



John Mack

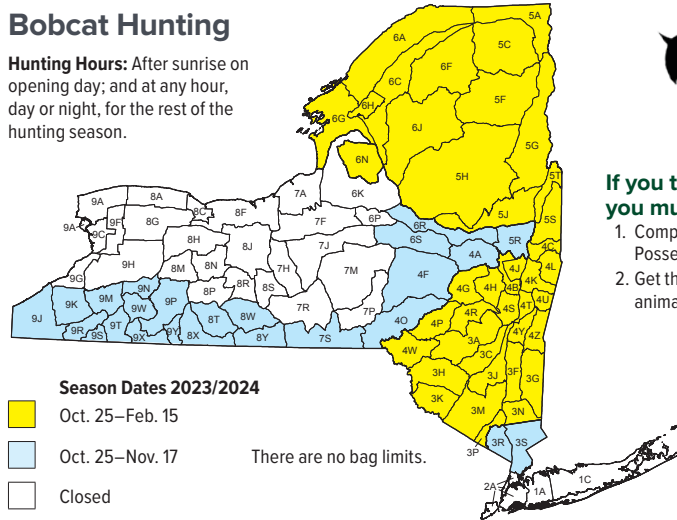
## General Regulations

To hunt furbearers, you must possess a resident or non-resident hunting license. A trapping license does not allow you to hunt furbearers. Furbearers may be hunted with a bow, crossbow, or firearm as described below.

- You may hunt red and gray fox, coyote, bobcat, raccoon, skunk, weasel, and opossum anywhere in the state with an open season.
- If you take a bobcat, it must be tagged and sealed.
- You may use a call, including an electronic call.
- Mink may only be hunted in the Southern Zone with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber during their open trapping season. Mink may not be hunted with a firearm in the Northern Zone.
- Muskrat may only be hunted on Lake Champlain during the open trapping season with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber.
- You may not hunt from any motor vehicle, including an ATV or snowmobile.
- Except as noted above, you may hunt furbearers using any handgun, shotgun, muzzleloading rifle, bow, crossbow, or air gun.

## Bobcat Hunting

**Hunting Hours:** After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the hunting season.



**If you take a bobcat, you must:**

1. Complete a Furbearer Possession Tag **AND**
2. Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

## Weasel, Opossum, Skunk, Raccoon, and Fox Hunting

**Long Island:** Nov. 1–Feb. 25  
**All other areas of New York:** Oct. 25–Feb. 15

There are no bag limits for these species. **Hunting Hours:** After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the hunting season.



## Coyote Hunting

**Statewide except Long Island and New York City:** Oct. 1–Mar. 31

There are no bag limits for coyotes. They may be hunted during the day or night.



## Possession and Use of Rifles for Hunting Furbearers

1. Is **any deer season open** in the location you wish to hunt (including archery, muzzleloading, regular, late, and Focus Area)? (pg. 25)
  - a. If **NO**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers.
  - b. If **YES**, can deer be hunted with rifles in that location during the regular season? (pg. 24)
    - i. If **YES**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers during any open deer season.
    - ii. If **NO**, you may only possess afield rimfire rifles .22-caliber or smaller, or centerfire rifles **LESS THAN** .22 caliber (.204, .17, etc.) during any open deer season. Once all deer seasons are closed, the restriction ends, except:
2. You may **NEVER** possess a rifle afield in Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties.
3. In the Northern Zone, it is illegal to carry a rifle larger than .22 caliber rimfire (or .22-caliber or larger centerfire rifles) at any time if accompanied by a dog, except when coyote hunting.

## Hunting Furbearers at Night

- Spotlights, night vision, thermal and laser devices are permitted for furbearer hunting. They may be attached to the firearm. All laws pertaining to the use of a spotlight apply.
- Hunters should consult with local government officials for any laws that may prohibit the discharge of firearms at night.

**Trappers and hunters who assist with furbearer management activities are eligible to receive a special patch!**

You can receive a patch if you turn in an incidentally trapped animal; turn in a road-killed fisher, marten, bobcat, otter, or weasel; report a violation that results in a conviction; provide data or assist with a research project; or promote furbearer hunting or trapping. Carcasses are used for biological data, training, education, and outreach. Contact your regional wildlife office for more information.



## Distinguishing Wolves from Coyotes

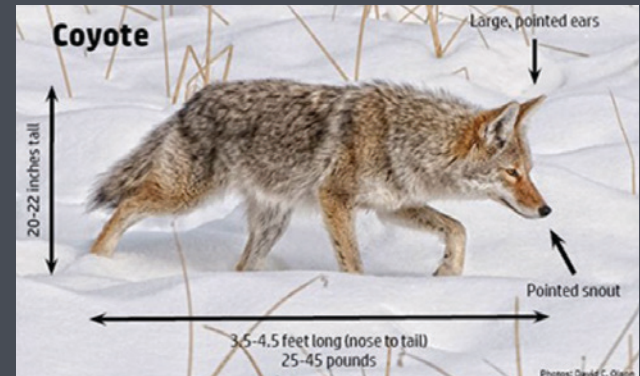
### Wolves

Wolves are very rare in New York, with only three confirmed in the past 25 years, including one harvested by a coyote hunter in 2021. Wolves are protected in NY as an endangered species. They can be distinguished from coyotes by their larger size, typically weighing between 70–100 pounds and measuring over 2 feet tall at the shoulder. Wolves have proportionally small, rounded ears and a shorter, blockier snout than coyotes. Their feet are larger, with tracks measuring about 5 inches long by 4 inches wide.



### Coyotes

Eastern coyotes are common in New York, found throughout the State. There are regulated hunting and trapping seasons for coyotes in NY. Eastern coyotes have a mix of coyote, wolf, and dog ancestry and are larger in size (about 40 pounds, on average) than coyotes west of the Mississippi. They are smaller than wolves, rarely weighing more than 50 pounds and standing less than 2 feet tall at the shoulder. Coyotes have long, narrow snouts that end in a point. Their ears are large relative to the head and are pointed in shape. Coyotes have smaller feet than wolves; their tracks typically measure 3 inches long by 2 inches wide. If you have a canine in a trap that is over 4.5 ft in length and is over 50 pounds, contact DEC law enforcement (1-844-332-3267) before dispatching the animal.



## Definition of Trapping

To trap means to take, kill, or capture wildlife with traps, deadfalls, and other devices commonly used to take wildlife, including the shooting or killing of lawfully trapped animals. It also includes all related activities such as placing, setting, staking, or checking traps or assisting another person with these activities. You do not need a hunting license to shoot a trapped animal.

## Other Definitions

- **Public Highway:** The traveled portion of a public highway. Culverts, drainage ditches, and the area under bridges are not considered the traveled portion of a public highway.
- **Carcass:** The body or parts thereof, meat, organs or viscera of an animal, including fish. Feathers (including feathers with attached skin or entire bird wings), hair (with or without skin or hide), and bones that include no attached meat, organs or viscera, are excluded from this definition.
- **Suspension:** This term applies to animals fully suspended in the air by means of the trap anchoring system (typically a chain, cable, or wire). It does not apply to traps set in water or to traps that are directly and firmly attached to an elevated structure, such as a tree.
- **Restraining trap:** A device used to capture and restrain a mammal. These traps include leg-gripping traps (foothold traps), foot encapsulating traps, and cage or box traps.
- **Foot encapsulating trap:** A trap with the following mechanical attributes: The triggering and restraining mechanisms are enclosed within a housing; the triggering and restraining mechanisms are only accessible through a single opening when set; the opening does not exceed 2 inches in diameter; and the trap has a swivel-mounted anchoring system.
- **Cage or box trap:** A type of restraining trap that fully encloses a captured animal within wood, wire, plastic, or metal.

## Legal Traps

- You must put your name and address or your DEC customer identification number (see your hunting or trapping license) on all your traps.
- Foothold traps larger than 4" set on land must have a pan tension device and be covered when set.
- Teeth are not allowed on foothold traps.
- On land, foothold traps must be 5¾" or smaller (inside jaw spread). For information on how to correctly measure traps, see page 61.
- During beaver or otter season, foothold traps up to 7¼" are allowed if set under water.

## Reminders on Pelt Sealing

All bobcat, fisher, otter, and marten need to be sealed within 10 days after the close of the season in the WMU where the fur was taken. Some things to keep in mind to make the pelt sealing process go smoothly:

- Contact your local wildlife office to make pelt sealing arrangements prior to showing up.
- When freezing an unsealed pelt, make sure that the face is on the outside and easily accessible.
- If having an unsealed animal mounted, thaw the carcass enough so that a seal can be inserted through the eye or foot. Inserting a stick or similar object through a pre-made hole makes the sealing process much easier. If this is not done, it may be impossible to seal the animal at that time.

- When the beaver or otter season is closed, foothold traps set in water may not be larger than 5¾".
- A foothold trap larger than 7¼" is never legal to use.
- Body-gripping traps more than 7½" may never be used on land.
- Body-gripping traps more than 7½" may only be used in water during an open beaver or otter season.
- Snares may not be used for trapping.
- Box or cage traps are legal for all species.
- You may not use a cage trap that is designed to take more than one muskrat at a setting.

## Land trapping

- You may not set a trap in such a manner that it causes a captured animal to be fully suspended in the air.
- In the Northern Zone, body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure when the fisher and /or marten seasons are closed.

## Water trapping

- You may set a trap in a permanent body of water only when the mink, muskrat, otter, or beaver season is open.
- You may not disturb a muskrat house or den.
- You may not set a trap on or within 5 feet of a muskrat house.

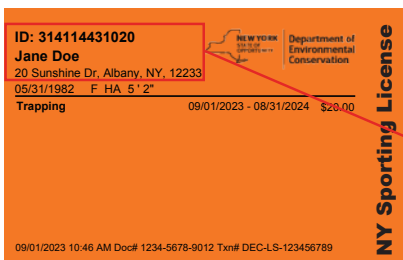
## Trapping Methods

### Checking traps

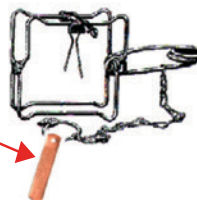
- In the Southern Zone: You must check traps once in each 24-hour period.
- In the Northern Zone, follow these rules:
  - » **WMU 5C, 5F, 5G, 5H, 5J, 6F, 6J, and 6N:** Visit once in each 48-hour period
  - » **WMU 5A, 6A, 6C, 6G, 6H, and 6K:**
    - **Traps set in water during the open season for beaver, otter, mink and muskrat:** Visit once in each 48-hour period
    - **Body-gripping traps set on land:** Visit once in each 48-hour period
    - **Restraining traps:** Visit once in each 24-hour period

### Use of carcasses as bait

Any carcass, as defined above, used as bait and placed or used in conjunction with a foothold trap shall be completely covered at the time the trap is set or visited. Coverings shall include but not be limited to brush, branches, leaves, soil, snow, water, or enclosures constructed of wood, metal, wire, plastic, or natural materials, and must completely cover the carcass so that it is not visible from directly above.



Place your name and address or Customer ID # on all your traps.



# Furbearer Trapping

## Land or water trapping

- You may use any legal method to kill a trapped animal. You do not need a hunting license to use a firearm to kill a legally trapped animal.
- You may not set or stake a trap prior to 7:00 AM on opening day.
- You are not allowed to set a trap within 100 feet of a house, school, playground, or church unless you have permission from the owner of the land where the trap is set.
- You may not set a trap on a public road. You are allowed to set a trap in a culvert or ditch unless the property is posted or the landowner does not allow trapping.

## Trapping near beaver dams and lodges

- You may not disturb a beaver lodge or beaver dam.
- You may not set a trap on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, den or house, measured at ice or water level, except under the following conditions:
  - » during an open otter season, traps of any legal size may be set on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, but not on or within 15 feet of a beaver den or house;
  - » during an open or closed otter season, any of the following traps may be set on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, den, or house:
    - body-gripping trap that measures less than 5.5 inches;
    - foot-encapsulating trap
    - foothold trap that measures 4¾ inches or less;
    - cage or box trap.

By limiting the trap sizes that are usable on beaver dams, this regulation provides opportunities for trappers while minimizing the accidental capture of otter.

## Pelt Sealing

Otter, bobcat, fisher, and marten must have a plastic seal attached to the pelt or unskinned animal before:

- It is sold or ownership is transferred to another person, or
- It is mounted or tanned, or
- It leaves New York State, or
- Ten days have passed since the close of the season where the fur was taken

The plastic pelt seals can be removed when the pelt is processed for taxidermy, tanning, or manufacturing.

## How to get your pelts sealed: a two-step process

- **Step 1:** Fill out your furbearer possession tag.
  - » A possession tag must be filled out for each animal you take.
  - » Possession tags must be filled out immediately after you reach your motor vehicle, camp, or home, whichever comes first.
  - » Possession tags must stay with the animal or pelt at all times, but they do not need to be attached to the pelt.

- » Furbearer possession tags can be obtained from your Regional Wildlife Office (see page 6) or at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9209.html#Seals](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9209.html#Seals).
- **Step 2:** Get your pelt sealed (see below).
  - » A completed furbearer possession tag must be submitted to obtain a plastic pelt seal.
  - » You can give your pelts to another person (other than a taxidermist) so he or she can get the pelts sealed or get them skinned. You must give that person your trapping license or a copy of your license and your completed possession tags while he or she has your pelts.
  - » Only authorized DEC representatives can attach the plastic pelt seals to otter, bobcat, fisher, or marten.
  - » Call a Regional Wildlife Office (see page 6) to make arrangements to get your otter, bobcat, fisher, or marten sealed. Seals for these species cannot be sent through the mail.
  - » Special arrangements for no-contact sealing of pelts related to COVID-19 concerns can be made by contacting a regional wildlife office.
  - » If the plastic pelt seal is broken or damaged, contact your Regional Wildlife Office for a replacement seal.

## Buying and Selling Fur

- Species requiring a pelt seal cannot be bought or sold or given to another person unless they have the plastic pelt seal attached to the animal. All other species may be bought, sold, and transported without restriction.
- Furbearers may be bought or sold either skinned or unskinned.
- People who buy fur do not need a fur buyer's license in New York.

## Rights of Trappers

- No one may disturb a trap lawfully set by another person.
- No one may remove a lawfully trapped animal from another person's trap.
- No one may harass a trapper while he or she is trapping.

## License Responsibilities

- A license is not transferable and can be used only by the person to whom it was issued.
- A license to trap does not give the holder any right to go on private property without permission of the landowner.
- It is illegal to refuse to show your license on demand to a law enforcement officer or the owner, lessee, or person in control of the lands (or their designees) while on their property.

## Trapping License Exceptions

- All residents must have a valid trapping license in their possession except:
- Resident owners primarily engaged in farming, lessees, and members of their immediate families do not need a trapping license when

trapping on farm lands they are occupying and cultivating, for bobcat, coyote, fox, mink, muskrat, raccoon, opossum, weasel, skunk, and unprotected wildlife that may be lawfully taken by trapping. (**Note: beaver, otter, fisher and marten are not included.**)

- Native Americans living on a reservation do not need a trapping license while trapping on reservation lands.

## Incidental and Accidental Captures of Trapped Animals

There are no provisions in the Environmental Conservation Law allowing trappers to possess animals that are taken outside of the open trapping season.

You must attempt to release any animals that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or if the area is not open for trapping that species.

If the animal is injured to the extent you believe it will not survive, humanely dispatch it. If you are not sure, contact a DEC Regional Wildlife Office or ECO for assistance.

When you find an unintentionally captured animal dead in the trap, or when you must dispatch an unintentionally captured animal due to a serious injury, you may remove it and lay it in the vicinity of the trap. There are no legal provisions for you to keep it, and you may not possess it even to take it back to your vehicle without permission from DEC.

DEC seeks information on all accidentally taken bobcat, otter, fisher, and marten, as well as other species of unusual nature. If the animal is dead, a DEC biologist will want to collect the carcass. Using the location and carcass data, biologists will be able to track the status of these species and study the age and reproductive data from the individual. The pelts from these carcasses will also be utilized in our trapper education classes.

Remember, you must contact the Regional Wildlife Office or an ECO as soon as possible to report the catch. You will receive instructions on what to do and information to provide.

## Possession of Road-Killed Furbearers

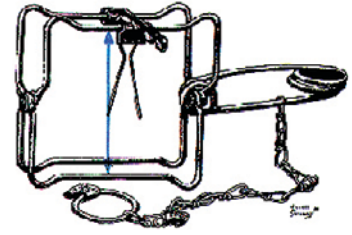
If the trapping or hunting season is open for the species in a WMU, you may keep a dead furbearer found on roads within that WMU. The requirements for possessing road-killed furbearers are the same as for trapping and hunting. For example, if you find a road-killed bobcat in an area with an open bobcat season, you can possess it if you have a hunting or trapping license, but you must fill out a furbearer possession tag and have the pelt sealed.



## How to Measure a Trap

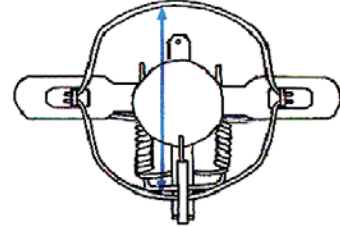
### How to measure a body-gripping trap:

Measure the inside distance between the outer frames of the trap. The addition of one or more bars to the inside of the frame does not change the way these traps are measured. The measurement is still the MAXIMUM distance as shown in the top picture.



### How to measure a foothold trap:

Measure the inside distance between the jaws excluding the gripping surface as shown. If the jaws have inside laminations, the measurement is the inside distance between the laminations. If the trap has double jaws, measure the inside distance between the outer jaws.



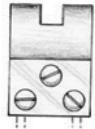
5¾" or less on land, 7¼" or less under water

## Trigger Regulations for Beaver Trappers

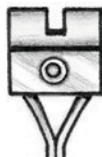
This regulation applies if you:

- Trap in a WMU in the Southern Zone during a closed otter season; and
- Use a body-gripping trap larger than 8½ inches (these are "330" size traps).

1. **Body-gripping trap with off-set parallel trigger:**
2. **Example of non-legal vs. legal trigger brackets:**



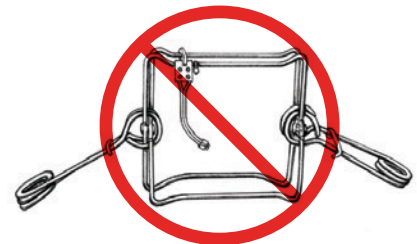
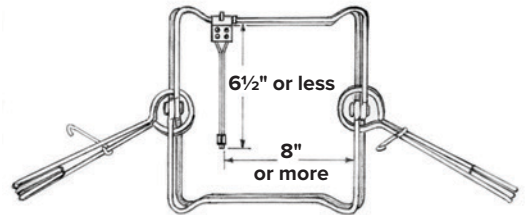
Two-way tension adjustable (legal)



Two-way non-tension adjustable (legal)

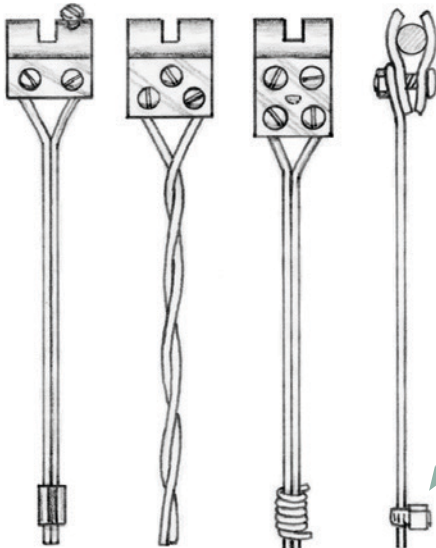


Four-way trigger (not legal)



Legal: square-notch, two-way trigger

3. **Examples of acceptable parallel triggers:**



4. **Tension-adjustable triggers and trigger stops are no longer required.**

The trigger must be 6½" or less.

Recommended tension: 8 to 12 oz.

Trigger wires must be joined together.

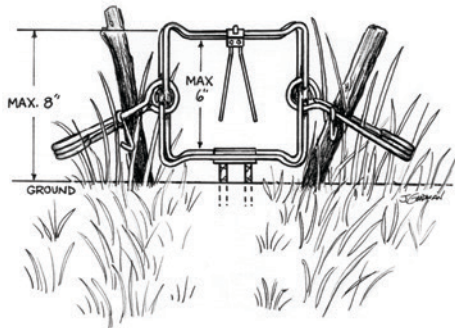
### NOTE:

1. You can bait these traps in any manner. However, the trap must have all of the features noted above.
2. There is no exception for traps set under ice; traps set under ice, whether baited or not, must have all of the design features noted above.
3. There is no tension requirement. However, DEC research showed that 8 to 12 oz. of tension works best for protecting otter and catching beaver.

# Furbearer Trapping

## Regulations for Body-Gripping Traps Set on Land

Body-gripping traps set on land shall not be within 100 feet of a public trail except on Wildlife Management Areas.



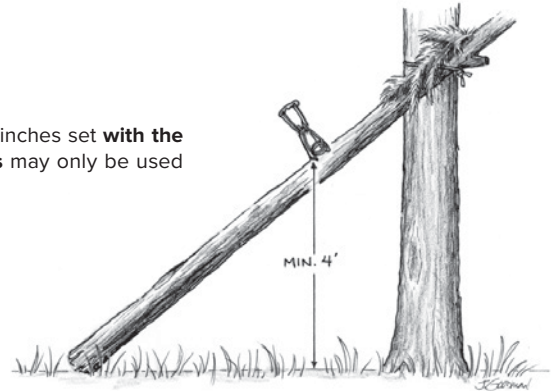
A body-gripping trap measuring less than 5½ inches may be set in any manner **with or without the use of bait**. Body-gripping traps measuring 5½ inches to 6 inches, set without the use of bait, must be set so that no part of the trap is 8 inches or more above the ground. Body-gripping traps measuring more than 6 inches to 7 1/2 inches may never be set in this manner.

**NOTE:** During a closed season for fisher and/or marten in the Northern Zone, body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure.

Body-gripping traps 5½ inches to 7½ inches set **with the use of bait, lure, or other attractants** may only be used as follows:

- ✓ Four or more feet off the ground

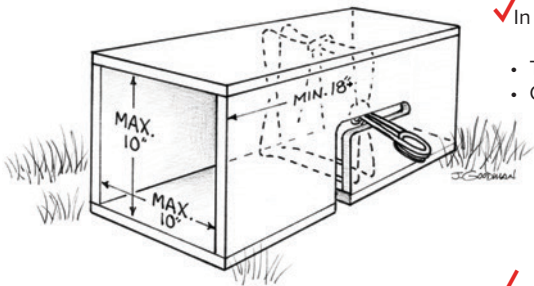
OR



- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Trap recessed minimum of 18 inches
- Opening height and width 10 inches or less

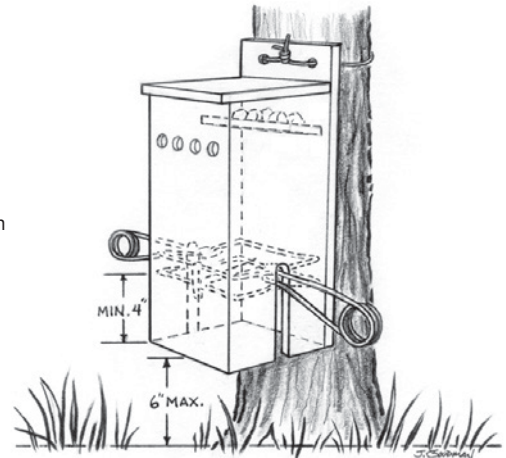
OR



- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Only one entrance, facing the ground
- Container set so entrance is no more than 6 inches from ground
- Trap recessed minimum of 4 inches

OR

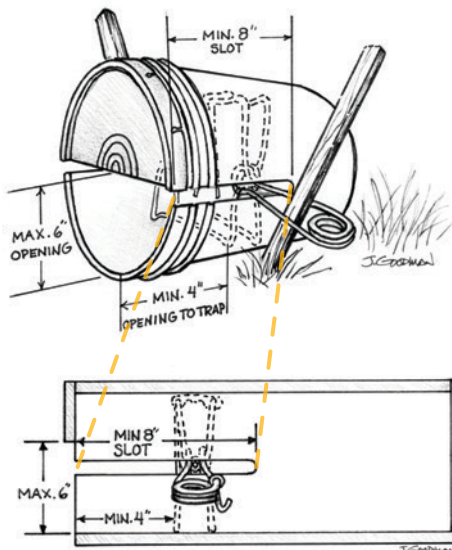


- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Opening height 6 inches or less
- Eight-inch minimum spring notches
- Trap recessed minimum of 4 inches

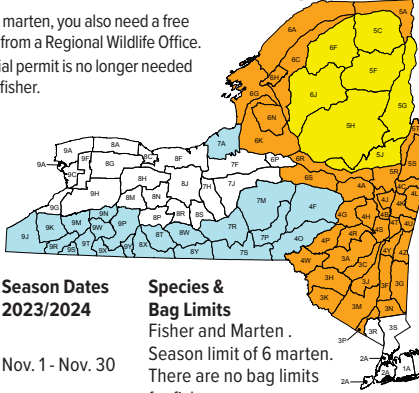
You may also build an enclosure of natural materials (e.g., logs or rocks)

- Opening height 6 inches or less
- Trap recessed minimum of 8 inches



## Fisher & Marten Trapping

To trap marten, you also need a free permit from a Regional Wildlife Office. A special permit is no longer needed to trap fisher.



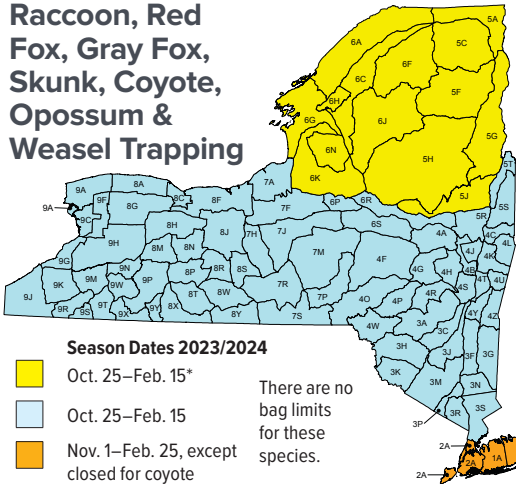
If you take a fisher or marten you must:

- Complete a furbearer possession tag, AND
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

Season Dates 2023/2024	Species & Bag Limits
Nov. 1 - Nov. 30	Fisher and Marten. Season limit of 6 marten. There are no bag limits for fisher.
Oct. 25 - Oct. 30	Fisher only. There are no bag limits.
Oct. 25 - Dec. 10	Fisher only. There are no bag limits.
Closed	Fisher and Marten



## Raccoon, Red Fox, Gray Fox, Skunk, Coyote, Opossum & Weasel Trapping



Season Dates 2023/2024

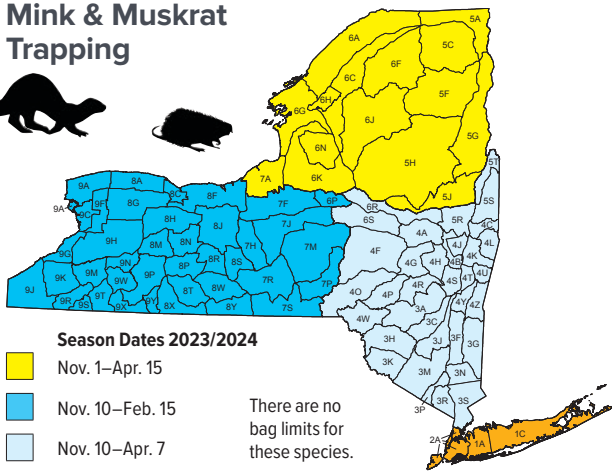
- Yellow: Oct. 25 - Feb. 15\*
- Light Blue: Oct. 25 - Feb. 15
- Orange: Nov. 1 - Feb. 25, except closed for coyote

There are no bag limits for these species.



\* In the Northern Zone (see page 24) body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure if the fisher and marten season is closed.

## Mink & Muskrat Trapping

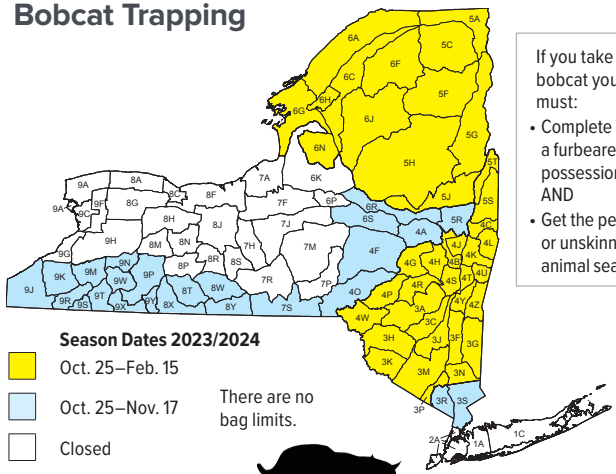


Season Dates 2023/2024

- Yellow: Nov. 1 - Apr. 15
- Light Blue: Nov. 10 - Feb. 15
- Medium Blue: Nov. 10 - Apr. 7
- Orange: Dec. 15 - Feb. 25

There are no bag limits for these species.

## Bobcat Trapping



Season Dates 2023/2024

- Yellow: Oct. 25 - Feb. 15
- Light Blue: Oct. 25 - Nov. 17
- White: Closed

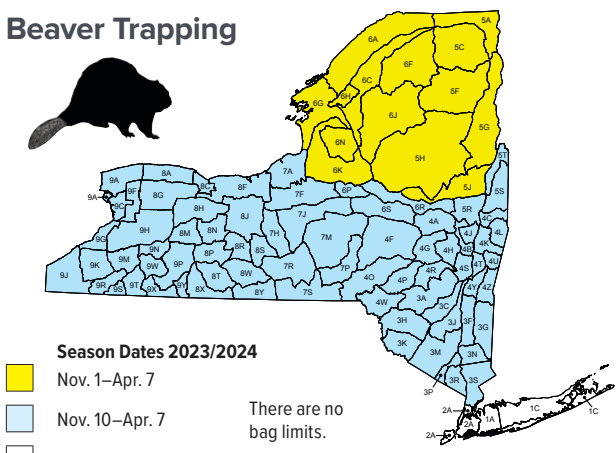
There are no bag limits.



If you take a bobcat you must:

- Complete a furbearer possession tag, AND
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

## Beaver Trapping

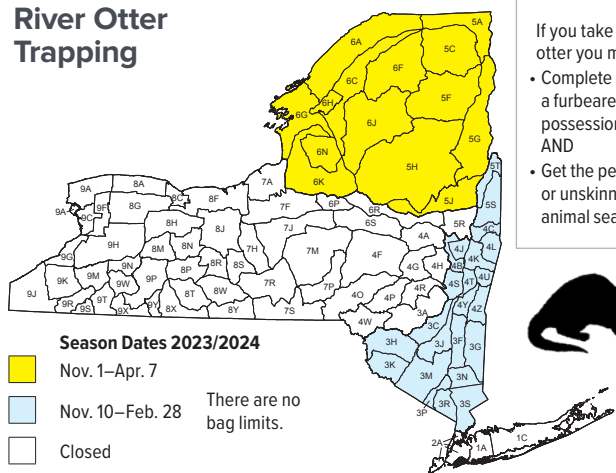


Season Dates 2023/2024

- Yellow: Nov. 1 - Apr. 7
- Light Blue: Nov. 10 - Apr. 7
- White: Closed

There are no bag limits.

## River Otter Trapping



Season Dates 2023/2024

- Yellow: Nov. 1 - Apr. 7
- Light Blue: Nov. 10 - Feb. 28
- White: Closed

There are no bag limits.



If you take an otter you must:

- Complete a furbearer possession tag, AND
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.



# Furbearer Trapping

## Game Recipe: BEAVER-CUE

Prep time: 30 minutes active, 24-36 hours total

Yields 4-6 sandwiches

### Ingredients:

- 2 beaver front or hind quarters
- 8 cups Carolina brine (recipe below)
- 1 quart light to medium stock (chicken, goose, duck, or beaver)
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- Salt to taste

### Carolina Brine:

- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup salt
- 8 cups water
- 1 tbsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp red pepper flake
- 2 bay leaves

### Method:

Combine all brine ingredients and bring to a simmer, then allow to cool completely before submerging the meat in the brine. Allow to sit, refrigerated, for 24-36 hours. Remove from brine.

If you have a smoker, go ahead and smoke the meat for 1-2 hours over low heat (under 200 degrees).

Place the meat in a crockpot or Dutch oven and add stock, onion salt and vinegar. Cook on low heat for 6-8 hours until the meat is easily pulled from bone with a fork. Allow it to cool in the cooking liquid until ready to serve. Remove from the liquid, shred from bone, and serve with your favorite BBQ sandwich fixin's.

Recipe provided by Wade Truong and Rachel Owen of Elevated Wild. For more delicious recipes, visit their website ([elevatedwild.com](http://elevatedwild.com)) or Instagram ([elevatedwild](https://www.instagram.com/elevatedwild)).



## Permit Requirements for Marten

A free special permit is still required to trap marten in New York. To receive a permit, contact the DEC Region 5 Wildlife Office in Warrensburg at 518-623-1240. You must provide the following information:

- Name
- Mailing address
- DEC ID # (from your trapping license or backtag)
- Phone number or email address.

You can also apply by email to: [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov), type "Marten Permit" in the subject line. Please be sure to include the information listed above.



## Report Your Furbearer Sightings!

DEC wants to learn more about the occurrence of various furbearers throughout New York such as bobcat, otter, fisher, weasel, and snowshoe hare. Your observations help biologists understand the distribution and abundance of these elusive or inconspicuous mammals.

You can report your observations online, and you can even include photos!

Go to [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/30770.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/30770.html) or email us at [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov)

Thanks for your help!

## Adopt Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- Learn practical traps and techniques that improve efficiency, selectivity, and the welfare of trapped animals
- Find out about specifications for traps that meet BMP criteria for each species
- Instill public confidence in and maintain public support for trapping

Visit [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) and search "Trapping BMPs"

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