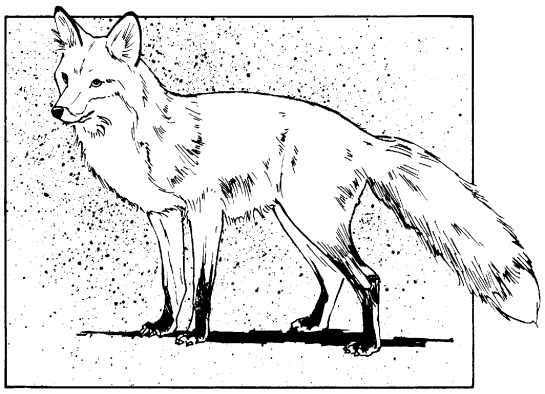
TRAP-LINES

New York State Trapper's Association Convention Edition 2008



Important News!!!

Governor Paterson signs Junior Hunter/ Trapper Mentoring Bill July 24, 2008
See Page 9

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New York State Trappers Association Annual Convention & Sportsmen's Show

Herkimer County Fairgrounds
Frankfort, New York
August 29- 30, 2008

Directions to Fairgrounds

Exit #30 from the NY Thruway, (I-90). Take Rt. 28 south to 5S, then West about 4 miles to the Fairgrounds.
Camping and Several motels in the Herkimer and Utica area

Friday, August 29th: Demos all day, 7PM - President's Dinner

Saturday, August 30th: Demos all day, Trap Setting Contest
NYS Certified Trapper Training Course
5PM—General Membership Meeting
Large Merchandise Auction, Live Music

Some of the Scheduled Demos:

Ernie Mosher—Fisher
Frenchie - Adirondack Mink trapping
Dale Gamba - Fox & Coyote trapping
Al West - Mink Trapping
Jeff of JR & Sons - Grey Fox
Lou & Angie Berchielli - Selective Coon & Fisher trapping
Bob Hughes - Red Fox Trapping
Demos on Collecting Animal Glands,
Hunting with Hounds, and many others.

Many Dealers from all over the Northeast.
A good time to stock up.

DEMOS - DEALERS - TAILGATERS

President's Report:

It has been almost 3 years since I became your president. One of my commitments to you, was to finish the revision of our By-Laws. I am happy to say they are completed, and were voted on and approve by our members, by an over-whelming majority. The vote was115 yes and 12 no. As of June 14Th the By-Laws were accepted. I want to thank Angie and all the committee members that worked very hard to bring these by-laws to the 21st century. This was no easy task, and because of legal ramifications, every word needed to be carefully considered.

This year I'm proud to say we hosted the NTA North East Regional Convention again. Unfortunately the turnout this year was about half of last year, but that was still a great turnout for a regional convention. I feel there were many factors that might of effected attendance. The weather wasn't very cooperative for one. With gas prices as high as they are, one wonders if personnel budgets won't allow trappers to attend as many Conventions as usual. With the economy the way it is everyone's disposable income is cut substantially. One can only hope that trappers are saving their money for our Fall Convention where there will be great opportunities to get their trapping supplies.

Our Fall Convention promises to be another great convention. I am pleased to announce we have the Adirondack story teller again. Last year his stories of his life growing up in the Adirondacks was very amusing. His stories had me in stitches. The response from our members was overwhelmingly in favor to have him back. I am also pleased to announce there will be a band performing this year at the Convention also. Look for the time and place in your Convention booklet.

Region 6 Director, Pat Arnold came up with a wonderful idea to have a ***"Fur Handler of the Year Award."*** The idea was brought up to help highlight good fur handling and to help improve the way trapper's put up their fur to bring in the most value for their effort. There will be awards given for each category. Each species will be represented. Youth 12 years and under will have their own category with small critters. The winners in each class will be entered for a chance for the ***"Fur Handler of the year award."*** This is the first award offered for fur handling in New York State. I would wish all entrants good luck

Every member was sent a book of raffle tickets. I would ask that everyone buy or sell these tickets. It would be outstanding if each member could sell extra tickets for this raffle! The money brought in for this raffle helps to pay for our Executive Director Dave Miller's salary. Dave spends countless hours in Albany and other areas of the state fighting for your right to trap. With out your financial support we can't continue to keep this position. ***Please do your part to help out!***

As I write this, the Junior Hunting and Mentoring Bill is waiting for Governor Paterson signature to become law. (See page 9!) This bill allows the age to hunt big game to be lowered from 16 to 14 years old. It also allows us, as trappers to take a youngster along with us trapping, and actually handle the traps and catch, without the fear of getting a ticket. This was one of the pieces of legislation that Dave Miller spent a considerable amount of time with, in getting this bill approved.

I also want to extend a thank you to everyone who called and wrote their representative to support this bill.

Thank you,
Dave Leibig - NYSTA President

Other Important events and dates:

Fur Auctions:

January 3rd, 2009 Ballston Spa 4-H Building

Fulton-Montgomery Fur Harvesters and Foothills Trapper's Association

Please note the following change of location!

February 7th and April 4th - New location:
VFW Post #4915 located at
131 Mohawk St., Herkimer, NY
Fur check in starts at 6AM,
the sale starts at 8AM.
7% Commission (With 1% going to NYSTA for the Executive Director Fund)
Contact: Mike Vickereson (518) 835-8014 or Frank Farrar at (518) 885-6623

Bear Forum: White Otter Rod and Gun Club - Woodgate, August 23rd , 2008, Starts at 10:00

Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program - September 5-7,2008, at Silver Bay, Lake George , A program to introduce women to a wide variety of outdoors skills, from Hunting, Fishing and Trapping to Canoeing, Hiking and Photography, and everything else in between. For more information: ***NYSDEC website*** or contact Kelly Stang at 518, 402 - 8862

Do you have Meetings, Fur Auctions, Dinners and other events to announce? Please send the information to:
AngieBerchielli@MSN.com ***to be included in the next Newsletter.***

Next Newsletter Deadline:
September 6th, 2008

Trappers:
For all of your trapping needs:
Send for a Free Sterling Fur Catalog.
Featuring the largest most complete listing of traps & trapping supplies!

Sterling Fur Company
11268 Frick Road
Sterling, Oh 44276
Ph 330-939-3763
Fax 330-939-5135
Raw Fur Wanted

315/735-1902 PASQUALE "PAT" BENZO
SQUAL'S
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10011 Davis Road-West, UTICA, N.Y. 13502
BUYING: RAW FURS & DEER SKINS
WE BUY: USED TRAPS & EQUIPMENT, ANTIQUE TRAPS, MOUNTED ANIMALS, TANNED SKINS, DUCK DECOYS
We do CUSTOM TANNING
PREDATOR CALLS AND HUNTING LIGHTS

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Trapping Supplies
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Hallstead,Pa. 18822
Ph.570-278-2553
email:
willsher@epix.net
I buy used traps

David *Nicole*
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Honey Brook, PA 19344
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A Full Line of Trapping Supplies
Buyers of
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Unadilla Valley Raw Furs & Hides

518-882-9418

Wanted

Raw Furs **Ginseng**
All furs, especially muskrats and beaver

Call us before you sell.
No waiting for your payment.

Mike Smith
5083 Consaul Rd. Hagaman, NY 12086
(518) 882-9418
e-mail: uvrfur@Aol.com

MANHEIM HIDE & FUR

IS

Proud to Introduce Raymond Shedivy
Professional Animal Lures

These lures have only been available to a select few in the trapping public since Ray retired from lure making in the mid 80's. These lures have thousands of catches to their name.

Also **check out** Manheim Hide & Fur's complete lure system for fisher *Adirondack Gold & Adirondack Long Call*, produced by Ernest Mosher.

315-823-4270 cell: 315-868-6275

THE PROOF IS IN THE CATCH

Executive Director's Report

Fund Raising:

Tickets for the annual raffle were sent out a few weeks ago, every member should have received one book. Treasurer Dale Gamba reports that sales have done very well and that he has had many requests for additional tickets. An important lesson learned here is the importance of mailing tickets since it appears that sales have already far exceeded last year. ***The drawing will be held at the Convention on August 30, 2008.***

There will be at least two Dinner Auctions this fall in Regions 3 and 8. It is my thought that a contest for heaviest beaver and heaviest coyote could be a great fund raiser too but it does require a lot of organizational work. I'd really like your thoughts on this idea of a heaviest beaver or coyote contest.

For each of these events I will need several key volunteers for them to be successful. I cannot do this alone. Please feel free to contact me at guarddn@empacc.net or at 607-522-4707, to discuss these ideas or to volunteer.

Legislation:

2008 was the slowest legislative session and about the strangest I can remember. Strange I guess because there was so little action. The members, in both Houses, seemed to have been thrown completely off balance. I suppose that is understandable with all the turmoil of switching Governors in midstream and all, still it causes one to wonder a bit.

In April Mr. Englebrights' bill which would allow municipalities (read that counties) to set trapping regulations was reported out of the Committee on Environmental Conservation but, thanks to Mr. Englebright, who actually is a pretty good guy, never went beyond that. The only legislation affecting Sportsmen & Women, that did move was;

1) the junior hunter and trapper mentoring bill that would allow 14 and 15 year olds to hunt big game under proper supervision and allow children under twelve to assist, under immediate supervision, with a licensed trapper before taking the trapping course. (See page 9!)

2)prohibit the sale of pan fish except from a small part of the St Lawrence and Bullheads from a couple of Region 7 waters.

As I write this report both of these bills have passed both houses of the Legislature and are on the way to the Governor. The Junior Hunting and Trapping is seeing tremendous resistance from the animal rights groups. Hopefully there are many, many letters that were sent to the Governor's office from those who support this legislation. By the time you read this the dust should have settled and we will know one way or the other.

Regulations:

Again, as I write this were faced with a problem. The DEC Division of Lands and Forests has proposed changes to part 190 of the regulations that govern the use of State Lands. This is an extremely restrictive regulation to begin with and the proposed changes would make it even more so. Many user groups including NYSTA and many individuals have sent very strong messages protesting these proposed changes. My feeling and my hope is that the Department will wind up reviewing the whole regulation before taking any action. I have, in fact, made that suggestion as have several others. We will have to see what happens.

Elections:

Remember that this is an election year, perhaps the most important one we have ever faced. A very good friend has been lost with the retirement of Senator Joe Bruno and there is a very good chance that the Senate Majority (Republican) could change this year. Keep in mind that the Republican Senate has been our most important last line of defense for many years.

Keep in mind too that this is the year for national elections; we will be voting for a new President. Look at the way things seem to be shaping up and tell me that's not a little scary. I would most strongly encourage you to look at the various candidates very carefully then for heavens sake ***get out and vote!*** And take your friends, relatives and Mother-in-Law with you.

In closing let me just remind you that we must be constantly on guard. The Legislative Committees that I have to deal

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Executive Director continued...

➥ with get more heavily weighted against us constantly and I constantly need to increase the time that I spend with legislators.

NYSTA needs you and believe me, you need NYSTA!

All that each and every one of you do to support our organization is greatly appreciate, more than I can tell you.

I can only ask that you continue your generous support so that we all can continue our beloved life style.

Dave Miller—NYSTA Executive Director

Twenty Years

JTI Marks Twentieth Anniversary

It is hard to believe, but in June the JTI Committee marked it's twentieth anniversary of it's existence. Originally it was known as the "Padded Trap Committee." Three of the seven person committee remain of the original members.

Back in 1988 the issue was a threat by DEC's Chief of the Bureau of Wildlife to mandate padded traps only for land trapping in New York. Consequently a committee was appointed to deal with the matter.

During the first meeting with DEC matters became quite heated and NYSTA's committee walked out of the meeting.

Eventually the two sides got back together, and a spirit of cooperation developed, and the Joint Trapping Initiative was formed.

The committee has developed language for legislation and with one bill introduced in the 1990's by Assemblyman Bragman. The bill passed the legislature, was signed into law by the Governor.

The mandate for padded traps only, never came to pass.

Since that time the committee has been directly involved and has had input on every major trapping issue that New York has faced.

They have met at locations all across the State; from Olean to Cape Vincent, to Cobleskill, to Ballston Spa, to Sherburne, to Shackleton Point on Oneida Lake. Most recently they have met with DEC at the Ithaca Game Farm and at Blue Mountain Lake. Many meetings have taken place at the DEC Albany Headquarters and out of necessity numerous meetings have been held in the Albany area.

Over the years the Committee has evolved as the major committee representing NYSTA with DEC. The JTI also has represented NYSTA on BMP matters. At least one other State, Vermont, has fashioned a JTI Committee after New York's.

Committee members are spread across the State; three in the Capital District, one from Steuben County, one from Oswego County, one from the southern end of Letchworth State Park in the Southern Tier, and one from the Adirondack north country.

But equally important is that the members of the Committee have very varied backgrounds and perspectives, which is very useful in dealing with some of the complex issues facing trapping and trappers in New York.

New York State each day is becoming more and more urbanized and with that comes more and more threats to trapping. It can be fairly stated that each member of the committee has had major input in all of the issues. Sometimes the meetings amongst the committee can become quite heated, however the goal always remains the same; to preserve trapping in New York State.

With the recent passage of the revised NYSTA By-Laws the JTI Committee, as well as other committees, a permanent committee to serve NYSTA. There are constantly concerns emerging and it appears there will be a need for the JTI Committee for a long time to come.

Al West - Chairman JTI

Credit: US Fish & Wildlife Service

Help to support the New York State Trappers Association

Raffle tickets are on the next page.

Tickets are $2.00 each or 6 for $10.00

Take a chance to win any of the following great prizes! Good Luck!

- Savage .243 Caliber rifle w/scope & sling w/carved stock
- 14' Yankee Canoe
- 8 Point Hudson Bay Blanket -red
- Traditions .50 Caliber Muzzle loader
- Spinning Rod & Reel - Lightweight
- $300.00 cash

- Savage .243 Caliber rifle w/scope & sling w/carved stock
- 14' Yankee Canoe
- 8 Point Hudson Bay Blanket -red
- Traditions .50 Caliber Muzzle loader
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- 14' Yankee Canoe
- 8 Point Hudson Bay Blanket -red
- Traditions .50 Caliber Muzzle loader
- Spinning Rod & Reel - Lightweight
- $300.00 cash

Please fill out the raffle tickets on the other side. (They must be legible and filled out completely). ☛ ☛ ☛

Drawing is August 30th, at the NYSTA Convention. If mailing them, send them and a check to: NYSTA, 12320 Pople Road, Cato, New York 13033. They must be received no later than August 25th.

New York Trappers Association Raffle

- Savage .243 caliber Rifle w/scope & sling w/carved stock
- 14' Yankee Canoe
- 8 point Hudson Bay Blanket - Red
- Traditions .50 Caliber Muzzle loader
- Spinning Rod & Reel - Lightweight
- $300 Cash

Tickets are $2.00 each, or buy the entire page, and get six tickets for only $10.00.

Name: Address: Phone:	Name: Address: Phone:
Name: Address: Phone:	Name: Address: Phone:
Name: Address: Phone:	Name: Address: Phone:

Drawing is on ***August 30, 2008 at the NYSTA Convention***. Need not be present to win. If mailing these tickets to the following address must be received no later than August 25th. ***NYSTA, 12320 Pople Road, Cato, New York 13033***. Or they may be dropped off at the NYSTA booth at the Convention. Each ticket must be filled out.

Thank you and Good Luck!

NYSTA 2008 Fur Handlers Award

Age Groups:

12 and under – Muskrats, Weasels, Mink, Red Squirrels
13 to 18 - Any species
19 and up - Any species

****** NO entry fee, but any entrant must be a member of NYSTA.***
****** All entries must be New York Fur Species.***

All fur must be at the fall convention before 8 am on

Saturday, August 30, 2008.

The owner of the fur is responsible to get his/her fur to the convention and back home following. Your Regional Director, County Representative, or fur buyer may be able to assist you if you can't get the fur to the convention by 8 am on Saturday.

Judging will be completed by 10 am the same day, so your fur MUST be here on time or it will not be considered. The ribbons will be placed on the fur after the judging. The fur will then be on display for public viewing for the rest of the convention. Individual species awards, as well as State Fur Handler of the Year, will be given to the winners at the General Membership meeting on Saturday night, August 30. The State Fur Handler of the Year will receive a trophy, and all other winners will receive ribbons/awards.

***** Plan ahead – freeze small animals, such as mink, squirrels, etc.....freeze them whole. The week before the convention, thaw, skin and put up as usual. This will assure that your fur will be fresh when presented at the convention.***

***** For larger animals, skin, wrap and freeze ahead, then put up a few days before the convention so it's fresh also.***

SPONSORS of the NYSTA 2008 Fur Handlers Award:

New York State Trappers Association (NYSTA), Conservation Alliance of New York (CANY), North American Fur Auction - Ernie Moser (NAFA), Fur Harvesters Auction / Toby Edwards (FHA). ANY other dealer or individual is welcome to join in the sponsorship of these awards.

State of New York | Executive Chamber
For Immediate Release: July 24, 2008

Contact: Errol Cockfield | errol.cockfield@chamber.state.ny.us |
212.681.4640 | 518.474.8418

David A. Paterson | Governor

GOVERNOR PATERSON SIGNS BILL TO CREATE JUNIOR HUNTER MENTORING PROGRAM, DELIVER BOOST TO NEW YORK SPORTING COMMUNITY

Legislation Brings New York In Line With Other States' Hunting Programs

Bill Creates Additional Outdoor Opportunities for Young Sportspersons Across the State

Governor David A. Paterson has signed into law a bill that creates a special "junior hunter" mentoring program which will allow persons aged 14 and 15 to hunt big game with a firearm while accompanied and supervised by an experienced adult hunter.

Current law already allows persons aged 12 to 16 years to hunt small game with a firearm or longbow, and persons aged 14 and 15 to hunt big game with longbow, under supervision. However, New York was the only state in the nation where 14-year-olds could not hunt big game with a firearm. Over 40 states allow 12-year-olds to hunt big game with a firearm.

"Hunting is a rich part of New York State's heritage, particularly in the North Country and our more rural areas, as well as a crucial part of the state's thriving sports industry," said Governor Paterson. "This bill will afford New York families, especially those Upstate, the same opportunities that already exist in other states by offering our junior hunters the opportunity to safely partake in such an important New York pastime with their parents, grandparents and other experienced hunters."

Senator Dale M. Volker said: "This is tremendous news for sportsmen, sportswomen, and their families throughout the State of New York who enjoy hunting and promoting safe and responsible wildlife management. I would like to thank Governor Paterson for signing this legislation into law. His action on this bill embraces our strong hunting tradition in New York State. Both Assemblywoman Francine DelMonte and I have fought very hard over the years for this bill, and now families will have the opportunity to enjoy hunting with their younger family members and foster responsible wildlife management techniques for future generations of hunters."

Assemblywoman Francine DelMonte said: "Studies show that strict supervision by experienced hunters instills a strong safety ethic in young hunters, and according to the DEC, the current licensing program has proven extremely successful and remarkably safe. The extended license will not only impart responsible hunting practices in hunters at a younger age, but it will also provide an opportunity to bolster more effective hunting recruitment."

Pete Grannis, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner, said: "Through Governor Paterson's leadership, this long-sought measure has become a reality. Historically, responsible hunting has been valuable in instilling youth with an appreciation of the state's abundant natural resources and a responsibility to act as environmental stewards. This bill will increase opportunities for young people to get out of the house and experience the outdoors. In addition, given the trend of declining hunters and expanding deer populations, the recruitment of additional hunters is needed to effectively manage deer populations in the future."

Patrick Hooker, New York State Agriculture and Markets Commissioner, said: "Wildlife causes a significant amount of damage to agricultural crops annually and the only practical way to control it is through regulated sport hunting. I applaud the Governor's decision to usher in the next generation of hunters at an earlier age, who will not only help keep this sport alive, but will help farmers manage wildlife

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on their farms and in rural areas throughout New York State. This is an historic and very positive change in New York's hunting regulations and it epitomizes the Governor's acknowledgment of New York's rural heritage."

Currently, all first-time hunters in New York must take a ten-hour hunter safety course and pass a written and practical examination before being issued a hunter safety certificate which is required when purchasing a hunting license. Parents of minors must also give written permission for a minor to take the safety course and to be issued a license.

Today's bill establishes additional supervision and safety requirements for the new program to help ensure that the junior hunting experience occurs safely:

- Hunters who are 14 and 15 years of age who hunt big game with a firearm must do so under the direct supervision and control of the adult hunter who must be a parent, guardian or other adult over the age of 21 designated in writing by the parent or guardian, have a minimum of three years of big game hunting experience, and maintain close and constant visual contact and physical control over the minor hunter.

- The junior hunter and his or her mentor must hunt at ground level (i.e., they may not hunt from an elevated blind).

- The junior hunter and his or her mentor must wear blaze orange at all times while hunting.

The bill also creates a trapper mentoring program that allows youngsters to accompany and assist a licensed trapper who is at least 18 years of age and has at least three years of trapping experience.

There was overwhelming support for the bill from hundreds of individuals and groups from around the state who wrote in to urge that the bill be enacted.

Editors Note:

What does this new legislation mean for trappers?

While trapping isn't the main focus in this new law, it's a big step forward for all Sportsmen and Women. It will make recruiting new hunters and trappers much easier. Now, with parental permission, you can take a youngster under the age of 12, out on your trap line.

You pull in a muskrat, and then clean and dry its fur in the snow. With this new law you can now legally hand it to the youngster to carry. With the next rat, they clean and dry it's fur, while you remake the set. If by the end of the day, they're pulling in the rats and remaking the sets, you know that you've created a new trapper. If not, you've at least created a positive memory, a connection with nature, that will last a lifetime.

We should all take the time to thank the Sponsors of the Bill; Senator Dale Volker and Assemblywoman Francine DelMonte. We should also thank all of the people who voted for the bill (it passed in the Senate 61-1). And very importantly a "thank you" should go to Commissioner Grannis and the Governor.

And finally we should thank Gordon Batcheller and the Fur Team for developing this idea from discussions between the Fur Team and JTI, and then getting Trapping added to this Department Bill.

How Far Have We Come?

By Jerry Leggieri

Recently, going through a pile of old papers while helping to clean out a friend's house, I came across a NYSTA newsletter that was sent out in the summer of 1973. The top half (above the fold) of the newsletter had photo copies of two anti trap bills that had been introduced into the 1973-74 legislative session. The bottom half of the page contained an editorial by NYSTA Secretary/Treasurer William Leathersich, Jr. who implored trappers to get involved by writing their state (and federal) representatives in support of trapping. Sound familiar? He also announced that at the NYSTA annual Convention at Piseco Lake that fall, a meeting would be held to discuss ways of monitoring state and federal anti- trapping legislation.

In order to monitor legislation, Leathersich said we needed:

- The means of obtaining a copy of/or knowledge of any anti - trapping legislation as soon after being introduced as possible.
- To know the name of the legislator that introduced the bill.
- To know the committee chairman and members who will be holding hearings on the bill(s).
- A member of NYSTA who will be able to gather such information and disseminate it to the general membership as quickly as possible.

In the 34 years since that call to arms, these needs have all been addressed. NYSTA now employs an Executive Director who monitors all legislation that may affect trapping, meets with elected officials to educate them as to the need for trapping in New York, and notifies the membership when they need to write in support of, or in opposition to, trap legislation. He also builds alliances with groups and organizations with similar interests. I guess the thing that hasn't changed is the continued introduction of legislation trying to prohibit or severely restrict trapping. It was good to know that NYSTA, over the years, has successfully adopted a political action plan that still works well 34 years later.

But it was the inside of the newsletter that really piqued my interest. Evidently, through the 1930s and into the '40s New York's red fox population exploded due to a combination of ideal habitat and lack of natural predators. As a result of this over-population, New York had its first diagnosed case of sarcoptic mange in 1937 followed by its first case of rabies in 1941. In 1944 the wildlife pathologist for NY wrote that he didn't think mange was adversely affecting the red fox population yet because over the course of two years only four foxes were brought into his lab for examination. By the 1970s, submission of mangy red foxes was almost a daily occurrence. In the Feb.- March 1972 issue of ***The Conservationist,*** an extensive article was written by three DEC personnel, including Ward Stone, our current wildlife pathologist, who was an associate pathologist at the time, that gave extensive description of the pathologies of sarcoptic mange and rabies and their impact on the red fox population. In their article they concluded that, "from the point of view of humaneness, mange, distemper, and rabies are, generally, all less humane ways of managing red foxes than is hunting or properly regulated trapping. If the above red fox management is to work, there must be sufficient hunting and trapping pressure to remove necessary numbers of red foxes from the various regions to maintain desired population levels." They were seriously concerned that unless the red fox population was regulated in a satisfactory way (hunting and trapping), mange and other diseases could decimate them similar to the way pesticides decimated eagles and bluebirds. The amazing thing here is ***The Conservationist*** magazine printed an article that actually advocated trapping as a means of wildlife management. To my knowledge this is something that ***doesn't/won't*** happen today due to current editorial policy, and as a result, we're losing an excellent means of educating the public about trapping.

Educating the public about the need for trapping was the focus of several articles in the newsletter. Currently, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has done research

through public opinion polling as to whom the public believes the most with regards to trapping related issues. The group scoring the highest in credibility with the public are the state fish and wildlife agencies, and NYSTA has long encouraged our DEC, both individual biologists and the Department as a whole to be more proactive in defending or promoting trapping. We're told that the Department is not allowed to take a position for or against a particular issue unless specifically asked by another state agency. Also, with the political climate such as it is today, the Department tries to avoid controversial issues. So, we're kind of up against it in this regard. If we write our own articles about trapping, the public will just say, "What do you expect them to say? They're trappers." And if the DEC won't write anything to support trapping, the public will infer that it's not supported. However, in this issue of the NYSTA newsletter I've been referring to, in addition to the article reprinted from ***The Conservationist***, it also included lengthy articles in support of trapping by NYS's Regional Conservation Educator, its Chief, Bureau of Wildlife, an associate wildlife biologist, and the DEC's Supervising Conservation Officer who wrote, "I think that it is absolutely necessary that leg gripping traps remain legal to use in New York State…" This is a huge change from then to now. I don't think we can count on that type of unequivocal endorsement today. It was also noted in the newsletter that Wildlife Pathologist Ward Stone was asked to testify to the Senate Commerce Committee what effect the banning of interstate transportation of leghold traps would have on managing wildlife populations. He told the Senate Committee, "….the steel trap has proven to be the most single, selective, means to date of controlling certain animal populations."

Another thing I noted in the paper that has fluctuated over the years but has essentially averaged the same over the years is the number of trapping licenses sold in New York. The paper estimated 11,000 licenses would be sold in 1973, which would have been about the average in the 30 year period starting in 1940 (16,354); 1950(14,715); 1960 (8,140); 1970(9,522). The 1973 number is right about where we are today. I believe last year 10,700 licenses were sold in New York. I would imagine you could chart the highs and lows of license sales over the years with the corresponding rise and fall of fur prices.

Why was this 1973 newsletter so interesting to me? I always think it's a good idea to study the past to see if we've made any progress to the present. It's interesting to see how we approached trying to preserve our ability to trap 34 years ago compared to methods used today. I would say we did a good job implementing the plan outlined in the newsletter. The type of anti trap legislation being introduced has changed, too. Back then it was basically trying to outlaw trapping. Today it's more sophisticated, such as allowing local municipalities to write their own trapping laws, or requiring unreasonable setbacks from trails, buildings, and roads.

As mentioned at the beginning of this piece, we've been constantly fighting against anti trap legislation and it looks as if that is going to continue for the foreseeable future, but I believe we're prepared to take on that fight. And today, as then, we need to work with the DEC to maintain our ability to trap. Trappers are needed to help manage the furbearer resource. The big difference that I see between then and now is we are unable to get the strong, public proactive support from the Department that we did in 1973 and that the public doesn't easily see that the Department endorses trapping. Many New Yorkers don't even realize trapping is going on, but I bet they know that deer and turkeys are hunted, or when opening day of trout season is. I believe the Department does support trapping, but it's necessary for them to tell the public that, and opportunities to do so are constantly missed.

The NYSTA in 1973 was just a fledgling organization and a lot of the newsletter impressed upon the reader the necessity to join NYSTA and unite as a group. Since 1973 I feel we've built a strong organization that today is a recognized and respected participant in issues of wildlife management and beyond. We have strong alliances with other groups that share common interests and concerns. Trappers are better organized nationally, as well.

Thirty-five years from now someone may be cleaning out my old papers and find this newsletter and read this essay. Let's hope when they do, trapping is still allowed in New York.

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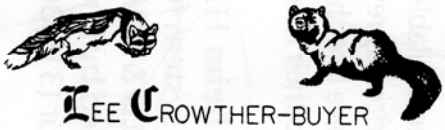

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County Chapter News:

Columbia County Trappers:
October 2007

This trapper training class was held by Columbia County Trappers. Jerry Leggieri, Ray Van Hoesen, Tom DeLisle and Dick Leggett, Sr. were the instructors. They had 46 people take the class and 44 passed the exam.

November 2007

Richard Leggett, Sr. (below) is giving recognition to John Bartholomew, Jr. (left) of Chatham, New York for his 12 years of drawing the NYSTA annual patch. John is a member of Columbia County Trappers as well as NYSTA. Thank you John for all your years of effort.

A message from the editor:

As space allows, I would like to highlight activities that your group is involved in. Please send the information to: Angie Berchielli, 3861 SR 85, Westerlo, NY 12193 or by e-mail to AngieBerchielli@MSN.com Thank you.

NEW YORK STATE TRAPPER'S Association

12320 Pople Road
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