

Colorado Trappers and Predator Hunters Association

SW Regional Director 2023 Winter Report

We are only half though, but it has already been a long winter here in southwest Colorado. Lots of snow and cold this year has kept all but the most dedicated (or, more likely, the most stubborn) hunters and trappers out of the field. I like to think I am in the first category, but more likely it is the second.

Predator numbers across the board are way down in this corner of the state, I do hope this extra snow we are getting will turn that around for next year. It is truly hard to stay motivated while looking at empty traps each day. Calling isn't proving very productive either. The lack of prey is really catching up to our predator numbers.

To help keep up my motivation I am trying my hand at pursuing different species than I typically do. Both ringtail cat and weasel are on my "bucket list" to successfully cage trap. To that end, my wonderful husband developed a totally new kind of "box trap". It's a design that can be upscaled to martin as well. I will let you know how it goes! He is also delving into call making. It's incredibly rewarding to take a critter with a call or trap you made yourself.

One nice afternoon this winter we were up on the side of a canyon, scouting for sign and just 'looking around' when I glanced under a big pinion tree to see an old Montgomery dogless trap still tied there where it was last set over 27 years ago. My thoughts on seeing it were, who did this trap belong to? Why did they leave it? Did they catch anything? And are there more that they left in this canyon? It made me want to scour the canyon looking for others. That single forgotten trap also reiterated that a good set location almost always remains a good set location. That trap also reminded me that I am but one in what should be a long line of trappers still walking the rims pursuing furbearers.

I encourage you all, no matter the state, to remember why it is we do what we do. It shouldn't just be about the numbers we catch or shoot, it should be about getting out there and trying new things, getting new people involved and walking in the footsteps of those like-minded individuals who came before us.

Christy Bryan