

Members of the Environment Committee  
Raised Senate Bill 994

March 7, 2009

My name is Pat Young – I support a ban on the leg hold and body crushing trap. I've been a wildlife rehabilitator for 25 years. I've had at least two animals caught in traps. Once in a while you'll hear about an animal caught in a trap – the husky in Waterbury, the owl in Wallingford and a while back another owl that died in a tree at a golf course. But how many animals in our state forests and parks are suffering horrible and brutal deaths caught in traps in freezing weather like we've had this past winter – traps only have to be checked once every 24 hours. These animals suffer from hypothermia, compound fracture, ripped tendons, blood loss sometimes chewing their own leg off to escape. This is the ultimate in animal cruelty.

Every year DEP sells trapping rights on 134 parcels in our state forests and parks. Some of these parcels include Devils Hopyard, Rocky Neck, Haddam Meadows, Selden Neck and many more. On all these parcels body crushing and leghold traps are legal.

The trapping season lasts for almost 5 months – the coldest months of the year. For many species, there is no limit on how many can be killed. Some of the animals on the trapping list can also be hunted – 11 out of 12 months. This has been going on for years even decades. Both the hunting and trapping seasons are never reduced they only get longer and bigger.

Some animals on the trapping list seem to be declining. In DEP's magazine "Connecticut Wildlife" there have been recent articles on "Where have all the Muskrats gone" and "Still looking for weasels". Apparently they have done such a good job of "managing" we're now seeing a decline in some of these animals. There is no science here. We have no numbers as to how many animals on that trapping list are actually out there. All we ever hear is "we have too many" or "we have an estimated". WE NEED NUMBERS!



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# FURBEARER TRAPPING SEASONS AND REGULATIONS

SPECIES	2009 DATES	SEASON LIMITS
River Otter*	Jan. 1 - Mar. 15 & Nov. 8 - Dec. 31	8
Beaver*	Jan. 1 - Mar. 15 & Dec. 1 - Dec. 31	25
Mink*, Muskrat, Weasel, Coyote*, Gray Fox*, Red Fox*, Raccoon, Opossum, and Skunk	Jan. 1 - Mar. 15 & Nov. 8 - Dec. 31	No Limits
Fisher*	Nov. 8 - Nov. 30	2

\*ALL BEAVER, FISHER, RIVER OTTER, RED FOX, GRAY FOX, WILD MINK, AND COYOTE PELTS must be properly tagged before they are sold, exchanged, given away, otherwise disposed of, or retained for personal use. These pelts must be tagged by the last scheduled tagging date of the season. Fur dealers are prohibited from buying or selling untagged pelts of these species. All pelts of these species, whether hunted or trapped, must be tagged.

## 2009 PELT TAGGING SCHEDULE

Location	2009 Dates
Southford Falls State Park Rte. 188, Oxford	Mar. 28, Saturday
Sessions Woods WMA Rte. 69, Burlington	Jan. 24, Saturday Mar. 29, Sunday
Natchaug Forest Hdqtrs. Kingsbury Road, Eastford	Dec. 19, Saturday Jan. 25, Sunday
Franklin WMA Rte. 32, Franklin	Mar. 29, Sunday Dec. 20, Sunday

Pelts will be tagged (at no cost) by DEP representatives between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon at the locations and dates listed above. Additional tagging locations and times may be obtained by calling the Wildlife Division at (860)675-8130.

## COYOTE LAND TRAPPING

From December 1 through January 31 there are special provisions for trapping coyotes on private land. Refer to PADDED METAL TRAP RESTRICTIONS section in this guide for the requirements that must be met to trap coyotes on private land during this time period.

## TAXIDERMISTS

Taxidermists can accept untagged animals or pelts, but are required to have them tagged by the next scheduled tagging date. Taxidermists must attach a paper tag to the animal or pelt listing the hunter or trapper's name, license number, town of harvest and date of harvest.

## PELTS OF PROTECTED SPECIES

Any skin, pelt, or carcass of protected species, including Bobcat and Black Bear, may not be sold, purchased, or possessed unless:

1. It was legally acquired AND,
2. In addition to any tag required by any other state or country, affixed with a separate tag bearing the following information: (a) Date acquired. (b) Name and address of the person from whom it was acquired. (c) Hunting or trapping license number under which it was harvested (if applicable). (d) State and/or country from which it was acquired.

## CARCASS COLLECTIONS

Wildlife biologists are collecting carcasses of RIVER OTTERS, FISHERS and WEASELS to determine the age structure and productivity of their populations. If you harvest river otters, fishers or weasels, you are urged to turn the carcasses in at pelt tagging stations or to call the Wildlife Division at (860)675-8130 to arrange a pick-up.

## STATE LAND TRAPPING

Permits for trapping on selected state-owned land can be purchased for \$60.00 per parcel. Information on applying for permits, applicant requirements, and available properties can be obtained by contacting the Sessions Woods WMA (860-675-8130).

## LEGAL TRAPS AND METHODS

Furbearing animals for which there is an open trapping season may be taken by **Box Traps, Live Traps, Dead-falls, Padded and Unpadded Metal Traps, Smooth Wire Traps, and Species Specific Traps** subject to the following restrictions.

### UNPADDED METAL TRAP RESTRICTIONS

1. May only be used below the surface of the water in a pond, lake, stream, spring hole, or tidal water.
2. Opening greater than 5 3/4" is prohibited, except that traps with an opening of up to 7 1/2" may be set for beaver in waters frequented by beaver.

### PADDED METAL TRAP RESTRICTIONS

1. May only be used in the burrow of a wild animal or below the surface of the water in a pond, lake, stream, spring hole, or tidal water. Except that, any person who has completed a DEP approved special land trapping course may use padded metal traps on or below ground from December 1 through January 31 for the taking of coyotes on private land parcels of at least 10 contiguous acres where the landowner has given written permission explicitly for the use of such traps. When trapping coyotes in this manner, no visible bait may be used, pan tension must be two pounds or greater, and traps must be securely anchored to the ground.
2. Opening greater than 5 15/16" is prohibited, except that traps with an opening of up to 7 1/2" may be set for beaver in waters frequented by beaver.

### SMOOTH WIRE TRAP RESTRICTIONS

1. May only be used below the surface of the water in a pond, lake, stream, spring hole, or tidal water. Except, smooth wire traps having an opening of 4 3/4" or less may extend above the surface of the water provided a portion of the trap frame remains in contact with the water.
2. Opening greater than 6 1/2" is prohibited, except that Conibears and similar smooth wire traps with an opening of up to 10" may be set for beaver in waters frequented by beaver.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED:

- The use of any type of snare.
- Traps placed, set, or tended within 10 feet of the waterline of a muskrat or beaver house, including bank beaver.
- Traps with serrations or teeth.

### TRAPPERS ARE REQUIRED TO:

- Attach their name legibly to all traps.
- Obtain, and have in possession, the written permission of the landowner when trapping on their land. **WRITTEN PERMISSION MUST BE RENEWED ANNUALLY.**
- Tend all traps within a 24-hour period.

## TRAP DEFINITIONS

**Padded Metal Trap:** A legal padded metal trap has all of the following features or characteristics:

1. Spring strength not exceeding 55 inch pounds with arms closed and 85 inch pounds with arms in the open position;
2. A gap between the arms of the trap in the closed position no less than 1/4 inch in width and no less than 4 inches in length;
3. Replaceable non-weather hardening, non-age hardening padding material not less than 3/32 inch thick covering the closing surfaces and securely affixed to the arms of the trap;
4. A chain no longer than 6 inches in length;
5. Swivels located at each end of the chain, and;
6. A shock absorbing spring incorporated into the anchoring chain.

**Species Specific Trap:** A legal species specific trap has all of the following features or characteristics:

1. Triggering and restraining mechanisms enclosed by a housing;
2. When set, triggering and restraining mechanism accessible only via a single opening;
3. An access opening measuring not greater than 2 inches in diameter or diagonally;
4. A triggering mechanism that can only be activated by a pulling force;
5. A swivel-mounted anchoring mechanism.

2008 HUNTING SEASONS STATE LANDS ONLY

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
DEER - ARCHERY									15		18	24-31
TURKEY - ARCHERY					7-31				15		18	24-31
DEER - SHOTGUN											19	9
DEER - MUZZLEL'DR.												10-23
TURKEY - FIREARMS					7-31			4-31				
PHEASANT/GROUSE	1-12											
GRAY SQUIRREL	1								1-30	18		31
COTTONTAIL RABBIT	1		29									31
RACCOON	1-19									18		31
FOX, RED	1		29							18		31
FOX, GRAY	1		29							18		31
COYOTE *	1				6	2				18		31
OPOSSUM	1-19									3 18		31
WOODCHUCK					6	2				18		31
CROW	1		15							3 18	15	
PORCUPINE *	1									18		31
CHIPMUNK *	1				6	2				3 18		31
RED SQUIRREL *	1				6	2				3 18		31
SKUNK	1				6	2				3 18		31
WEASEL	1				6	2				3 18		31

\* NO CLOSED SEASON PER CGS 26-66-39. COYOTE, PORCUPINE, RED SQUIRREL, CHIPMUNK WEASEL & SKUNK