

Legend of Trapper Ron started with a few skunks

My father once told me to be careful of what you ask for in life; you may accidentally receive it. I will spend a lot of time over the coming months trapping and relocating nuisance animals, such as raccoons, opossum, skunks, rats, mice and coyotes from property in the Farmington/Farmington Hills and surrounding areas. Since I started writing trapping stories I have received a lot of questions on trapping.



Trapper Ron

Ron Baker

One question in particular, I get asked the most relates to how I started trapping nuisance animals. The following is the story of how Trapper Ron came to existence. I hope you will enjoy reading it.

It all started about ten years ago in the driveway of my home in the city of Farmington. It was about 9:00 p.m. and my wife and I were attempting to remove the window sticker off of our brand new full sized van we had just purchased.

I was standing on the passenger side with the door open scraping the sticker off when two skunks appeared at my feet from under the van. I was in shock and feared moving. The skunks walked casually past my feet towards my backyard and squeezed under the fence. I slowly peeked around the corner of my house and watched them crawl under my deck.

My wife, Kathy, insisted that I get rid of them for obvious reasons. I didn't have a clue what to do, so I called the city for help. They said that as long as the animals were outside the home, they could not do anything.

However, they did have a couple of live traps I could use, if I wanted to trap it myself. I have hunted and fished my whole life and I thought that trapping should be easy enough so I went to the Police station to borrow a trap. At the station, I talked with an officer while waiting for the trap to be brought out from a back room. He asked me what I was trapping and I told him my story about the skunks.

I asked him what should I do with any skunks that I trap; he just laughed and said, "Sounds like skunk fricassee to me."

I replied, "You mean I can shoot it once I trap it." The officer looked at me with a very concerned expression and said, "No, you cannot shoot it; city ordinance does not allow anyone to set off a fire arm within the city."

After a second or two I asked, "Well, can I shoot it with my bow?" The officer looked at me with a devilish grin and walked away. I took that to mean I had a viable alternative, until I looked at the trap. The metal wiring of the trap was so tight to shoot it with a bow and arrow so I dismissed this option altogether.

Later that evening, I set up the live trap in the driveway near the area of my deck where the skunks had entered the night before. I didn't know what to bait the trap with so I looked in the refrigerator. The only thing that I could see that might work was hot dogs. I grabbed a couple and threw them into the trap.

Early the next morning, I looked out my kitchen window and to my surprise there was a very large skunk inside the live trap.

My chest pumped up as I strutted down the hallway to brag to my wife who was still sleeping.

Kathy was very happy but wondered how and where I was going to get rid of it.

The reality of this finally sank in as I drank a cup of coffee and watched the skunk

from the safety of my kitchen. Many questions were running through my head: would it spray me, how far could it spray, how was I going to get close to the cage, never mind opening the cage without getting sprayed, and how and where do I take it.

After several cups of coffee, I remembered that I had a tarp in the garage. I mustered the courage to deal with the skunk by covering the cage with the tarp. I slowly approached the cage with the tarp as a shield and laid it over the skunk without incident. I continued to wrap the cage with the loose ends of the tarp until I had the entire cage wrapped. Now that I had that hurdle jumped I called my father for assistance.

My father was still laughing when he arrived at my house; he was a clueless as I was on what to do. Fortunately he owned a pickup truck and we could use it to move the trapped skunk. My father, Erik my oldest son, he must have been around 5 years old at the time, and I piled into the pickup for our adventure. We slowly drove to the nearest park since I didn't want the tarp to blow away from the cage.

Once at the park I took the trap and sat it on the ground away from my father, my son and the truck. We talked it over for a minute until I got the nerve to reach inside the tarp to unlatch the trap door. When the door was securely open I ran from it as fast as I could.

We waited for 5 minutes and the skunk didn't come out. After 10 minutes, I walked up to the cage and gave a light kick and ran.

I was amazed that the skunk wouldn't leave the cage. My father and I just looked at each other in puzzlement. Jokingly my father told me to go over and shake it out. The look I gave him surely indicated that he was insane, but after waiting another five minutes decided what the heck.

I left my son by the truck and told him he was about to witness two grown men running from a small furry little animal my father and I approached the cage slowly. I grabbed the rear of the cage and tilted it so that the open end was pointed to the ground. The skunk still didn't come out. I lifted it higher, still nothing.

Then in a moment of bravery, I picked up the cage and gave it a good shake. Suddenly the cage got a little lighter. My father was already running away from me when I noticed that the skunk was on the ground.

A split second later the cage was going one way, me another, and the skunk another.

After my first experience, I continued to trap at night in an attempt to capture the other skunk. In the process, I caught two raccoons, an opossum and eventually trapped the other skunk.

Word quickly spread throughout the neighborhood and I found myself doing favors for friends and neighbors. I continued to educate myself on various trapping techniques eventually turning my new hobby it into a business, the rest is history.

Ultimately, the answer the question of how I became an animal trapper is by pure accident. My father, like many times before, was right again. As he would put it "ask and you shall receive."

As always, anytime you decide to have professional come out and review your situation, make sure they are insured and licensed with the Department of Natural Resources.

Do your homework and make sure you know what are all of the costs associated with the services and if there are any guarantees.

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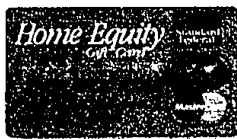
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