelt tags (50¢ ea.) required, 10 ft. rule
1955-56	Statewide	15 Feb.-15 Mar. (30)	20 per year	10 ft. rule
1956-57	Statewide	15 Feb.-15 Mar. (29)	20 per year	10 ft. rule
1957-58 through 1958-59	Statewide	15 Feb.-31 Mar. (45)	20 per year	10 ft. rule
1959-60	Statewide	15 Feb.-31 Mar. (46)	None	10 ft. rule
1960-61	Statewide	15 Feb.-31 Mar. (45)	None	10 ft. rule
1961-62 through 1962-63	Statewide	20 Nov.-1 Mar. (102)	None	10 ft. rule
1963-64	Northern ^b Southern	20 Nov.-31 Mar. (133) 25 Nov.- 1 Mar. (98)	None	10 ft. rule
1964-65	Northern ^b Southern	20 Nov.-31 Mar. (132) 25 Nov.- 1 Mar. (97)	None	10 ft. rule
1965-66 through 1966-67	Statewide	1 Dec.-31 Jan. (62)	None	10 ft. rule
1967-68	Statewide	20 Nov.-29 Feb. (102)	None	10 ft. rule

Table 13. Continued.

Year	Zone	Season length (days)	Bag limit	Special regulations
1968-69 through 1970-71	Statewide	10 Dec.-28 Feb. (81)	None	10 ft. rule
1971-72	Statewide	9 Dec.-29 Feb. (83)	None	10 ft. rule, Mississippi R. closed from Rock Island north to Wisconsin line
1972-73 through 1973-74	Statewide	9 Dec.-28 Feb. (82)	None	10 ft. rule in 1972-73, Mississippi R. closed from Rock Island north to Wisconsin line, Cook County closed.
1974-75	Statewide	7 Dec.-28 Feb. (84)	None	Cook County closed
1975-76	Statewide	6 Dec.-28 Feb. (85)	None	Cook County closed
1976-77	Statewide	18 Dec.-7 Mar. (80)	None	Cook County closed
1977-78	Northern ^c Southern	15 Nov.-13 Jan. (60) 25 Nov.-23 Jan. (60)	None	Cook County closed
1978-79	Northern ^c Southern	15 Nov.-12 Feb. (90) 25 Nov.-22 Feb. (90)	None	Cook County closed
1979-80	Northern ^d Southern	10 Nov.-28 Feb. (111) 20 Nov.-28 Feb. (101)	None	Cook County closed, Mississippi R. from Rock Island north to Wisconsin line open only from 15 Nov.-29 Dec.
1980-81 through 1981-82	Northern ^d Southern	15 Nov.-28 Feb. (106) 25 Nov.-28 Feb. (96)	None	Cook County closed, Mississippi R. from Rock Island north to Wisconsin line open only from 15 Nov.-29 Dec.

^a No trap shall be set or placed within 10 feet of any beaver den, house, or lodge.

^b Northern zone includes the 66 counties north of Bond, Calhoun, Crawford, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Jersey, and Madison counties.

^c Northern zone includes area north of US Rt. 36 from Indiana state line to Springfield, Rt. 20 from Springfield to Pekin, and Rt. 9 from Pekin to Dallas City, then due west to the Mississippi River.

^d Northern zone includes area north of US Rt. 36.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES
FURBEARER SECTION

REPORT OF RAW FURS PURCHASED

SEASON OF _____ WMU _____
 FUR BUYER LICENSE NUMBER(S) _____ () RESIDENT () NON-RESIDENT (For office use)

	MUSKRAT	MINK	RACCOON	OPOSSUM	RED FOX	GRAY FOX	BEAVER	SKUNK	WEASEL	COYOTE	OTHER (LIST)
1. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM ILLINOIS HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS											
2. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM OTHER ILLINOIS FUR BUYERS											
3. RAW FURS BOUGHT FROM OUTSIDE OF ILLINOIS											

APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS RACCOONS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % SIGNED _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS OPOSSUMS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % FIRM NAME _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS RED FOXES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % ADDRESS _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS GRAY FOXES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ %
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS COYOTES WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % DATE _____
 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENT OF THE ILLINOIS SKUNKS WERE BOUGHT FROM HUNTERS? _____ % ZIP CODE _____

Figure 1. Report of raw furs purchased form used for the 1982-83 season.



Figure 2. Furbearer management zones for the 1982-83 season.

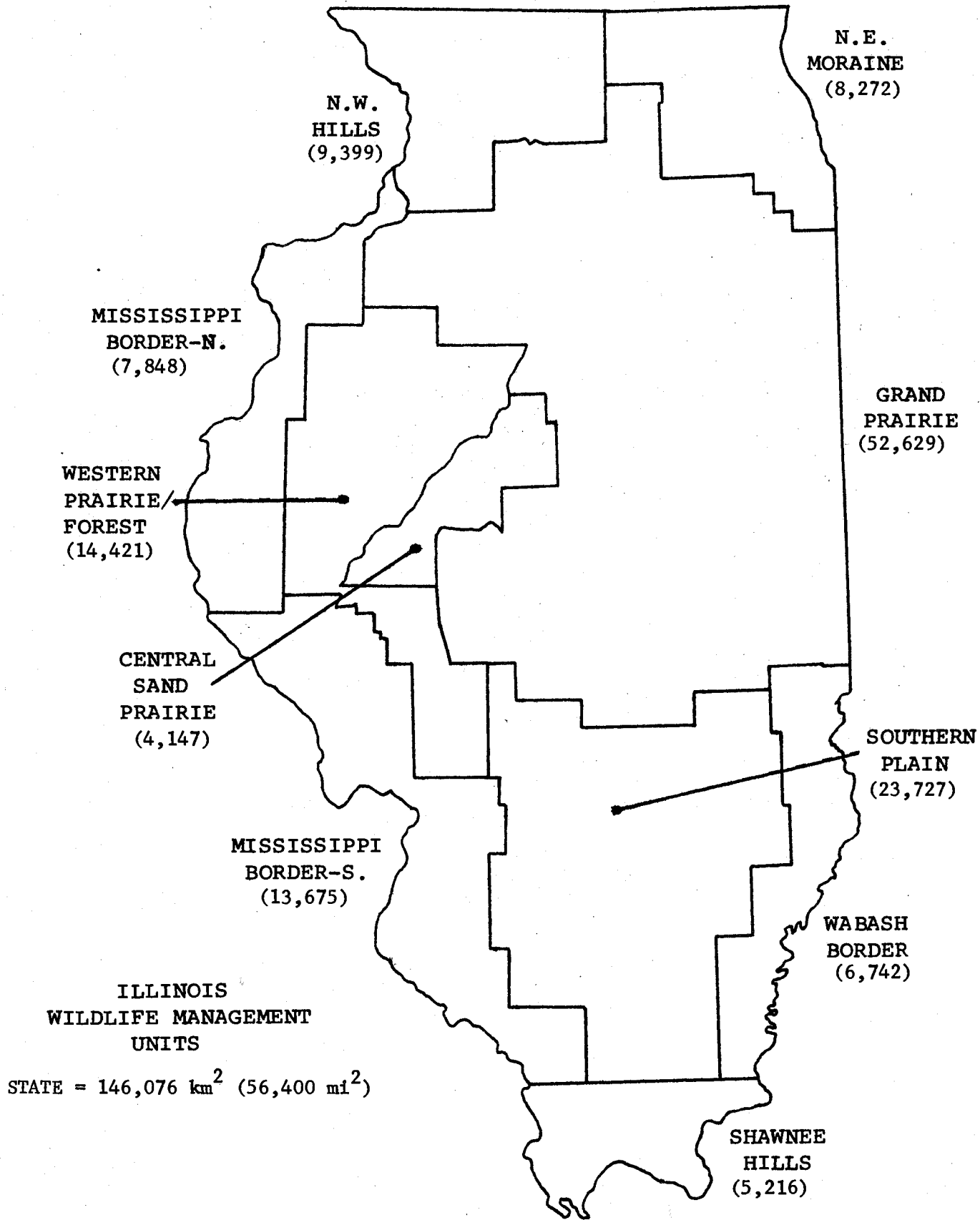


Figure 3. Area (km²) of wildlife management units in Illinois.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

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1982/83 HARVEY SPRINGFIELD, ILL.



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