

**To: Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee
and the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife**

Concerning S. 201 — a Bill to end trapping wildlife in Vermont, in its original form

Dear Legislators in the House and Senate Natural Resources Committees:

Please find a commentary in the March 29th edition of VTDigger. The writer, John Aberth, is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator at the Flint Brook Wildlife Refuge in Roxbury.

Mr. Aberth writes: "The basic mechanics of a leghold trap, for example, have not changed since the Middle Ages: spring-loaded steel jaws that lie flat on the ground, which snap shut when triggered by the tripping of a bait pan. As expected, anything and everything that happens to put weight on the trip pan will trigger the trap and be caught in its jaws.

This includes birds of prey such as eagles, hawks and owls; rare, endangered species in Vermont such as pine marten; and domestic dogs and cats. Indeed, the majority of animals caught in leghold traps are non-target animals that the trapper never intended to kill. "

He goes on to describe the physical and mental damage done to trapped animals and that even those who are freed, are often left to die from their injuries.

Trapping is essentially a sport enjoyed by a subset of Vermonters which inflicts cruelty, injury, and loss of life on our wildlife. There are rare occasions when trapping is useful and that is confined to the scientific community who safely trap for study or release of the animal in another geographic area.

Just a small subset of Vermonters have valid trapping licenses, but their negative effect on our wildlife is disproportionately large. These fur bearing animals are not used for food, and pelts' value has declined to the point where it simply doesn't make economic sense. Trapping is simply for bloodlust and the random killing of Vermont wildlife with no other purpose than to entertain and create waste. In short, trapping simply has no place in 21st Century Vermont.

"75 percent of Vermont's population supports a trapping ban, according to a recent survey by UVM's Center for Rural Studies," Mr. Aberth writes.

Please support Senate Bill 201 IN ITS ORIGINAL DRAFT FORM in your consideration and vote. The above demonstrates why S. 201 is such an important bill in its original form. You can see Mr. Aberth's letter [HERE](#) and the original S 201 draft [HERE](#). And below my signature, please find the results of a padded, leghold trap being touted by VT Fish & Wildlife Department.

Thank you for caring for Vermont wildlife.

Sincerely,
Jane Fitzwilliam
Putney, VT

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Vermont Coyote Coexistence Coalition Lead

<https://www.vermontcoyote.org>

One of our coalition founders came across this leghold trap that would likely qualify under "best management practices" for trapping as it's a "laminated/padded" trap. You'll see that the captured animal amputated its own limb to free themselves. There is no way to make leghold traps ever humane, as the current version of S.201 seeks to accomplish. Please vote for S.201 in its original form.





