

# Legal Foxhunting Back Again By Popular Demand

BY SUSAN USHER

Legal foxhunting returns to Brunswick County next month by popular demand.

Some foxhunters in Brunswick County will no longer simply ride to the hounds for sport, without taking any prey. During a short hunting and trapping season—Jan. 6 through Jan. 27—up to 250 foxes will be harvested.

"Legally," says trapper and fur-buyer Roger Hewett of Supply, "it's been seven or eight years since you could hunt fox in Brunswick County. But a lot of them have been caught illegally."

Local hunters and trappers successfully petitioned the N.C. Wildlife Commission to establish a county fox season. A local bill that would have accomplished the same result was filed and later withdrawn by Rep. E. David Redwine during the 1985 session of the legislature.

Mounted fox hunting with dogs has been legal in most North Carolina counties in recent years, but it was illegal to take or possess the foxes. Only through local legislation or by special permit seasons set by the Wildlife Commission has killing foxes been allowed, permitting the state's fox population to expand.

In southeastern North Carolina,

Sampson County is the nearest county where foxhunting will also be allowed by permit. It will be allowed by local legislation in Bladen, Robeson and Moore counties.

Hewett is among 33 hunters/trappers who applied for and received one of the 50 foxhunting permits approved for Brunswick County by the N.C. Wildlife Commission this fall. The cutoff date for applications was Nov. 1.

"We need to catch some of them," Hewett said of the foxes. "They're eating up the birds—the quails—and the rabbits."

"We're finding a lot killed on the road. That shows they're overpopulated."

Each permit-holder will receive five tags, said Grady Barnes, manager of the Commission's research and regulations section.

Since there are excess tags available they will be allowed after Jan. 1 to buy up to five additional tags until all 250 are issued.

That means 10 will be the largest number of foxes any one of the hunters or trappers can legally take next month.

The N.C. Wildlife Commission established the 250-fox harvest limit

after agency biologists completed a field study this summer using "scent stations" to establish an index of the local fox population.

Along a 20-mile line, stations are set up at one-mile intervals. Each station consists of a yard-wide cleared circle in which a tablet soaked in fox urine is placed. About four such lines are established across a county during a typical survey, said Barnes.

Foxes in the area are attracted to the stations. Biologists return to the areas the following morning and check footprints. Using a formula, they are able to establish some idea about the size of the local fox population and the level of harvesting it can sustain.

"The problem with wildlife management," said Barnes, "is that if we knew the total population we could tell hunters exactly how many males and females they should take."

"The indexes are not 100 percent accurate, but they are fairly close. If there's any doubt, we always go in favor of the animal."

Brunswick County is home to both the common red fox and to the larger, more retiring gray fox.

The fox, a member of the dog family, has a pointed face, short legs, long,



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

NEXT MONTH IT BECOMES legal again to take foxes in Brunswick County by hunting or trapping—if you're one of 33 persons issued permits by the N.C. Wildlife

Commission. This mounted fox was a mixed-breed, part red and part gray fox, and is owned by Auburn Dutton of Regan's Crossroads.

thick fur, and a tail up to two-thirds as long as the head and body.

Foxes feed on insects, earthworms, small mammals and birds, vegetable matter, eggs and carrion.

The pelt of the red fox ranges from reddish to black, silver and cross, with silver the most demanded.

However, prices for fox pelts are going to be low this year, Hewett

said, because supply is outstripping demand. "There's so much on the market there's no demand for them. There's so much holdover from last season in other states and places."

## Tourney Draws 134 Golfers

The first Christmas golf tournament sponsored by Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapter No. 7288 in Calabash drew 134 participants Saturday, reported Robert Botts, golf committee chairman.

Proceeds of the event, held at Oyster Bay Golf Club at Sunset Beach, will be set aside to buy land and construct a building for the chapter.

Winners were recognized in men's and ladies divisions.

In the men's division winners and their scores were as follows: Gill Gilbert, first, 71; Paul Iantzy, second, 71; Hoby McDowell, third, 71; Bill Williams, fourth, 72; Jo Simons, fifth, 72; and Jim McClung, sixth, 72.

In the ladies division first prize

went to Jean Bryant with a score of 73. Other winners were Victoria Weise, second, 73; Joan Gilbert, third, 74; Marie Dolan, fourth, 75; Rosemary Seubert, fifth, 75; and Lucy Dipboye, sixth, 76.

Consolation prizes went to Rusty Cavallo in the men's division, with a score of 81; and in the women's division, to Ann Burke, with a score of 80.

Although the weather was cool Saturday, Botts said tourney participants expressed interest in the chapter holding similar events in the future.

After the tournament, the VFW's ladies auxiliary served barbecue at the Calabash Volunteer Fire Department.

## This Week's Tide Table

Day/Date	DECEMBER		LOW	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
Thursday 26	7:14	2:30	12:52	1:33
Friday 27	7:53	3:08	1:32	2:14
Saturday 28	8:30	3:45	2:11	2:53
Sunday 29	9:06	4:24	2:49	3:32
Monday 30	9:48	5:06	3:31	4:11
Tuesday 31	10:29	5:50	4:13	4:52
JANUARY				
Wednesday 1	11:09	6:36	4:53	5:32
ADJUSTMENTS				
SHALLOTTE INLET—Bowen Point—add 10 min. high tide, add 20 min. low tide.				
TUBBS INLET—subtract 19 min. high tide, subtract 12 min. low tide.				
LOCKWOOD'S POINT—subtract 29 min. high tide, subtract 17 min. low tide.				
LITTLE RIVER—add 3 min. low tide.				
BALD HEAD ISLAND—subtract 17 min. high tide, subtract 11 min. low tide.				

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