

area, also, is noted for its fine furs, particularly Labrador mink, and muskrat, marten, otter, beaver, fox, lynx, ermine and red squirrel are numerous enough to warrant trapping.

Wild fur trapping was a basic autumn and winter employment in the Province before World War II but defence construction and maintenance and industrial expansion so changed the economy of the people that trapping is now purely a part-time occupation engaged in only when other employment is not available. In fact the future of the industry may be impaired because few members of the younger generation are receiving the training necessary to the successful trapper.

Throughout the Province, the long-haired fur-bearers were once the basis of the fur industry and the decline in the prices of their fur was mainly responsible for the decline in trapping. As a result, the fox and lynx populations have built up so that they have assumed predator status and are not now protected by regulations.

Beaver management was started in 1935 and the Island of Newfoundland was repopulated by the transfer of live animals. This program proved so successful that during four open seasons in the years 1946-53 the catch numbered 30,000 beaver valued at \$550,000. The success of this venture has led to the institution of a similar program in northern Labrador. The Labrador area, north of the Hamilton River drainage, has been without beaver for a hundred years.

Other fur bearers have not been managed except through the usual close seasons provided by regulations; for open seasons, regulations on fur-bearing animals differ according to climatic zone and provide for the taking of animals only during that season when the fur quality of the pelt is at its highest.

Prince Edward Island.—Wild fur-bearing animals are very plentiful on Prince Edward Island. Red fox, skunk and raccoon have become so numerous and their depredations among Island poultry flocks so alarming that all protection has been removed and bounties are paid on all three species. Beaver, too, have increased to the point where they have become a nuisance in this highly agricultural province: they have plugged road and railway culverts and their dams have flooded pulpwood stands and extensive tracts of farmlands. There is now an annual open season on beaver (Nov. 10-Dec. 31) and some trapping permits are issued in the out-of-season period.

Ten years ago muskrats had become quite scarce but their population has increased. They are now the best revenue producers because they are easily trapped, and more than 3,000 of them are taken annually. Their increase is attributed largely to the shortening of the trapping season from Nov. 1-Mar. 31 to Nov. 10-Dec. 31 and 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 that house or den. Mink are also increasing in number, and are protected by the same shortened trapping season as are muskrat. Mink, moreover, 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. There is usually a six-week open season (Nov. 1-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. For the trapping of fur-bearers, other than beaver, no licence is required.