



Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Furharvester Activity Summary, 2010-11



Matt Peek, furbearer biologist

Licenses: A total of 5585 adult and 135 junior resident furharvesting licenses were sold in 2010. This is a 8% decrease from 2009, and a 6% decrease from the 5-year average. However, it is also the 5th highest total in license sales since 1988.

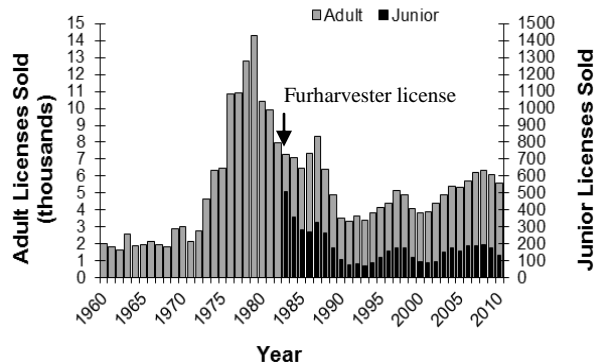


Figure 1. Resident furharvester license sales in KS, 1960-2010.

Nonresident furharvester licenses have been available in Kansas since 1983. Forty-six were sold in 2010. This is down from 47 in 2009 and 64 in 2008.

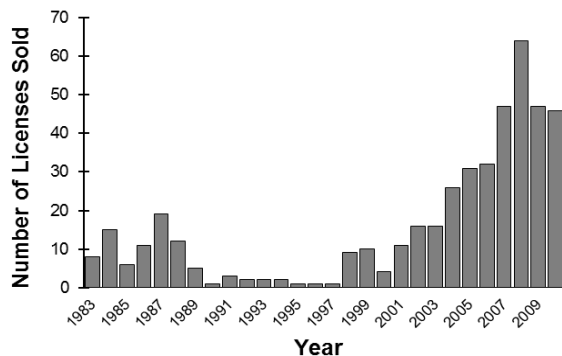


Figure 2. Nonresident furharvester license sales in Kansas, 1983-2010.

Seasons: Furbearer hunting and trapping seasons open statewide the Wednesday following the second Saturday in November. The season ends February 15th for badger, bobcat, red fox, gray fox, swift fox, mink, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, striped skunk

and weasel. Beaver may only be trapped, and their season runs through March 31.

Historically, the raccoon has been the most important furbearer species in Kansas in terms of total harvest and pelt value, and season dates are set to roughly correspond with the time when raccoons are prime (Figure 3). In addition to ensuring the different species are conserved, emphasis is placed on having season open for all species at the same time – so a bobcat taken incidentally by a raccoon trapper in November can be kept, and a raccoon taken incidentally by a bobcat trapper in February can be kept. Over 100,000 user days are spent annually hunting and trapping furbearers in Kansas.

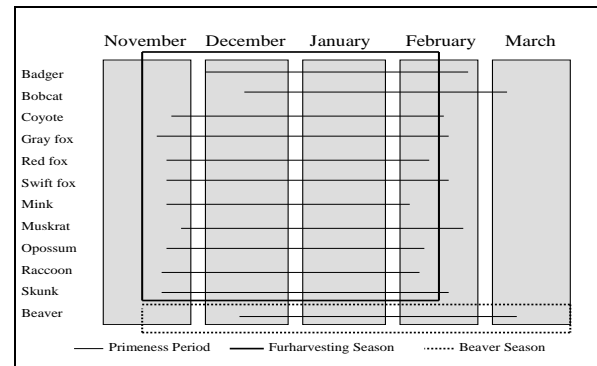


Figure 3. Pelt primeness dates for Kansas furbearers as indicated by Kansas furdealers.

Harvest and Furdealer Purchases:

Total harvest and the number of furbearers purchased by furdealers is provided in Table 1. Harvest increased substantially from 2009 to 2010, more than doubling for seven species. Only gray fox experienced a decline in harvest, and swift fox was the only other species for which harvest didn't increase by at least 70%. Muskrat experienced the greatest increase. This year's dramatic increases are partially reflective of a depressed and uncertain fur

market throughout most of the 2009 season, as well as a lot of severe weather and precipitation that made for a difficult trapping season last year.

Species	Total Harvest**	Total Purchases***	% Change in harvest from previous year
Badger	1,898	548	71%
Beaver	9,774	1,945	114%
Bobcat	4809	2,846	147%
Coyote	39,152	5,456	82%
Grey Fox	43	7	-36%
Red Fox	988	219	132%
Swift Fox	43	28	10%
Mink	371	56	107%
Muskrat	15,193	3,388	167%
Opossum	48,296	3,365	157%
Raccoon	97,858	33,379	137%
Skunk	12,755	1,092	73%

*From pelt tagging records rather than Furbearer Harvest Survey

**From annual Furbearer Harvest Survey

***From furdealer record books

Species	Average Pelt Price*	Average KFHA Auction Pelt Price **	% Change from previous season*
Badger	\$8.99	\$15.99	2%
Beaver	\$7.17	\$5.45	-13%
Bobcat	\$58.48	\$89.54	58%
Coyote	\$6.52	\$10.62	41%
Gray Fox	\$14.83	-	59%
Red Fox	\$11.37	15.08	38%
Swift Fox	\$9.00	-	13%
Mink	\$9.70	7.25	5%
Muskrat	\$4.49	5.05	13%
Opossum	\$0.60	0.66	-15%
Raccoon	\$8.93	8.98	34%
Striped Skunk	\$2.02	1.75	50%

*From annual Furdealer Pelt Price and Primeness Survey.

**From Kansas Fur Harvesters Assoc. Auctions (Dec. 18, 2010, Jan. 15 & Feb 19, 2011).

Pelt Values: Following two consecutive years of declining pelt values, pelt values

increased for every species in 2010-11 except beaver and opossum (Table 2). Most notably, bobcat, which has been a major influence on furbearer harvest levels in recent years, increased by 58%. Muskrat, which was one of only two species for which pelt values didn't decrease in 2009, experienced just a 13% increase this season, but the average pelt values in the \$5 range are high, and lead to the substantial increase in muskrat harvest.

Kansas furdealers purchased an estimated \$394,000 worth of pelts from furbearers harvested in Kansas in 2010-11. (This estimate does not include the value of pelts harvested in Kansas but sold out-of-state, including at fuU68r auctions, or those kept for personal use.) Raccoon remains by far the most important furbearer in terms of total pelt value, accounting for about 56% (\$222,000) of the total value of pelts harvested in Kansas. Bobcat remained second most important, accounting for 27% of the value (\$105,000). Coyote (6%; \$25,300), beaver (4%; \$15,900) and muskrat (3%; \$13,500) were the only other species that accounted for more than 2% of the total value of pelts. As indicated in figure 4, our market today differs from a predominantly beaver/mink/muskrat market of the pre-1970's.

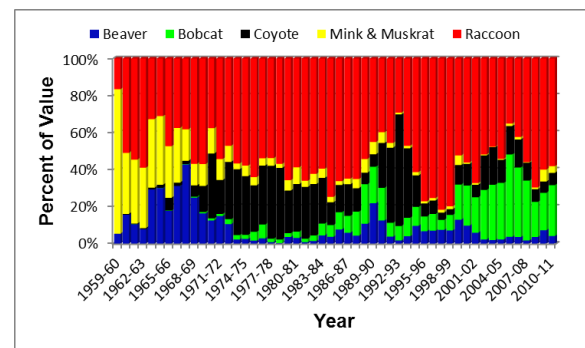


Figure 4. Relative cumulative value of select furbearers purchased by Kansas furdealers, 1959-2010.

This and other KDWP furbearer reports can be found online at:

<http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Other-Services/Research-Publications/Wildlife-Research-Surveys>