

TRAPPER NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2008

A very happy and prosperous new year to all. In this issue I included a trapping story from Saskatchewan from the 1920's which I got off the internet. It is interesting to look at fur prices from then. I used the inflation calculator and the trapper caught a silver fox and received \$450. In 2007 that fox would have fetched \$5,300. He trapped the season and made \$4,000. In 2007 that would have equated to \$47,000 for about 4 months of work. No wonder everyone trapped in the old days. Still a good story of hardship and deprivation that you might enjoy.

I also attached a "diary" of a couple of days on my trap line. I don't know if there is any interest in this sort of thing, but if you want more or less let me know.

COURSES

Still chugging along. We have six completed and four more to go. Check out the website and you will see details on two courses we will be running at the trapper's college this summer and fall. Website is (Google) www.albertatrappers.com. We will also be offering a biologist workshop this May, which should bring together biologists from Alberta, the territories, and some from BC to discuss fur management. It should prove to be a good time for all with lots of spin offs.

BREAK AWAY "S" HOOKS (BAD's)

I can report some success with the wolf BAD. It held a wolf and released one deer. Unfortunately it also nailed another deer and put it down fast. These are about 300# devices. I am experimenting with 250# BAD's but I am not hopeful I can take a wolf and still release deer. I am willing to try, just so we know the limits. I will tell you more when I know. Just a note about snaring. On a solid anchor (tree), I would tie high but if the tree is springy at all, anchor at the base. If you anchor high the tree whips back and forth and absorbs the energy the animal is exerting. Just a point. The same can be said on a snare with a drag. Unless the drag gets tangled up the snare won't work right. In those situations consider using a power ram where there is nothing to tie to. You often can chip a small hole in the ice and freeze a cable in to anchor a ram near water.

FUR SIGN

In the lower Swan Hills area we have a fair amount of rabbit sign as well as mice and squirrels. I note a lot more marten sign because of it as well as weasels. If you have the prey, you will get the predators. All this even with a lot of industrial activity. Imagine what you would be taking without the activity.

STENLUND TOOL

This is a device invented by Donald Stenlund from Ontario to help release yourself if you were caught in a trap. We mention it in our trapping manual. We field-tested it last summer and it failed. We have been in touch with Mr. Stenlund and he has heat-treated the catch part of the tool and it seems to be holding up better. We will be doing more tests but the problem seems to be the stronger trap springs on the new traps. As I learn more, so will you.

FIC PRESS RELEASES

I also attached a couple of press releases from the FIC. They deal with the sealing industry and this industry is joined to our industry at the hip.

WOLF SEMINARS

I attached Gordy Klassens wolf trapping seminar schedule for your information. Please contact Gordy if you are interested.

FUR PRICES

I attached the latest fur sale from Fur Harvesters for your enjoyment? Prices are not good, but if you read the preamble you will see some hope. As well as the prices paid, it is important to read the percentage sold. NAFA is having their sale next week so that will give us a more complete picture.

I will sign off for now. Again, if you have some one you want on this newsletter let me know, and if you want off I will respect that. Good trapping.

Jim
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