

tree because the new area was confusing.

Harold was surprised to learn that there was a large elk herd wintering in the Stanley Basin and a much larger herd that summered there. When he worked in Stanley, there were no elk wintering in the valley and about 100 animals in the entire Stanley Basin in the summer. He said there were a lot of deer, however. He said that in the seven years he lived in Stanley and hunted lynx, he observed wolverine tracks on only three occasions. Harold felt that elk would directly compete with snowshoe hares for food, resulting in extremely low hare numbers.

Since moving to St. Maries, he has seen two or three different sets of lynx tracks in the head of Marble Creek, toward Homestead..

He worked in the Uintas in northern Utah in 1957 and 1958 and treed 20 lynx in those two years. Harold encountered lynx along the entire north slope of the Uintas. He estimated that there were 15 lynx on the north slope of the Uintas between the West Fork of the Bear River and the Little East Fork of the Black Fork River. This essentially was the area within his ranger district. He assumed there were lynx farther east since the country was similar, but he did not spend any time there. He actually harvested three lynx, one at a site that is currently underwater as the result of the subsequent construction of Whitney Reservoir.

The habitat utilized by lynx in the Uintas included sub-alpine fir, spruce, aspen and what Harold called "moose willow". There were many beaver ponds in the area and moose were common. On one occasion, when there was about 18" of snow on the ground and beaver ponds were frozen except for air pockets in the ice, he came upon three lynx evenly spaced around and about a foot back from an airhole on a two-acre beaver pond. Although these lynx immediately ran away, at other times he found evidence of lynx killing beaver on the ice. He also found evidence of beaver killed by lynx in aspen stands where they were traveling away from water to cut aspen. He found that not only did lynx regularly prey on beaver, but they comprised the majority of their diet.

The remainder of their diet was primarily made up of porcupines and snowshoe hares in about equal amounts. He found lynx occasionally ate muskrats. Beavers created better habitat for snowshoe hares by cutting mature aspen, stimulating regeneration of young aspen saplings used by snowshoe hares during the winter. The beaver density was so high that he found beaver skidding aspen a quarter mile from water and saw beaver five miles from any water out in the sagebrush. He has never seen that density of beavers.

Lynx in the Uintas had more dark-to-silver coloration than in the Sawtooths. Harold saw one lynx that was nearly black. He thought that as the result of the spruce-alpine fir forest in the Uintas being darker than the spruce-subalpine fir-Douglas-fir forests in the Sawtooths that darker lynx had a competitive advantage for blending in with their surroundings.

He didn't see any bobcats or coyotes in the Uintas and found mountain lions extremely rare. Lynx were, for all practical purposes, the only large predator in the area. One winter while Harold was staying at the Mill Creek Ranger Station, a male lynx used the hayloft as a shelter.

Harold found most hunting dogs incapable of catching lynx. If he bred dogs so that they had 15-25% Norwegian elkhound, the dogs were fast enough and silent enough to catch lynx. Silent dogs would put more pressure on lynx because lynx would often stop to listen for the dogs. Their silence allowed the dogs to approach closer to the lynx. He said his dogs would take turns plowing through the snow as a way to rest enough to continue pursuit. Harold found that, unlike other cats when treed, lynx would turn their head

away from a light making them extremely difficult to see at night.

In the considerable amount of time that Harold spent in country inhabited by lynx he has never seen a dead lynx, other than those killed by his dogs.

Gary Will, Boise, Id. - Gary remembered a lynx that was killed crossing a highway near Carey about 1972.

EASTERN IDAHO

Joe Curry, Island Park, Id. - Joe checked the three lynx trapped by John Stevens in his capacity as a CO with IDFG.

Steve Zundel, St. Anthony, Id. - Steve had a friend who saw a pair of lynx near Monida Pass a number of years ago.

Tony Latham, Salmon, Id. - Tony shot a lynx while hunting ducks along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River in 1972. The lynx was harvested near the bridge crossing the Henry's Fork of the Snake River on the Big Springs Loop Road, east of Mack's Inn.

Bruce Pentsky, Island Park, Id. - Bruce checked a lynx that was harvested near Big Bend Ridge between 1982 and 1987 in his capacity as a CO with IDFG. Big Bend Ridge is near Ashton Hill and the Sand Creek Wildlife Management Area. It's a transition area between sagebrush and conifer/aspens.

Vard Wright, St. Anthony, Id. - Customers brought in a lynx that had been trapped at Henry's Lake Flat into Vard's taxidermy shop in the early 1970s. The lynx was harvested incidental to trapping coyotes. He recalled an old trapper who told him that around the turn of the century people who lived in Kilgore, Idaho, would catch lynx and chain them up until their fur was prime before killing them.

Blaire Siepert, Rexberg, Id. - Blaire bought a couple of lynx in his capacity as a fur buyer, but couldn't remember who and when. He thought the last one was 8-10 years ago.

John Stevens, Ashton, Id. - John Stevens worked west of Henry's Lake on Sawtell Peak as a radar technician. In the mid-70s, he observed eight or nine lynx using the area near where he worked. The lynx were in heavy timber hunting rabbits, which at the time were abundant. The second consecutive year that he found the lynx using the area he trapped four, of which he harvested three two-year olds and released an adult female. Of the lynx using the area prior to his trapping, he thought that two were adult females and the rest were subadults.

The high densities of snowshoe hares in the area lasted only the two years that he observed multiple lynx and have never approached that level again. The lynx that weren't trapped did not return to the area. He accessed his traps using snowshoes. During this time, John observed not only high densities of snowshoe hares in timbered areas, but high densities of jackrabbits in shrub-steppe habitats as well. Jackrabbits shot in the desert were used for bait when trapping lynx in forested habitats.

In 1986, while traveling on snowmobiles, John was surprised to observe tracks from a group of 4 or 5 lynx in the desert west of Ashton in the Five Monuments area. He was shooting jackrabbits when he discovered

the lynx. Jackrabbit numbers were very high at that time. He came back to the area a week later and trapped and harvested three animals, an adult female and two kittens that were just old enough to hunt. These animals were harvested in habitats whose vegetation was dominated by sagebrush and bitterbrush.

John was not aware of any adult male lynx in the areas where he observed females with kittens. On one other occasion he observed the tracks of a lynx pair. He said there was one big male that traveled through the area west of Henry's Lake every two years on the last week of December and crossed in almost exactly the same place. He had observed one or two lynx tracks in the Sawtell Peak area every year until 1992 when he retired. The lynx would hunt for about a week in the area and then leave.

There were a number of areas where he observed lynx that have since been logged. He has not observed lynx in these areas after logging. Lynx were the only predator in the area and therefore were easy to target when trapping. He said there were no bobcats or coyotes in the areas frequented by lynx in the wintertime, but there was an occasional lion.

He thinks that big game populations have stayed fairly static since the mid-1970s. It is John's opinion that the two major factors in the lack of high densities of snowshoe hares since he trapped the lynx in the area near Henry's Lake were clearcutting and slashburning. He said that it not only affected lynx and snowshoe hares, but red squirrels, marmots, grouse, marten, and chipmunks.

John feels that clearcutting tore up the ground, and removed all the vegetation that directly affected the wildlife because of the lack of food and cover. Reforestation has been extremely slow, and even where there is revegetation, the quality and succulence of vegetation for small animals is greatly reduced. An example he gave was that prior to the extensive clearcutting, he picked lots of huckleberries in areas where lynx occurred. Even in those few places where huckleberry bushes have returned there are no berries because plants are overexposed to sunlight. He said that the snow now melts about 45 days sooner than in the mid-1970s.

He feels that the largest impact to lynx prey is burning slash piles. Large animals could move off during and after clearcutting, but small mammals that aren't as mobile were forced to live in the environment modified by the timber harvest activities. In most cases, they made their home and cached food in the slash piles. When cold weather arrived in the fall, these small mammals were hibernating in the slash piles. The slash piles are burned when the first snowfall arrives, incinerating all the animals who made their homes in the slash, completely eliminating small mammals from entire areas. He said that snowshoe hares, rockchucks, squirrels, and chipmunks all used the slash piles extensively.

He thinks that pikas may have been an important food source for lynx in the summer because of their availability in areas where lynx were seen in winter. Grouse and squirrels were also important food sources, although not as important as snowshoe hares. He thinks that lynx traveled long distances, but when they do find a concentration of rabbits, whether they are snowshoe hares or jackrabbits, that they will remain in the area until they were no longer available.

He said the current density of coyote and foxes in the desert around St. Anthony is extremely high.

Kirk Beuller, Island Park, Id. - Kirk trapped a lynx in the area locally referred to as Shotgun, which is the Spencer-Kilgore area. He said there were a number of lynx in the area and pointed out places near Henry's Lake that he knew lynx were or still are. He had trapped a number of lynx, but was vague as to their location. He didn't think that coyotes had any impact on lynx and saw no difference in coyote

numbers when they were trapped hard versus the current limited trapping due to low fur prices. On one occasion, a lynx killed and ate a bobcat caught in his trap.

Jim Burghome, Georgetown, Id. - Jim trapped a lynx above his house in Skinner Canyon in 1972. He had trapped 34 bobcats, but that was the only lynx he caught. He further corroborated that Johnny Hottle had trapped a lynx in Georgetown Canyon about the same time.

Bud Keller, Preston, Id. - Bud said his father-in-law had trapped a few Canada lynx in the 1930s and 1940s in Caribou County.

Blaire Jacobson, Swan Falls, Id. - Blaire talked to some people who claimed to have seen a lynx on Skyline Ridge, which is in Hunting Unit 66, east of Idaho Falls. About 1990 someone called him and asked if he would mount a lynx, but when he told them he couldn't if it wasn't properly tagged, he didn't hear from the caller again.

Troy Weeks, Swan Valley, Id. - Troy said his father caught one Canada lynx in Tincup Creek in 1978 or 1979. He hadn't seen or heard of a Canada lynx in about 10 years. He hadn't done much trapping in the last 10 years. He attributed the decline in lynx and bobcats to increases in mountain lions. All of the bobcats and lynx they harvested had porcupine quills in their stomach.

Trevor Hill, Swan Valley, Id. - Trevor observed one set of lynx tracks since about 1995 in the proximity of the waterfalls in Falls Creek, near the South Fork of the Snake River. He has seen an increase in the numbers of snowshoe hares in the last four or five years.

Dean Michaelson, Paris, Id. - Dean has been trapping since the late 1950s and never run across any lynx. He caught a lot of bobcats when he first started trapping, but thinks hound hunters and coyotes have killed most bobcats.

Eric DeClerk, Montpelier, Id. - Eric heard of three lynx that had been trapped around Montpelier, none recently. One was trapped in Home Canyon by the Christiansen brothers.

Oliver Peterson, Montpelier, Id. - Oliver began trapping in 1945 and did most of his trapping in the 1950s and 1960s. During a one-week period in 1947 or 1948, he caught five lynx ten miles northeast of Soda Springs. He trapped four lynx in the 1950s and 1960s, one in the same area he caught the five lynx. He caught three lynx farther east near Georgetown. Except for one lynx trapped near timberline, the remaining lynx were caught in areas with a mosaic of aspen, conifer, and mountain brush.

The last set of lynx tracks he saw was a group of four or five animals in the late 1960s or early 1970s that spent an entire winter hunting on and around a series of beaver ponds near what is now the Soda Springs archery range, locally referred to as Combine Hill. Other than the five lynx he caught in Trail Canyon, it was the only other time he saw multiple animals. Two of the lynx he trapped were incidental to trapping coyotes. The remaining trapped lynx were the target animals. He didn't see any bobcats and only rarely saw coyotes in areas occupied by lynx in the winter.

He began using 1080 in about 1947 and almost wiped out the coyotes. It took the coyotes five or six years to figure out the poison. There weren't any bobcats until the 1950s. Since then he has observed a lot of bobcats when there were few coyotes, and vice-versa.

He recalled very few deer in 1945 with about 100 sets of coyote tracks for every set of deer tracks. When use of 1080 to control coyotes began, deer numbers exploded. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there were a lot of jackrabbits in the basins between mountain ranges. In the area he was familiar with, whitetailed and blacktailed jackrabbits occupied about the same habitats. It appeared to him that both species went through boom and bust cycles at the same time. Since the 1950s, when they started using 1080, coyotes were kept at fairly low levels by federal trappers to protect domestic sheep.

He said that forest and rangeland road densities are only slightly higher now than when he observed lynx. He said that the main difference is there was no access into the areas in the winter because there were no snowmobiles and very limited access the rest of the year because there were no ATVs. He said he ran his trap lines with snowshoes and cross-country skis.

He knew Roy Keeler, who was documented by IDFG as harvesting two lynx. Based on the area that Roy worked, they were likely trapped near Tincup Creek or Stump Creek. He said Canada lynx were never numerous. He said he thought the lynx fed mainly on snowshoe hares. He doesn't recall any of the lynx having porcupine quills in their legs, but caught bobcats that did.

When asked to speculate on the demise of the lynx in the area, he thought it was due to the lack of snowshoe hares and increased access into the areas by snowmobiles and ATVs. He said that the ban on 1080, and the subsequent increase in coyotes, led to great reductions in bobcats. He doesn't know if it affected lynx or not, because there were so few. He had never seen any sign of lynx in the mountain range west of Bear Lake.

Johnny Hottle, Montpelier. He trapped one lynx in Big Rattlesnake Canyon in 1973. He didn't see any lynx sign and didn't hear of any others, the exception being the one Jim Burghome trapped.

Wayne Green, Alta, Wyoming - Wayne began trapping in 1947. He often caught four or five lynx a year, but hasn't seen any sign of lynx for about the last ten years. He attributed the decline and extirpation of lynx to lack of snowshoe hares and the increased density of coyotes and mountain lions. All of his trapping has been in Teton County Wyoming. He now only rarely sees bobcats.

SALMON AREA

A. Laverne Hokanson, Salmon, Id. - Laverne harvested two lynx, pursuing them with hounds, both in the Lemhi Mountains, south of Salmon. One was harvested in the 1950s and one in 1979. He saw tracks infrequently in the Salmon vicinity, where he hunted or guided for 30 years.

He unsuccessfully pursued lynx with hounds in the Pioneer Mountains west of Mackay in the 1950s, the Lemhi Mountains in the 1960s, and again in the 1970s. He said that in the Lemhi Valley, Canada lynx would occasionally make a big loop out of the high country anywhere there were extensive willow bottoms and that's where he first observed their tracks. He said that they spent most of their time at very high elevations. He said the most consistent place for finding lynx was the Lemhi Mountains, about 30 miles south of Salmon.

He rarely pursued game up the Lemhi Valley because of the danger to his dogs from bobcat and coyote traps and 1080. Bobcat trappers still have snares and traps set in the mouths of all the canyons. He lost two dogs in snares in the last few years.

Jerry Meyers, Salmon, Id. - Jerry treed and harvested a Canada lynx with hounds east of Salmon in 1976 and sold the pelt for \$80. He observed "lots of jackrabbits" during the mid-1970s in Lemhi County. While hunting with Doc Smith in 1976, he saw and pursued with hounds a lynx at the foot of the Lemhi Mountains.

Richard (Doc) Smith, Salmon, Id. - Doc saw and pursued a lynx with hounds while hunting with Jerry Meyers in the upper Lemhi River in 1976. He saw a lynx southeast of Salmon in the late 1970s. He often observed lynx tracks while cougar hunting in this same area in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He also recalled a newspaper picture showing Ray Torrey with a harvested Canada lynx his hounds had treed in the Leesburg Basin area in the mid-1970s. He saw the lynx that Laverne Hokanson killed in the Lemhi Mountains in 1979.

Bedford Stroud, Leadore, Id. - Bedford trapped four lynx in the upper Lemhi River drainage between the late 1960s and early 1980s. All of the lynx were trapped in willow riparian areas adjacent to shrub-steppe habitats. All of the lynx were caught incidental to bobcat trapping. He observed lynx tracks on the Montana side of Bannock Pass, but did not recall ever seeing lynx tracks on the Idaho side.

He thinks coyotes kill young bobcats and lynx. He trapped 134 bobcats one year during the late 1960s in the upper Lemhi River and sold the pelts for \$6.25 each. During the late 1960s, prior to the ban on 1080, there were very few coyotes but lots of bobcats in the Lemhi Valley. He has not observed nor trapped many bobcats since the post-1080 increase in coyotes. He also stated that peak numbers of bobcats occurred during periods of highest jackrabbit populations.

Dick Wenger, Salmon, Id. - Dick observed lynx tracks on the Continental Divide north of Salmon in 1986. He observed lynx tracks east of Salmon in January 1995. He observed a lynx in the Pine Creek drainage in July 1983.

Andy Hagel, Salmon, Id. - Andy commonly saw lynx tracks in the upper Lemhi Valley while hunting cougars in the 1960s and 1970s. He found lynx extremely difficult to tree or keep treed with hounds. He had a taxidermy shop in Salmon and recalls making two lynx rugs, one for Larry Jarrett, who killed a lynx while deer hunting near Mackay in the early 1970s and one for a Mr. Tobias, who shot one that was feeding on a deer carcass in the Lemhi Mountains in the 1970s.

Adam Sedlak, Salmon, Id. - Adam lived at the mouth of Opal Creek on upper Panther Creek in 1939-40. He worked for a taxidermist and trapped. He did not recall ever trapping a lynx, or mounting or tanning a pelt. However, he did trap fisher and stated that he didn't like fisher because they ate marten, his target species. He also recalled customers bringing wolf and wolverine pelts to the shop. Adam said that bobcats were very abundant at that time.

Larry Maxwell, North Fork, Id. - Larry has trapped the North Fork of the Salmon River area since the 1950s, and also trapped in Alaska. He trapped two lynx southwest of Salmon in the 1960s. He recalled fewer than 12 lynx trapped or killed in Lemhi County during his lifetime. He observed tracks of several lynx on the Idaho/Montana Divide north of Salmon in the mid-1980s and again while trapping marten in 1990, but has seen no tracks in that area the past two winters. Larry trapped a young lynx west of Salmon in 1987, which he released. He observed tracks of two lynx north of Salmon during 1995 and 1996. These two lynx are the only he is aware of in the North Fork area at this time.