

# 2012-13 SWIFT FOX PELT TAGGING REPORT

## PERFORMANCE REPORT STATEWIDE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

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## 2012-13 Swift Fox Pelt Tagging Report

Prepared by Matt Peek, Furbearer Biologist

The swift fox (*Vulpes velox*) is classified as a furbearer in Kansas (K.S.A. 32-701 (e)). The first swift fox harvest season in Kansas in recent times was initiated in 1982. Since that time, harvest information has been acquired by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT) through an annual Furbearer Harvest Survey. Additionally, a pelt tagging program was initiated in 1994 to acquire more precise information on swift fox distribution and harvest.

Any swift fox taken in Kansas must be presented to KDWPT for tagging within seven days of the close of the season (K.A.R. 115-5-2). All five KDWPT regional offices as well as biologists and conservation officers within or near the swift fox range are provided with tags. The number of swift foxes presented annually to KDWPT for pelt tagging since the tagging program was initiated is presented in **Figure 1**. In 2012-13, 246 swift foxes were taken by furharvesters in Kansas. This is the most on record since the pelt tagging program began.

Swift foxes may be taken using equipment authorized in K.A.R. 115-5-1. **Table 1** provides a breakdown of the methods used to take swift foxes. Trapping and hunting accounted for 84% and 13% of the harvest, respectively. **Table 2** shows the primary species being pursued at the time the swift fox was taken.

A total of 46 furharvesters took swift foxes during the season. This is more than twice the number of furharvesters who have taken swift foxes in recent seasons, and likely reflects an increase in furharvesting participation in recent years. (Furharvester license sales in 2012 were the highest since 1982.) The annual season bag per furharvester is given in **Table 3**.

Habitat types from which swift foxes were taken are presented in **Table 4**. Shortgrass prairie and dryland crop ground are the two dominant habitats where swift fox are harvested.

### Notes:

Swift fox season opened on November 14, 2012 and ended February 15, 2013. Harvest by month is as follows: November – 24, December – 64, January – 104, February – 52 (n=244).

Swift foxes were harvested from fifteen western Kansas counties in 2012-13, including Finney, Greeley, Gove, Hamilton, Haskell, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Rawlins, Scott, Sherman, Thomas, Trego, Wallace, and Wichita.

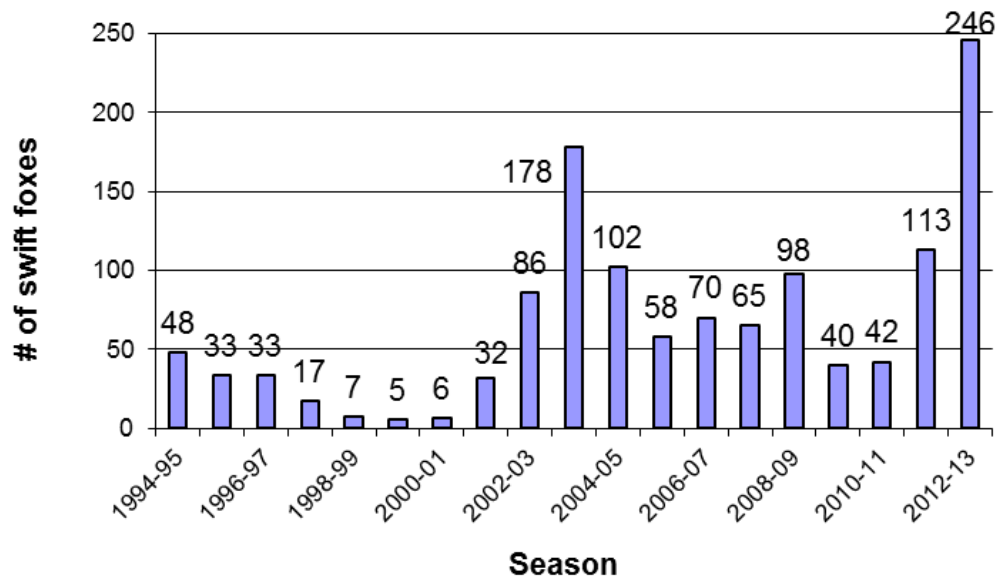


Figure 1. Number of swift foxes pelt tagged annually by KDWPT since a tagging program was initiated in 1994.

Table 1. Methods used to take swift foxes during the 2012-13 furbearer season in Kansas.

Method of Take	Number of Swift Fox	Percent of Swift Fox
foothold trap	116	47
bodygripping trap	85	35
cage trap	6	2
rifle	28	11
shotgun	6	2
salvage	4	2
other	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2. Primary species being pursued when swift foxes were taken during the 2012-13 furbearer season in Kansas.

Target Species	Number of Swift Fox	Percent of Swift Fox
swift fox	129	52
coyote	51	21
unspecified "canine"	64	26
bobcat	1	0
red fox	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3. Total bag of swift foxes by individual furharvesters during the 2012-13 furbearer season in Kansas.

Season Bag per Furharvester	Number of Furharvesters	Percent of Furharvesters	Cumulative Percent of Furharvesters	Total number of Swift Fox Taken	Percent of Swift Fox Taken	Cumulative Percent of Swift Fox Taken
1	21	44.68%	44.68%	21	8.54%	8.54%
2	8	17.02%	17.02%	16	6.50%	15.04%
3	2	4.26%	21.28%	6	2.44%	17.48%
4	2	4.26%	25.53%	8	3.25%	20.73%
5	1	2.13%	27.66%	5	2.03%	22.76%
6	3	6.38%	78.72%	18	7.32%	30.08%
8	3	6.38%	85.11%	24	9.76%	39.84%
9	1	2.13%	46.81%	9	3.66%	43.50%
10	1	2.13%	19.15%	10	4.07%	47.56%
15	1	2.13%	48.94%	15	6.10%	53.66%
22	1	2.13%	51.06%	22	8.94%	62.60%
26	1	2.13%	53.19%	26	10.57%	73.17%
29	1	2.13%	25.53%	29	11.79%	84.96%
37	1	2.13%	100.00%	37	15.04%	100.00%
	47			246		

Table 4. Habitat types from which swift foxes were taken during the 2012-13 furbearer season in Kansas. (The “immediate habitat” type is that from which the swift fox was specifically taken, and the “general habitat” type is the predominant habitat within 2 miles of the harvest site.)

Immediate Habitat	Number of Swift Fox Harvested	Percent of Total Harvest
<b>General Habitat</b>		
<b>Short-grass prairie</b>		
Short-grass prairie	107	43.5
Dryland crop	25	10.2
Irrigated crop	5	2.0
CRP	1	0.4
Unspecified	1	0.4
<b>Dryland crop</b>		
Short-grass prairie	31	12.6
Dryland crop	59	24.0
<b>CRP</b>		
Irrigated crop	1	0.4
CRP	8	3.3
<b>Other</b>		
Short-grass prairie	1	0.4
<b>Unspecified</b>	7	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>100.0</b>