

Section 2.—Provincial and Territorial Fur Resources and Management*

Newfoundland.—Only a very small portion of the wild fur resources of Newfoundland is being utilized at present. Trapping is confined to areas in the vicinity of settlements and the operation of traplines is no longer practised in remote areas, which formerly provided the best pelts and the bulk of the fur harvest. This situation arises from the fact that other employment has become available to trappers. Steady income has raised their standard of living to such an extent that they can no longer depend on an occupation which fluctuates so drastically in both supply and market value. Thus no section of the population is now wholly or even partially dependent upon fur trapping for a livelihood and much of the wild fur crop remains unharvested.

Beaver offers the best basis for a revived fur industry within the Province but under present conditions there are not sufficient trappers to harvest the numbers required by managed fur resources.

Open seasons are declared annually upon such species as beaver, otter, muskrat, marten and mink, while hunting of fox and lynx is permitted throughout the year. These latter species have not been harvested to any extent in recent years and are now better known for their predation upon other species and upon livestock than for their fur.

The total value of wild furs produced decreased from \$360,000 in 1949-50 to \$158,000 in 1955-56, with a further decline in prospect if depressed prices for long-haired furs continue.

Prince Edward Island.—Wild fur-bearing animals are very plentiful on Prince Edward Island. Red fox, skunk and raccoon have become so numerous that all protection has been removed and bounties are paid on all three species. Beaver also have increased greatly but may be trapped only by permit secured from the Department of Industry and Natural Resources. There is no open season on beaver.

Ten years ago muskrats had become quite scarce but their population has increased and, being so easily trapped, they are now the best revenue producers. More than 3,000 of them are taken annually. Their increase is attributed largely to the shortening of the trapping season (now from Nov. 10 to Dec. 31) and to the strict enforcement of trapping regulations, which prohibit the setting of traps within ten feet of a muskrat house or den or the damaging of it. Mink are also increasing in number and are protected by a short trapping season. Mink is the only fur-bearing animal ranched to any extent in the Province.

Nova Scotia.—Nova Scotia is not a large producer of wild fur pelts. Trapping is seldom a full-time occupation but is a source of additional income to guides, woodworkers and farmers who live near fur-producing areas. There is usually a six-week open season (Nov. 1 to Dec. 31) for mink, otter, weasel and muskrat. The present low market prices for long-haired fur has discouraged the trapping of wildcat, fox and raccoon and these animals have been removed from the protected list. No licence is required for the trapping of fur-bearers other than beaver.

Since 1931 the Department of Lands and Forests has been redistributing live beaver which before that time had been almost completely trapped out. Today, beaver is an important part of the trappers' catch in most of the counties of the mainland, where an autumn season has been instituted. A few live beaver have also been introduced into Cape Breton Island but no open seasons have been proclaimed.

The red squirrel has also become important as a fur-bearer and in 1954 the laws were changed to permit trapping during the regular season and shooting during the rabbit season which lasts until the end of February.

* Provincial information received from the respective provincial governments and that for the Yukon and Northwest Territories from the Northern Administration and Lands Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa.