

# early morning

"It is amazing," he said. "I walk up to the snare and I still have trouble seeing them because they blend into the brush."

"The bobcats are out there, only they are hard to see. I have only seen three that I haven't trapped."

In the last 12 years, Semler said, he has trapped 32 bobcats. Last year, he said, 17 were trapped in Cheyenne County.

The hardest animal to trap, he said, is a gopher.

"I can spend a couple of weeks trying to trap one gopher," he said.

He said he seldom skins skunks or possum. If a skunk has very little white on it or is a spotted skunk, he may take the time.

When skunks are trapped, they do not stink. It is only when they are riled up that they use their spray.

The oil is used in some perfumes. Semler said he tried gathering some of the oil by taking a syringe with a needle, pulling out the oil and depositing it in a brown bottle he had gotten from the veterinarian. It didn't work too well as, each time the needle was put into the rubber top, the hole got a little bigger and pretty soon, the smell was escaping.

"My wife put a stop to that," he said, adding that he didn't think the post office would want to deal with it either.

Fur-bearing season is less than a month

away, he said, and his grandson will be calling on weekends to see if he can go with him to check traps. Shannon is only 5, but he is already practicing his trapping skills on mice. It appears to be a hobby that is passed from generation to generation, Semler said.

### Regulations

In Kansas, trapping season for badger, bobcat, mink, muskrat, possum, raccoon, fox, skunk and weasel begins on Nov. 12 and runs through Feb. 15. Beaver trapping is from Nov. 12 to March 31. A fur harvester license is required, and most people will need to take the fur harvester education class first to buy one.



Cliff Semler, a St. Francis trapper, has different traps for different animals. The season is approaching, and soon he will begin making his early morning treks to check traps.  
— Photo by Karen Krien/The Saint Francis Herald



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