

FURBEARER HUNTING AND TRAPPING



2026-2027 FURBEARER HUNTING SEASONS

SPECIES	INCLUSIVE DATES	DAILY LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
Coyote	No closed season; Night hunting allowed, Jan. 1–Mar. 31	No	No
Fisher	Dec. 1, 2026–Jan. 31, 2027	2*	2*
Fox (Red & Gray), Opossum, Skunk, Raccoon	Sept. 1, 2026–March 31, 2027	No	No
Mink, Muskrat, Weasel	Oct. 15, 2026–April 10, 2027 Nov. 1, 2026–April 10, 2027	WMUs A–F WMUs G–M	No
Bobcat, Lynx, Pine marten	CLOSED		

* The statewide daily and season bag limit is 2 fisher per hunter (combined with trapping).

Furbearer Hunting Licensing Requirements

To hunt for furbearers, hunters must have a current Regular N.H. Hunting, Combination, or Archery License. **A Small Game License does not allow for the hunting of furbearers.**

Furbearer Hunting Regulations

Hunting Hours: ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

There is no daily bag limit for coyote, red fox, gray fox, opossum, skunk, weasel, mink, muskrat, or raccoon.

There is no open hunting season for otter or beaver. Furbearers shall not be taken with an

air rifle. Hunters are required to register all furbearing animals taken by hunting by completing an online registration report available at www.wildlife.nh.gov/hunting-nh/furbearer. Once the registration process is complete, hunters will receive a confirmation number that must be written or kept within their hunting license.

Coyote

- No closed season.
- **Night Hunting:** Coyotes may be hunted at night from Jan. 1 through March 31. Lights may be used, except from a motor vehicle, snowmobile, or OHRV. In towns

with special rules (page 22), coyote night hunters are restricted to permitted pistols, .17 and .22 caliber rimfire rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbow, or bow and arrow.

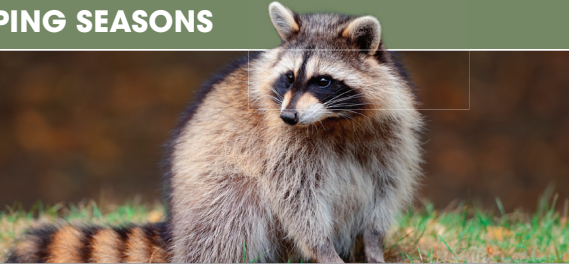
- Electronic calling devices are legal.
- Written landowner permission, filed with the local conservation officer, is required to hunt coyote at night or to place bait for coyotes.
- Baiting is not permitted on ice-covered public waters.
- From the close of the bear baiting season through December 15, baiting for coyote will be restricted to the use of meat, animal parts, carrion, or fish only.

Fisher

Sealing required within 10 days of the close of season. The lower jaw of fisher must be submitted at the time of sealing. The season limit is 2 fisher.

Raccoon

Raccoon may be hunted at night. It is illegal to use a rifle or pistol larger than .22 caliber, or shot size larger than number 4 birdshot. It is illegal to take raccoons using a light from a motor vehicle or OHRV.



2026-2027 TRAPPING SEASONS

SPECIES	INCLUSIVE DATES	WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT UNITS	SEASON LIMIT
Beaver, Muskrat, Mink, Otter, Weasel	Oct. 15, 2026–Apr. 10, 2027 Nov. 1, 2026–Apr. 10, 2027	A–F G–M	Otter: 10 Other: No
Fisher	Dec. 1–Dec. 31, 2026	Statewide	2*
Fox (Red & Gray), Opossum, Skunk, Raccoon	Oct. 15–Dec. 31, 2026 Nov. 1, 2026–Jan. 15, 2027	A–F G–M	No
Coyote	Oct. 15, 2026–March 31, 2027 Nov. 1, 2026–March 31, 2027	A–F G–M	No
Bobcat, Lynx, Pine marten	CLOSED		

* The statewide bag limit is 2 fisher per trapper (combined with hunting).



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FURBEARER TRAPPING

Trapping Licensing Requirements

Any person (regardless of age), except resident landowners while upon their own land or children under 16 years of age when accompanied by a licensee 18 years of age or over, must have a license to trap fur-bearing animals. This license can only be purchased at Fish and Game headquarters in Concord or by mail from N.H. Fish and Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301. Trapping Licenses expire on June 30 of each year.

No person shall be issued a license to trap unless he or she presents proof that he or she has completed a trapper education course or has previously held a N.H. license to trap within the last three years.

- **Trapping License—Resident Minor:** N.H. resident youths (under age 16) may purchase this license with proof of Trapper Education or a previous NH Trapping License issued within the previous 3 years. Resident minors shall provide a copy of their parent or legal guardian's current state issued motor vehicle driver license or state issued non-driver photo ID card which shall be used to determine residency. This license allows youth trappers to trap without adult accompaniment.
- **Nonresident Trapping Licenses:** In order to be eligible for a N.H. Trapping License, the applicant's state or province

must allow nonresidents to trap within their jurisdictions.

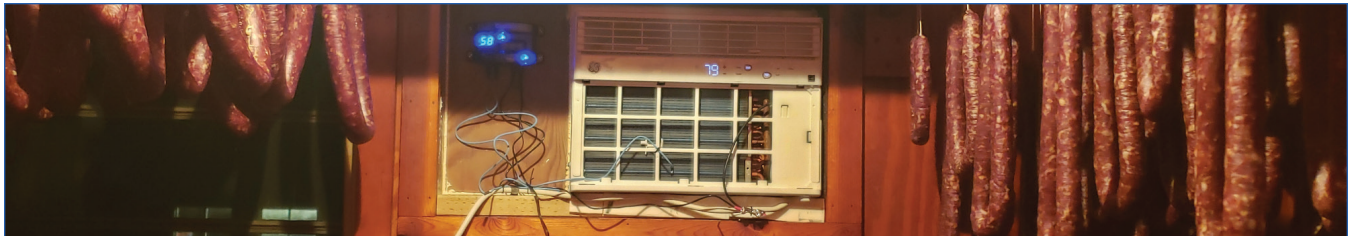
Persons engaged in the practice of trapping conflict wildlife outside of the regulated trapping season are required to possess a Wildlife Control Operator's License, available at Fish and Game headquarters in Concord or by mail.

General Trapping Regulations

- Snares may be used for taking beaver and otter. Snares shall only be set in water or under ice.
- All traps/snares must have the name of the person setting them, either stamped or engraved in a legible and permanent manner on the trap or on a durable tag securely affixed to the trap or snare or chain holding the trap.
- Only New Hampshire residents may trap beaver and otter during the N.H. open seasons.
- When set, all traps must be securely attached to the ground, to a fixed object, to a drag, or to a slide wire.
- Otter sealing is required within 10 days of the close of the otter season.
- Fisher sealing is required within 10 days of the close of the fisher season.
- There is no open season on bobcat, lynx, or American marten.
- No person may set, arrange, or tend any trap/snare upon any land or from the shores

of any waters of which he or she is not the owner or occupant unless he or she has signed, written permission, and until a copy is filed with the conservation officer in whose district said person is going to trap, together with a description of the land on which trapping is to be done. The only exceptions are traps/snares placed in public bodies of water as defined in RSA 271:20 and on the following named rivers: Androscoggin, Ammonoosuc, Ashuelot, Bearcamp, Contoocook, Connecticut, Cocheco, Exeter, Lamprey, Mascoma, Merrimack, Merrymeeting, Isinglass, Pemigewasset, Pine, Saco, Soucook, Suncook, and Winnepesaukee and their navigable tributaries. Navigable tributaries are those waters from the tributary's mouth to a point upstream where a person can row a boat or paddle a canoe when the water in the stream is in its ordinary condition.

- No person may set or arrange any trap in a public way, cart road, or path commonly used as a passageway by human beings or domestic animals.
- Any trapper causing injury or damage to domestic animals, with the exception of dogs at large, shall be liable to the owner. An injury to a licensed dog at large shall be reported to the town or city listed on the dog's tag, and to the owner of the dog, if known.



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FURBEARER TRAPPING

- No person may set or arrange any trap/snare in or under any bridge, ditch, or drainage system, whether artificial or natural, within the limits of the right-of-way of any public highway except by special permission of the executive director.
- A trapper must visit set traps at least once each calendar day. A person trapping beaver through the ice must visit his traps at least once each 72 hours.
- Trappers may use artificial lights to facilitate checking traps. Checking traps by the use of lights from a motor vehicle is prohibited.
- While checking traps at night, no person shall have in possession a rifle, revolver, or pistol larger than a .22 caliber long rifle, air rifle larger than .25 caliber, or a shotgun with shells larger than number 4 birdshot.
- **Annual Trapper's Report due April 30:** All persons licensed to trap furbearing

animals, whether they trapped or not, are required to submit an Annual Trapper's Report by April 30 of each year.

- Fur Dealers must submit a completed "Fur Dealers' Record Book" (Furs Purchased—Form F&G 152, Furs Sold—Form F&G 152A) to N.H. Fish and Game on or before July 30 of each year. All licensees must carry on their persons a Form F&G 152 when buying the skins of furbearing animals. All forms are available from Fish and Game's Concord headquarters. Fur buyers are not required to maintain a record of deer hides bought or sold.

It Is Unlawful to:

- Disturb or interfere with the dams or houses of beaver without obtaining a special permit from the executive director or his designee, except as provided in RSA 210:9.
- Set or arrange any trap prior to the first day of the open season for trapping a species.

- Disturb the trap of another person or take a furbearing animal from the trap of another person, unless specifically authorized in writing by the owner of the trap.
- Per Fis 303.12 (a Fish and Game Administrative Rule), body gripping traps with an inside jaw spread greater than or equal to 6½ inches, measured inside the jaws perpendicular to the trap's pivoting joints, shall only be set:
 1. Five feet or more above the ground or surface of the snow (with the exception of a snowstorm during the previous 24 hours); or
 2. In water for trapping beaver or otter.
- Place a trap within 15 feet of a muskrat house, or injure or destroy the house, den or burrow used by any game or furbearing animal.
- Place a trap within 50 feet of exposed bait (see Statewide Restrictions on page 35).

Trapping on State-Managed Lands

Permits to trap on state-managed lands are issued by lottery every two years, in even years only, and are valid for two years. The next lottery will be in August 2028.

Lottery applications, property maps, and lists of available lands may be obtained from the Wildlife Division in Concord (603-271-2461), or downloaded from huntnh.com.



LYNX PROTECTION ZONE & TRAP RESTRICTIONS



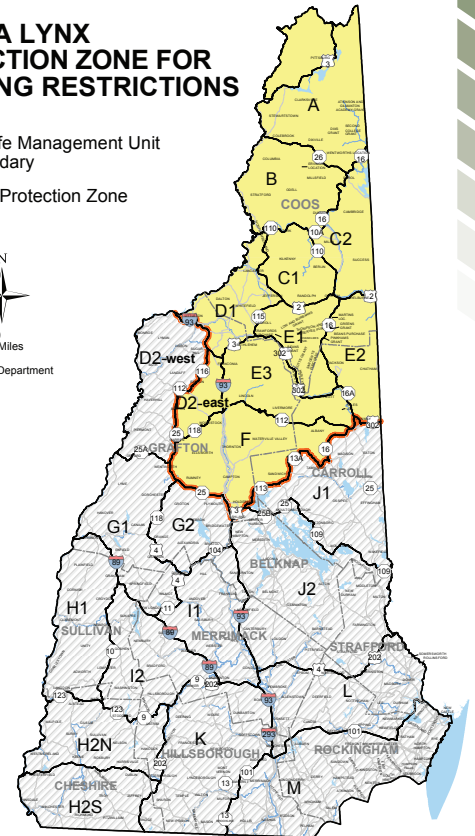
CANADA LYNX PROTECTION ZONE FOR TRAPPING RESTRICTIONS

Wildlife Management Unit boundary

Lynx Protection Zone



0 5 10 20 Miles
April 2012
NH Fish and Game Department



Canada lynx are a federally listed **Threatened Species**. There is no open season for the trapping or hunting of lynx in New Hampshire. Fish and Game biologists have confirmed the presence of reproducing lynx in northern New Hampshire. To protect the lynx, and to help N.H. trappers avoid accidentally taking lynx, Fish and Game worked with the N.H. Trappers Association to delineate a lynx protection zone in the northern and White Mountains area where special regulations are in effect.

Statewide Restrictions

- No foothold trap with auxiliary teeth added shall be allowed.
- No foothold trap with an inside jaw spread greater than 6½ inches shall be set on land.
- Body gripping traps with an inside jaw spread greater than or equal to 6½ inches shall only be set:
 - Five feet or more above the ground or surface of the snow with the exception of a snowstorm during the previous 24 hours; and
 - In water for beaver or otter.
- There is no open season for taking bobcat, American marten, or Canada lynx. Any American marten or Canada lynx trapped must be reported immediately by contacting the Fish and Game Department at 603-271-3361 on business days during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., during weekdays or 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends, or, if

the Fish and Game Department is closed, by contacting the nearest Conservation Officer.

- Deadfalls are prohibited.
- Traps shall not be set within 50 feet of exposed bait, but may be set any distance from a covered bait (see definitions below).
 - “Exposed bait” means bait that is the body of any animal, including fish, or parts thereof, including meat, organs, viscera, bones, or any other parts of an animal, that is visible from above, but does not include meat, organs, viscera, or bones totaling 4 ounces or less, or skin, hair, or feathers 25 square inches or less, droppings, urine, or living or dead animals held in a trap as the result of lawful trapping activity.
 - “Covered bait” means bait that is the body of any animal, including fish, or parts thereof, including meat, organs, viscera, bones, or any other parts that are covered so as to not be visible from above, where cover includes, but is not limited to, brush, branches, leaves, soil, or snow and is constructed in a manner to withstand wind and normal environmental conditions. “Covered bait” includes baits less than one-half pound when placed in a dirt hole 6 inches in diameter or less at a depth of 6 inches or greater; and baits of less than 5 pounds placed on pole sets 5 or more feet above ground are also considered covered bait.

Restrictions within the “Lynx Protection Zone”

The following restrictions on traps shall apply while trapping in WMUs A, B, C1, C2, D1, D2-east, E and F:

- All foothold traps set on land must have one swivel in the chain/cable and one swivel connection to the trap;
- Body gripping traps with an inside jaw spread of 4 inches or greater and less than or equal to 5 inches which are set on the ground shall only be set as follows:
 - Set in water at all times;
 - Set under overhanging stream banks; and
 - Set as a blind set with no bait or attractant; and
- Body gripping traps with an inside jaw spread 4 inches or greater which are set off the ground shall only be set as follows:
 - Five feet or more above the ground or surface of the snow, with the exception of a snowstorm during the previous 24 hours;
 - Affixed to a leaning section of a pole or tree, no greater than 4 inches in diameter that is free of branches and angled 45 degrees or greater in its entirety;

Know the difference between lynx and bobcat AND wolf and coyote. See our brochure at wildnh.com/hunting/publications.html.

LYNX PROTECTION ZONE & TRAP RESTRICTIONS

- Excluding branch removal, the pole or tree shall not have planed or altered sides.
- The area within 4 feet of the trap shall be free of trees, poles or other objects greater than 4 inches in diameter;
- The areas within 4 feet of the trap shall be free of trees or poles that are angled less than 45 degrees to the ground at any point between the ground elevation and the elevation of the trap; and
- The area within 4 feet of the trap shall be free of banks, bluffs, rocks or immediate rise in ground elevation;
- Body gripping traps with an inside jaw spread greater than 5 inches and less than 6½ inches which are set on the ground shall only be set:
 - Recessed in the den entry of conflict wildlife, with the den entry covered by wire mesh with openings that do not exceed 1½ inches side-to-side and wire gauge shall be 16 gauge or less or a wire diameter of 0.05 inches or greater.
 - If placed in a lynx exclusion device, as follows:
 - » The trap jaws shall be completely within the device, the trap springs may be outside of the device;
 - » The lynx exclusion device shall not have an opening greater than 6 inches by 8 inches;
- » The opening shall not be directly in front of the trap, but shall be either on the top or side of the device;
- » The trap set within the device shall be a minimum of 18 inches from the closest edge of the opening to the trap;
- » The back of the device shall be secured to withstand heavy pulling;
- » If using wire mesh with a wood box, the wire mesh shall wrap around two opposite sides of the box and be secured;
- » There shall be at least 2 attachment points for each side of the device where there is a joint, or where panels come together;
- » The exclusion device shall be constructed of wood, or wire mesh that does not exceed 1½ inch openings from side to side;
- » The wire gauge shall be 16 gauge or less or a wire diameter of 0.05 inches or greater;
- » The opening slot in the device that allows the trap springs to extend outside the device shall be no more than 7½ inches wide and a height of no more than 1½ inches; and
- » The trap shall be anchored outside of the device.

Shop Wild NH!

For the 2027 New Hampshire Wildlife Calendar visit www.wildlife.nh.gov/shop-and-support



Other Wildlife

There is no restriction in New Hampshire on the taking of woodchucks, porcupines, English sparrows, European starlings, common feral pigeons, red squirrels, and other rodents not covered in this publication. All other birds not specifically covered in this digest are protected by New Hampshire or federal law and may not be taken. For more information on nongame and endangered wildlife, look for the N.H. Wildlife Action Plan at wildnh.com.

OTHER—NONGAME WILDLIFE

Reptiles and Amphibians

- No person shall sell native species of reptiles or amphibians, including parts or eggs thereof, except:
 - Non-living snapping turtles and bullfrogs raised outside the state which may be possessed, bought, and sold for use as food provided that with each package there shall be a bill of sale bearing the species, the weight of the package, and the place of origin; and
 - Non-living amphibians and reptiles obtained outside the state to be used for educational purposes.
- No person shall take or possess a spotted turtle, Blanding's turtle, wood turtle, Eastern box turtle, black racer, Eastern hognose snake, timber rattlesnake, marbled salamander, Fowler's toad, northern leopard frog, or any egg or part thereof.
- Importation, possession, and release of reptiles shall be in accordance with Fis Chapter 800.
- No person shall take any species of indigenous turtle from May 15 to July 15.
- Persons taking reptiles or amphibians shall not take more than 2 reptiles or 5 amphibians per day.
- The taking of amphibians and reptiles shall be only by hand capture, including the use of hand-held nets.
- Snapping turtles may only be taken if less than 6 inches or 12 to 15 inches in length, as measured along the top of the carapace.
- The possession limit of harvested reptiles and amphibians is 2 times the daily bag limit.
- Individuals may possess up to 2 each of the following native reptiles:*

— Musk turtle	— Brown snake
— Painted turtle	— Northern watersnake
— Snapping turtle	— Red-bellied snake
— Ring-necked snake	— Garter snake
— Eastern milk snake	
- Individuals may possess up to 5 each of the following native amphibians:*

— American toad	— Northern two-lined salamander
— Gray tree frog	— Red-spotted newt
— Spring peeper	— Northern dusky salamander
— American bullfrog	— Eastern red-backed salamander
— Green frog	
— Pickerel frog	
— Mink frog	
— Wood frog	
— Spotted salamander	



NH Fish & Game

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wildnh.com/nongame

** NOTE: Although limited possession of these species is currently legal in New Hampshire, the NH Fish and Game Department encourages people to leave these wildlife species wild. Populations of some species, especially turtles, can be adversely affected by the removal of a small number of individuals.*