

CHAPTER 108  
MINK, MUSKRAT, RACCOON, BADGER, OPOSSUM, WEASEL,  
STRIPED SKUNK, FOX (RED AND GRAY), BEAVER, COYOTE, RIVER OTTER,  
BOBCAT, GRAY (TIMBER) WOLF AND SPOTTED SKUNK SEASONS

[Prior to 12/31/86, Conservation Commission[290] Ch 104]

**571—108.1(481A) Mink, muskrat and weasel.** Open season for the taking of mink, muskrat and weasel shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through January 31 of succeeding year. Entire state open. No bag or possession limit.

**108.1(1) *Molesting or disturbing muskrat houses.*** Any department of natural resources officer may permit trappers to molest or disturb muskrat houses on specific state game management areas as provided in Iowa Code section 481A.90, after finding that muskrats are causing excessive damage by destroying the vegetation essential to the welfare of a marsh and after so posting the area.

**108.1(2) *Game management areas.*** Open season for taking muskrats on certain state game management areas, certain federal national wildlife refuges, and certain county conservation board areas, only where approved by the wildlife bureau and posted accordingly, shall be from 8 a.m. the day after the regular muskrat trapping season ends until April 15. The use of leg-hold traps during this season is prohibited unless each trap is placed completely inside a muskrat house. No bag or possession limit.

**571—108.2(481A) Raccoon, badger, opossum and striped skunk.** Open season for the taking of raccoon, badger, opossum, and striped skunk shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through January 31 of succeeding year. Entire state open. No bag or possession limit.

**571—108.3(481A) Red and gray fox.** Open season for the taking of red and gray fox shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through January 31 of succeeding year. Entire state open. No bag or possession limit.

**571—108.4(481A) Beaver.** Open season for the taking of beaver shall be from 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through April 1 of succeeding year. No bag or possession limit.

**571—108.5(481A) Coyote.**

**108.5(1) *Hunting.*** Continuous open season. Entire state open. No bag or possession limit.

**108.5(2) *Trapping.*** Open season for trapping coyote shall be 8 a.m. on the first Saturday in November through January 31 of succeeding year. Entire state open. No bag or possession limit. Any conservation officer or wildlife biologist may authorize a landowner, tenant or designee to trap coyotes causing damage outside the established trapping season dates.

**571—108.6(481A) Gray (timber) wolf and spotted skunk.** Continuous closed season.

**571—108.7(481A) River otter and bobcat.**

**108.7(1) *License requirements.*** Each person who takes river otters or bobcats shall have a valid fur harvester license and pay the habitat fee if normally required to have a license to hunt or trap.

**108.7(2) *Open area.*** River otters may be taken statewide. Bobcats may be taken in the following counties: Adams, Appanoose, Clarke, Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Fremont, Harrison, Henry, Jefferson, Lee, Lucas, Mills, Monona, Monroe, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie, Ringgold, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Wapello, Wayne, and Woodbury.

**108.7(3) *Quotas and seasonal bag limit.***

*a. Seasonal bag limit.* The seasonal bag limit is 2 river otters and 1 bobcat per person.

*b. Quotas.* The quota for the number of river otters that may be taken is 500 statewide. The quota for the number of bobcats that may be taken is 200 in the open area. The season shall end for river otters when the number of river otters trapped, as determined by the harvest reporting system, reaches 500. The season shall end for bobcats when the number of bobcats taken, as determined by the harvest reporting

system, reaches 200. Trappers shall be allowed a 48-hour grace period after the quota is reached to clear their traps of river otters or bobcats. River otters or bobcats found in traps during the grace period may be kept even though the quota is exceeded provided that the trapper has not reached the trapper's personal bag limit. River otters or bobcats trapped after the grace period or in excess of the seasonal bag limit must be turned over to the department; the trapper shall not be penalized.

**108.7(4) *Season dates.*** The season for taking river otters and bobcats opens on the first Saturday in November and closes when the quota has been reached, as explained in this rule, or on January 31 of the following year, whichever occurs first.

**108.7(5) *Reporting requirements.***

*a.* Anyone, including a landowner or tenant not required to have a fur harvester license, who takes a river otter or bobcat must report the harvest to a DNR conservation officer or designated DNR employee within 24 hours. The fur harvester must arrange to receive a CITES tag from the officer or designated DNR employee within 48 hours of the time the harvest is reported or before the river otter or bobcat is skinned, whichever occurs first.

*b.* Upon receiving a telephone report that a river otter or bobcat has been legally taken, the conservation officer or DNR employee will call the department's harvest reporting system. The number of river otters and bobcats taken will be updated daily, and a message will be recorded on the department's telephone system. The number taken will be available 24 hours a day. Fur harvesters may check the message daily to determine when the season closes and when the grace period begins and ends. The department will use all practical means to publicize these dates.

**108.7(6) *Tagging requirements.*** Every river otter or bobcat that may legally be kept must have a CITES tag attached. Tags will be supplied by the conservation officer or designated DNR employee. The tag must remain with the pelt until the pelt is sold or used for other purposes that render it no longer available for sale. Persons displaying river otters as taxidermy mounts or as other decorative items must keep the tags in their possession as proof of legal harvest.

**571—108.8(481A) *Accidental capture of a river otter or bobcat during a closed season.*** A person who accidentally captures a river otter or bobcat during a closed season or in a closed area or after the person's individual bag limit has been reached shall not be penalized provided that:

1. The river otter or bobcat is captured during a legal trapping season or as part of a legal depredation control process; and
2. A conservation officer is contacted within 24 hours and the river otter or bobcat and all parts thereof are turned over to a conservation officer as soon as practical.

**571—108.9(481A) *Trapping restrictions.*** Trapping for all furbearers will be restricted as follows:

**108.9(1) *Exposed bait.*** No person shall set or maintain any leghold, body-clasping trap, or snare within 20 feet of exposed bait on land anywhere in the state or over water in the following areas:

- a.* Mississippi River corridor—Allamakee, Clayton, Dubuque, Jackson, Clinton, Scott, Muscatine, Louisa, Des Moines and Lee Counties.
- b.* Missouri River corridor—Those portions of Woodbury, Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills and Fremont Counties west of Interstate 29.
- c.* Des Moines River corridor—Boone, Dallas, Polk, Marion, Mahaska, Wapello and Van Buren Counties.

Exposed bait means meat or viscera or any animal, bird, fish, amphibian, or reptile with or without skin, hide, or feathers visible to soaring birds.

**108.9(2) *Trapping near beaver lodges and dens.*** Rescinded IAB 7/16/08, effective 8/20/08.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.6, 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.87, and 481A.90.

These rules are based on the best biological data available as determined by research conducted by the department of natural resources.

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