

Tips for Submitting Viable Biological Samples

How Trappers and Hunters Provide Important Data for Furbearer Monitoring

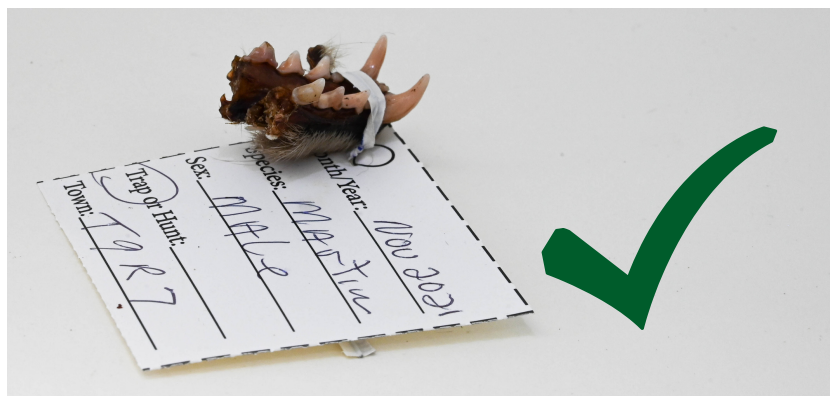


Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is monitoring the age and sex structure of the bobcat, fisher, marten, and otter harvest to ensure that hunting and trapping is sustainable. To accomplish this, MDIFW relies on trappers and hunters to submit biological samples from these four species, a requirement that has been in place since 2016.

Unfortunately, each year MDIFW receives hundreds of broken and/or unlabeled tooth samples each year meaning valuable data is lost. Below are some guidelines to ensure that requirements are being met and samples are viable.

What makes a sample viable or non-viable?

The lab uses tissue in the root of the tooth for aging. Roots extend far under the gums beyond what is visible. When jaws are cut off too short, not enough of the root is included for aging. Be sure to cut far enough back to include most of the lower jaw to avoid this problem.



Hunters and trappers may request age results by including their contact information with their samples.

Contact MDIFW Furbearer Biologist, Shevenell Webb with any questions at shevenell.webb@maine.gov or 207-287-8776

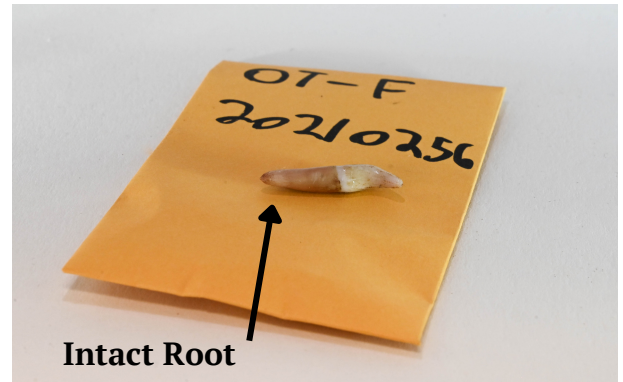
What biological samples are required?

Fisher, Marten, and Otter

- Trappers must provide a lower jaw or canine tooth from each fisher, marten, and otter taken
- Samples must be labelled with the species, sex, town, method, and date
- Samples from each individual animal must be bagged separately



Viable fisher jaw sample



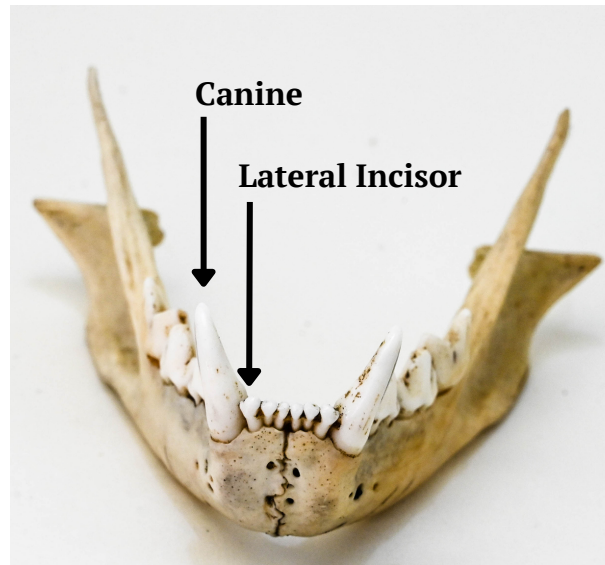
Viable otter tooth sample

Bobcat

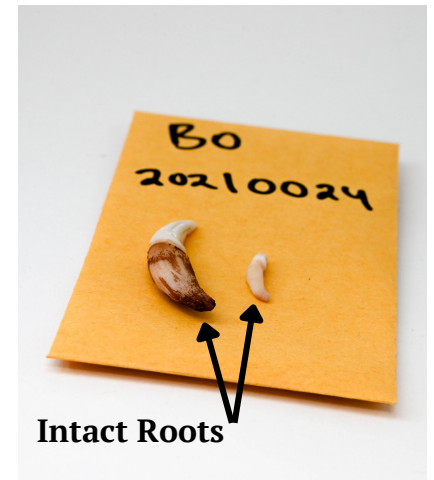
- Hunters and trappers must provide a lower jaw, canine tooth, or lateral incisor tooth from each bobcat taken. Lateral incisors are very small and easy to take when fresh before the animal freezes. Run a pocket knife down each side and gently rock the knife left to right to loosen and pull the tooth out.
- Hunters and trappers must also provide a Starburst-sized meat sample (tongue works great) so the labeled sex can be checked with DNA. Please keep this sample frozen to protect it from rotting.
- Bobcat samples must be labeled with the species, sex, and seal number. Both meat and tooth or jaw samples from the same animal may be bagged together.



Bobcat skull



Bobcat lower jaw



Viable bobcat tooth samples

Hunters and trappers may request replacement teeth by contacting MDIFW Furbearer Biologist, Shevenell Webb, at shevenell.webb@maine.gov or 207-287-8776

View all of Maine's trapping laws and regulations at mefishwildlife.com/laws