

Liberated Mink Survive in the Wild, Study Shows

Peter Young

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Study shows released mink survive in the wild.



Laying to waste fur industry claims that liberated mink do not survive in the wild, a recent study published in April 2009 studies the survival rate of captive-bred mink when released. The study, done in partnership with Oxford University, tracked the survival of released mink over eight years. The study found that *none of the released mink died directly due to lack of survival skills*.

For years, anecdotal evidence and quotes from wildlife biologists supported the possibility of high survival rates for released mink. For example, view this article on

a (now removed) blog post from a Utah woman finding a mink in her yard near the McMullin Fur Farm, 18 months after it was raided by the Animal Liberation Front.

The Mink Release Study

The study (viewed here), is titled “*The survival of captive-born animals in restoration programmes – Case study of the endangered European mink *Mustela lutreola**”.

The study set out to answer the following questions:

1. What is the survival rate of released mink and how does it change with time since release?
2. Do age, sex of an individual, and the conditions in which it is kept prior to release, affect its subsequent survival in the wild?
3. What are causes of mortality?

A few of the factors which could mitigate the relevance of this study are:

- The study was done with endangered European mink, not the commonly farmed North American mink.
- The study did not specify how many generations the mink had been bred in captivity (though, as reprinted below, it concluded this was not relevant to survival).

Mink Release Study Highlights

- “There was no evidence that the number of generations for which the lineage of the released individuals had been bred in captivity had any effect on survival.”
- Released mink survived for “up to 39 months”
- “The main cause of death was other carnivores and raptors, although this broad categorization may conceal a diversity of fatal scenarios.”
- (Only) “...three deaths were caused by humans: one was shot, the second was hit by a car and the third was beaten to death when venturing into a farmyard.”
- A quarter of the released European mink died within the first ten days. Survival decreased by half in 38 days and then stabilized....Overall, we conclude that mink adapt to the wild c. 1–1.5 months after release.”
- No mink were found to have died (directly) due to lack of survival skills.
- “The results show that genetically managed, long-term breeding programs within the zoo community can be a source of individuals for re-introductions”.

The study includes graphs charting survival rates and more.

Fur Industry Lies

In the wake of mink liberations by the A.L.F., the fur industry's stock-response, without exception, is that released mink will not survive in the wild. They are likely to have no comment on this recent study, which proves these soundbites to be false.

Conclusion

Now we have a study published in partnership with a major university, in a credible academic journal, proving what the Animal Liberation Front and critical thinkers have believed for years: farm-raised mink retain their wild instincts, and when released, can reassimilate successfully into their native habitat.

— Peter Young

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