

# Living With Carnivores



Cougars



# Puma Concolor

- Catamount
- Puma
- Mountain Lion
- Panther
- Cougar

























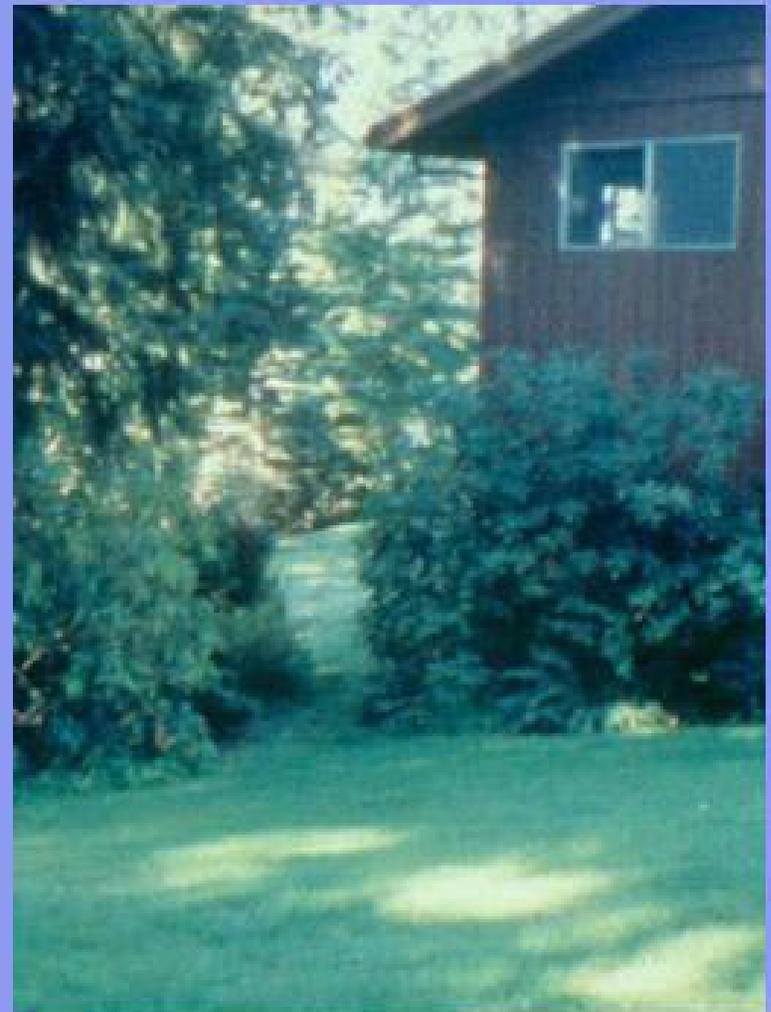
# If Living in Cougar Country

- Keep pets indoors at night.
- Keep farm animals inside at night.
- Clear brush along fences and edge of fields.



# If Living in Cougar Country

- Supervise children while playing outdoors.
- Light walkways.
- Remove vegetation near house that could conceal a cougar.



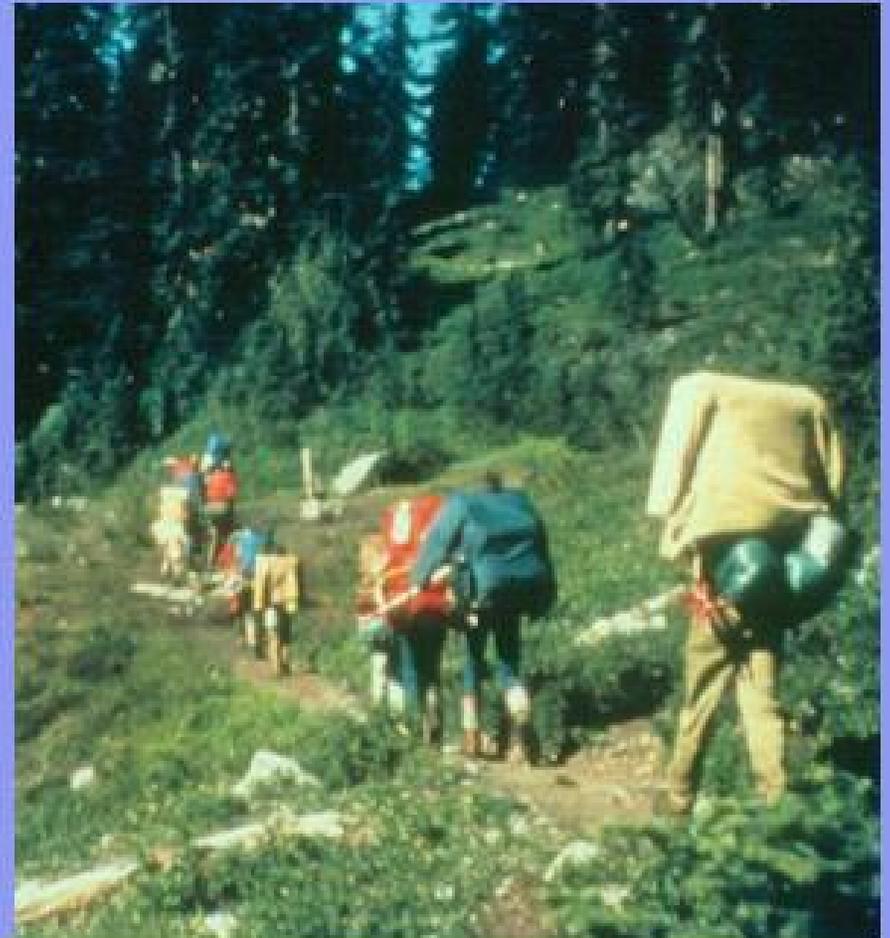






# Avoid Encounters While Hiking

- Hike with companion.
- Make noise.
- Keep children close.
- Carry a stout walking stick.



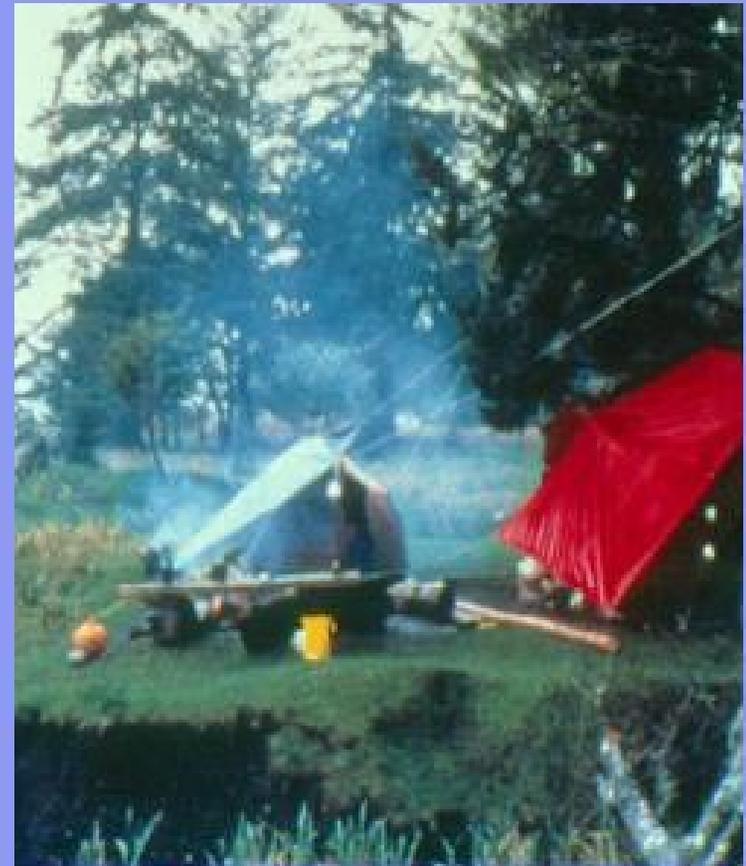
# Avoid Encounters While Hiking

- Do not approach dead animals.
- Avoid overhanging ledges and large branches.
- Be aware of your surroundings.



# Avoid Encounters While Camping

- Keep a clean camp.
- Store foods in safe areas.
- Do not leave your pet unattended.







# Face To Face Encounters

- Stop and don't run.
- Pick up small children.
- Shout at cougar.
- Look big.
- Slowly retreat.
- If attacked, Fight Back!





## Living with Carnivores

### Oregon Workshop Presentation 2001, Cougar

	<u>Narration</u>
Slide 1 LWC	<b><i>Introduction:</i></b> Presenter's name; title; affiliation.
Slide 2 cougar	The cougar is the largest native cat in Oregon, weighing considerably more than its cousins — the lynx, bobcat and domestic cat. Sleek and graceful, the cougar is a solitary and secretive animal rarely seen in the wild. In Oregon, however, humans increasingly live, work and play in wildlife habitat, and cougar numbers are rebounding. As a result, the number of cougar sightings and interactions is on the rise.
Slide 3 Puma concolor	The Scientific name of the cougar is <i>Puma concolor</i> and means "cat of one color." Other common names for the cougar include mountain lion, puma, panther, and catamount.  The cougar is a member of the cat family: cats have short faces, relatively small rounded ears, and retractable claws.
Slide 4 cougar	Cougars vary in color from reddish brown, to tawny, to gray with a black tip on their tail. Kittens have black spots.  An adult cougar's body length ranges from 3 ½ to 4 ½ feet with tails nearly 3 feet long, or about a third of the lion's total length. Adults range from a little over 2 feet to 2 ½ feet tall at the shoulder.
Slide 5 Cougar portrait	Adult males average between 125 and 175 pounds, but can weigh up to 200 pounds. Adult females average 75 to 100 pounds, but can weigh up to 120 pounds. Subadults weigh about 40 to 60 pounds.

<p>Slide 6 Mountain habitat</p>	<p>In Oregon, cougars are now found throughout most of the state, but density varies widely. They generally prefer rocky terrain, steep slopes, cliffs, rim rock, dense brush and semi-open forests — essentially the same habitats as their prey species. Over 20,000 cougars are thought to live in the Western United States, of which 3,000 to 5,000 are estimated to inhabit Oregon.</p>
<p>Slide 7 Cougars in snow</p>	<p>Cougars are carnivores, meaning they eat mainly meat. Their diet consists primarily of deer and elk. Mountain goat, wild sheep, coyotes, raccoons, birds, porcupines and rodents all supplement their diet. Occasionally, some individual cougars will learn to eat domestic livestock and pets. Cougars sometimes will cache or store uneaten portions of their kill or cover it for later consumption, but rarely eat spoiled meat.</p>
<p>Slide 8 Hidden cougar</p>	<p>Cougars are primarily active at dawn and dusk, and are secretive animals. Adults, particularly the males, roam widely. They will often have a home range of 100 to 180 square miles. Adults are territorial and will “mark” their territories.</p>
<p>Slide 9 Cougars with kitten</p>	<p>Cougars 8 to 12 years old are considered “old,” yet they may live up to 20 years.</p> <p>Cougars breed for the first time between two and three years of age. They den in rock outcroppings, dense thickets, and under uprooted trees. They are polygamous, meaning one male may breed with several different mates. The bond between male and female is short-lived and the male cougar plays no role in raising the kittens. A female’s gestation period is about three months. Female cougars normally breed every other year, and at any time of the year. In Oregon there is a slight increase in the birth rate in the spring, which roughly coincides with the elk calving and deer fawning season.</p>
<p>Slide 10 Kitten on log</p>	<p>Females usually give birth to two kittens, but litters may range from one to six. Newborn kittens are eight to 12 inches long, weigh less than a pound, and have bright blue eyes. Kittens remain with their mother for a year and a half.</p>

<p>Slide 11 Dead cougar with hunter</p>	<p>Cougars have been classified as a game mammal in Oregon since 1967. They may be hunted during specific times of the year with appropriate license and tag available from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The state uses protective quotas to ensure that too many cougars are not harvested from any geographic area. Dogs may <u>not</u> be used to hunt cougars during regulated hunting seasons. Spotted kittens, and females with spotted kittens are protected.</p>
<p>Slide 12 cougar</p>	<p>Cougar attacks on humans are extremely rare. In North America, about 20 fatalities and 75 nonfatal attacks have been documented during the past 100 years. There are no records of a cougar causing serious injury to a person in Oregon, but all three of our neighboring states (Washington, Idaho and California) have had recent incidents, and two fatalities have occurred.</p>
<p>Slide 13 Rural town</p>	<p>As cougar numbers increase in Oregon and human presence in their habitat increases, the more likely you are to encounter a lion. Young, newly independent one- or two-year-old cougars, possibly struggling to find food, account for the majority of the cougar/human interactions reported in Oregon. Most of those interactions occur on the edges, where human development meets forested land.</p>
<p>Slide 14 Rural home</p>	<p>With many people living, working and recreating in cougar country, it's important for you to know how to reduce the chances of a cougar conflict. Understanding and following a few tips can help you avoid a negative interaction.</p>
<p>Slide 15 “Living in....”</p>	<p><b><i>If living in cougar country, especially wooded foothills:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep pets indoors or in enclosed kennels at night for safety.</li> <li>2. If practical, bring farm animals into enclosed sheds or barns at night, especially during calving or lambing seasons.</li> <li>3. Clear brush, which may serve as hiding cover, along fences and at the edge of fields.</li> </ol>
<p>Slide 16 house</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When children are playing outdoors, closely supervise them and be sure they are indoors by dusk.</li> <li>2. Light walkways, barns and livestock holding areas.</li> <li>3. Remove any heavy vegetation or landscaping near the house that could conceal a cougar.</li> </ol>

Slide 17 garbage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Store garbage in cans with tightly fitting lids so odors do not attract small mammals, as small mammals may attract cougars,</li> <li>2. Finally, do not leave pet food or food scraps outside.</li> </ol>
Slide 18 deer	Remember: avoid feeding all wildlife. Also avoid landscaping with plants or shrubs that attract deer or elk, because predators follow prey.
Slide 19 Cougar in cage trap	<p>Just because you see a cougar doesn't mean there is a problem. But landowners who experience livestock damage have several options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Landowners may kill the offending animal, and are then required to report the kill to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.</li> <li>2. Landowners may contact an independent hound <u>owner</u> to assist with the situation, providing the chase occurs entirely on the landowner's property.</li> <li>3. Or landowners may call the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife or Wildlife Services for assistance.</li> </ol> <p>Cougars causing agricultural damage are destroyed, not relocated.</p>
Slide 20 hiking	<p>While recreating in cougar habitat you can avoid close encounters by taking the following precautions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Always hike with a companion.</li> <li>2. Make enough noise while hiking to prevent surprising a cougar.</li> <li>3. Keep small children close to the group, preferably in plain sight just ahead of you.</li> <li>4. Carry a stout walking stick to intimidate cougars and protect yourself and others.</li> <li>5. Keep small children in camp, and supervised, during evening hours.</li> </ol>

<p>Slide 21 hiking</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do not approach dead animals, especially recently killed or partially covered deer or elk.</li> <li>2. Be aware of your surroundings, particularly when hiking in dense cover or when sitting, crouching, or lying down. Look for tracks, scratch piles, and partially covered droppings.</li> <li>3. Cougars are ambush predators. This makes it more difficult to detect their presence, so be extra <u>aware</u> when hiking in areas of heavy cover, overhanging ledges or large overhanging tree branches.</li> </ol>
<p>Slide 22 camping</p>	<p>Keep a clean camp. Reduce odors that may attract small mammals like raccoons, which in turn attract cougars. Store meat and other foods, pet food, and garbage in double plastic bags. Do not leave pets unattended.</p> <p>Also, don't leave your pet tied at a campsite, which may also attract cougars. Better yet, leave "Rover" at home when camping or hiking. Most dogs provide little protection from cougars.</p>
<p>Slide 23 Hunting camp</p>	<p>Also, if hunting, be sure to hang harvested game at least 100 yards from your camp sight. Try to hang the game at least 10 to 15 feet high and 10 feet from the nearest tree.</p>
<p>Slide 24 cougar</p>	<p>Thousands of people spend time in Oregon's wildlands each year; yet relatively few will catch a glimpse of a cougar, much less confront one. <b><i>If you do come face to face with a cougar, your actions can either help or hinder a quick retreat by the lion. Here are some tips.</i></b></p>

<p>Slide 25 “face to face”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stop, stand tall and don't run. Running and rapid movements may trigger an attack. Remember, a cougar's instinct is to chase.</li> <li>2. Pick up small children immediately.</li> <li>3. Face the cougar, talk to it firmly and slowly back away. Always leave the animal an escape route.</li> <li>4. Try to appear larger than the cougar by getting above it, either by stepping up onto a stump or rock. If wearing a jacket, hold it open to further increase your size.</li> <li>5. Do not take your eyes off the animal or turn your back. Do not crouch down or try to hide.</li> <li>6. Never approach the animal, especially if it is near a kill or with kittens. Never corner the animal or offer it food.</li> <li>7. If the animal does not flee and shows signs of aggression (crouches with ears back, teeth bared, hissing, tail twitching, and hind feet pumping in preparation to jump), be more assertive. Shout, wave your arms and throw rocks. The idea is to convince the cougar that you are not prey, but a potential danger.</li> <li>8. If the cougar attacks, fight back aggressively and try to stay on your feet. Cougars have been driven away by people who have fought back using anything within reach, including sticks, rocks, shovels, backpacks, and clothing — even bare hands. Generally, if you are aggressive enough, a cougar will flee, realizing it has made a mistake.</li> </ol> <p>While it is legal to use lethal force to defend yourself or a person from a wild animal, it is rarely necessary. It is a personal choice.</p>
<p>Slide 26</p>	<p>By following these easy steps you can help reduce your chance of conflict with a cougar. Remember, though, there is no guarantee. If you do have a negative interaction with a cougar please contact the appropriate authorities. A list of “who to contact” for questions or to report an incident is available here for your convenience.</p>

Thank you.

**END**