



Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Furharvester Activity Summary, 2017-18



Matt Peek, furbearer biologist

Licenses: A total of 6084 adult and 115 junior resident furharvesting licenses were sold in 2017. This is a 9% decrease from 2016 and the 4th consecutive year of decreasing license sales.

On the down side, raccoon harvest continued to decline slightly (2%) to the lowest total since the 1992-93 season.

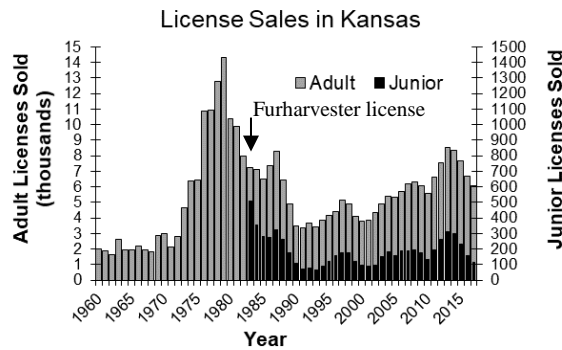


Figure 1. Resident furharvester license sales in KS, 1960-2017.

Unlimited nonresident furharvester licenses have been available in Kansas since 1983. Ninety-eight were sold in 2017. This is the 3rd most nonresident license sales on record, and represents 1.6% of all furharvester license sales.

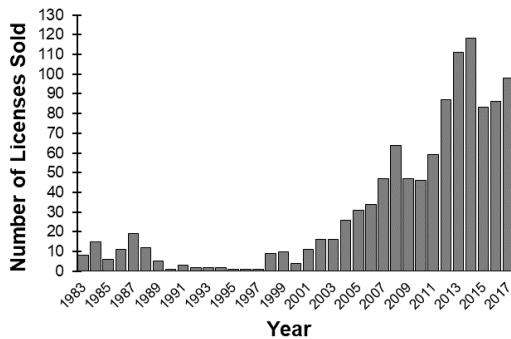


Figure 2. Nonresident furharvester license sales in Kansas, 1983-2017.

Harvest and Furdealer Purchases:

Total harvest and the number of furbearers purchased by Kansas furdealers are provided in Table 1. Total harvest was up 8% from last season. Coyote was the strong point of the fur market this season. Their harvest increased by 31%. The number of bobcats pelt tagged also saw a sizable increase (52%).

Species	Total Harvest**	Total Purchases***	% Change from previous season**
Badger	1122	316	11%
Beaver	4459	732	12%
Bobcat*	3900	1649	52%
Coyote	47499	12,821	31%
Gray Fox	12	1	n/a
Red Fox	512	132	31%
Swift Fox*	93	17	166%
Mink	98	17	-2%
Muskrat	5411	1272	-11%
Opossum	18442	1165	-7%
Otter*	167	43	27%
Raccoon	38746	8122	-2%
Skunk	5187	317	-13%

*From pelt tagging records rather than Furbearer Harvest Survey

**From annual Furbearer Harvest Survey

***From furdealer record books

Pelt Values:

Kansas furdealers purchased an estimated \$340,221 worth of pelts from furbearers harvested in Kansas in 2017-18, which was a 90% increase from last season. (Figure 3).

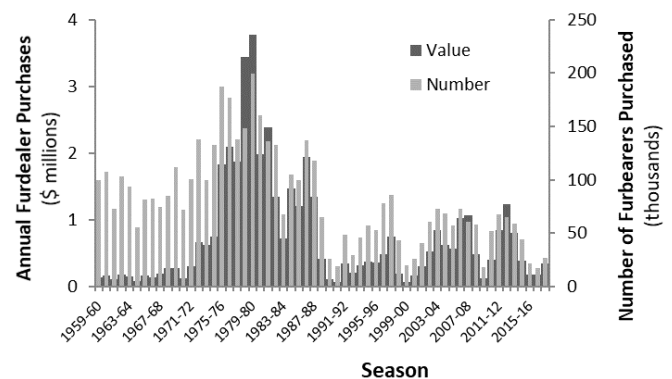


Figure 3. Value and number of furbearers harvested in Kansas & purchased by Kansas furdealers, 1959-2017.

According to the annual Furdealer Pelt Survey, pelt values increased for about half the species compared to last season (Table 2)

but remain well below longer term averages. Of particular note, coyote pelt values increased by 28%. Raccoon increased by 9% (just \$0.22) from last year's average value which was the lowest since 1970.

Table 2. Pelt Values of Kansas Furbearers, 2017-18

Species	Average Pelt Price*	Average KFHA auction pelt price**	% Change from previous season*
Badger	\$7.29	\$6.42	-4%
Beaver	\$4.82	\$4.16	-23%
Bobcat	\$42.36	\$43.07	-20%
Coyote	\$18.44	\$25.42	28%
Gray Fox	\$10.00	-	n/a
Red Fox	\$10.45	\$12.00	-14%
Swift Fox	-	-	n/a
Mink	\$7.31	\$5.50	37%
Muskrat	\$1.82	\$2.20	-35%
Opossum	\$0.50	\$0.32	-62%
Otter	\$23.31	\$8.20	n/a
Raccoon	\$2.73	\$2.08	9%
Striped Skunk	\$1.64	\$0.20	12%

*From annual Furdealer Pelt Price and Primeness Survey
 **From Kansas Fur Harvester Assoc (KFHA) auction

Highs and Lows:

For the 3rd year in a row and just the 4th time since records have been kept, coyote accounted for most of the total value of pelts sold to Kansas furdealers (69%; Figure 4). In addition, the total pelt value (\$236,427) was the highest for coyote since the 1986-87 season.

Alternatively, raccoon's contribution to total pelt value continued to decline to a record low (since 1959) of just 7%, falling 1% from last year's value. Despite this slight decline in total contribution, raccoon total pelt value actually increased from \$15,060 to \$22,173.

Adjusted for inflation, average raccoon pelt values over the past 3 years (\$2.74) have been the lowest on record, over \$2 lower than the next lowest average on record (Figure 5).

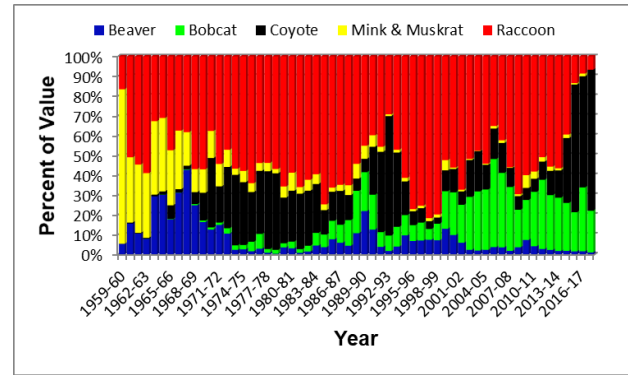


Figure 4. Relative cumulative value of select furbearers purchased by Kansas furdealers, 1959-2017.

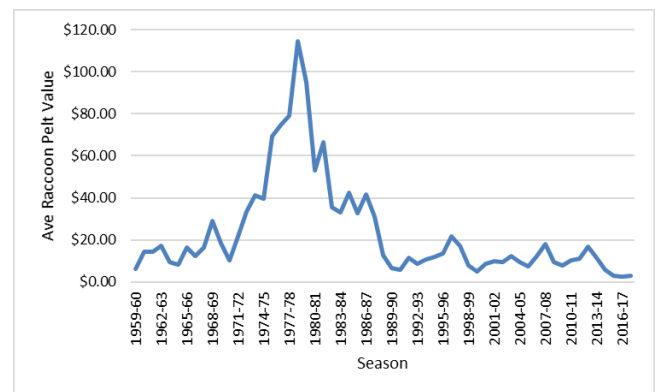


Figure 5. Average raccoon pelt value adjusted for inflation to 2018 values from 1959-2017.

Just for Fun:

Trappers sometimes like to say they could make more money working for minimum wage than they do trapping. Well, here's a comparison of our three most important furbearers showing how many of each you need to catch per day to break even with that 8-hour day making minimum wage. (You'll have to trap the weekend too, to pay for your expenses, as they're not included in the calculation!)

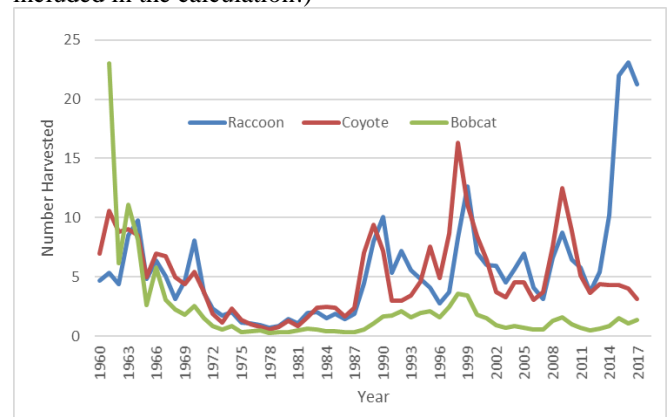


Figure 6. Harvest per day by species needed to equal an 8-hour work day at min. wage (without expenses).