

What do I do if I meet one?



Mountain lions are
WILD ANIMALS!

STAY WITH PARENTS OR
FRIENDS!

DON'T APPROACH ONE!

If you see one,
DON'T RUN!

If it is moving toward you or
staring at you,
WAVE YOUR ARMS!
SCREAM AT IT!
STARE AT IT!
THROW ROCKS (But don't
BEND DOWN to pick them up)!

If it attacks YOU,
FIGHT BACK!

If it attacks YOUR PET,
DON'T HELP YOUR PET! LEAVE
AND GET HELP!

Mountain lions usually run from people. They are intelligent hunters, but they may attack people when they can't find other food or mistake you for prey because you're small or running.

Mountain lions are an important part of nature and deserve our respect and our care. When they hunt other animals, they are helping Mother Nature make the world work right for all of us. Likewise, they need our help if they are going to survive.

You can help mountain lions live on by learning about them, by talking to other people about them, and by staying safe when you're in the outdoors.

Be a Mountain Lion Lover!

What is a Mountain Lion?



Learn more at
The Cougar Zone
<http://www.theandyzone.com/cougar>



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What is a Mountain Lion?



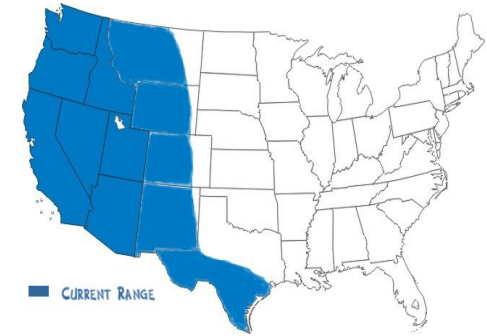
This is a mountain lion in Idaho. He is wearing a radio collar.

Are they ever young like me?



This kitten is about six months old.

Are they endangered?



Most cougars live in the area colored blue. They used to live in the whole U.S.!

Mountain lions are big cats also called "pumas" and "cougars" and "painters" and "catamounts" and "panthers". Though they can weigh as much as 200 pounds and can be 9 feet long (including their tails), they purr like your house cat and are their cousins. They used to live throughout the United States but now live mostly in the Western U.S., including Texas, mainly in the Trans-Pecos area of West Texas. They eat mostly deer, depending on where they live; and if you want to see how they hunt, study your house cat. Cougars need big areas of land to live and hunt in. These areas are called "home ranges". Males and females need different size home ranges. The males' are usually bigger.

Mountain lions are born at any time of the year. Up to six at a time may arrive, but they usually are born in litters of two to four. They nurse with their mother until they are 5 or 6 weeks old. When they are about 3 to 4 months old, the mother moves them out of the den to a new place. The family then stays together until the kittens get to be a year and a half to two years old while the mother teaches them how to hunt. The male cats then leave to go find their own home ranges. The females do, too, but they often make a home range close to where they were born. The males go far away and have to fend for themselves the whole time. This is often when they get into trouble. They get hungry and aren't old enough to be really good hunters, so they eat what they can.

Cougars are not endangered. Their populations are probably growing. But that doesn't mean they aren't threatened. As more land is gobbled up for cities and homes, they have nowhere to live. In Texas, they are not protected like some animals are. They can be hunted and killed for any reason. A lot of people say this is okay because there are a lot of them here. But we really don't know how many there are, and there is good reason to think there aren't as many as some people in Texas think. Cougars are not popular with many people. But Mother Nature put them here to help her balance things, and they need our help.