

Living in Cougar Country

Some common sense guidelines can keep you and your neighborhood safe.

- Learn your neighborhood. Be aware of any wildlife corridors or places where deer or elk concentrate.
- Walk pets during the day and keep them on a leash.
- Keep pets indoors at dawn and dusk. Shelter them for the night.
- Feed pets indoors.
- Don't leave food or garbage outside.
- Use animal-proof garbage cans if necessary.
- Remove heavy brush from near the house and any play areas.
- Install motion-activated lights outdoors along walkways and driveways.
- Be more cautious at dawn and dusk when cougars are most active.
- Do not feed any wildlife. By attracting other wildlife you may attract a cougar.
- Keep areas around bird feeders clean.
- Deer-proof your garden and yard with nets, lights and fencing.
- Fence and shelter livestock. Move them to sheds or barns at night.
- Report any cougar sighting or encounter to a local ODFW office or Oregon State Police office.

Oregon law allows landowners to kill a cougar that is damaging livestock or property. If you experience cougar damage, call your local ODFW office.



Recreating in Cougar Country

Cougars usually will sense people and leave an area, but by following these guidelines you can further minimize your risk of encountering one.

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Leave your dog at home or keep it on a leash. Pets running free may lead a cougar back to you.
- Hike in groups. Make noise to alert wildlife of your presence.
- Keep children close to you. Teach them about wildlife.
- Keep campsites clean. Sleep 100 yards from cooking areas.
- Store food in animal-proof containers.
- Carry deterrent spray.
- Never feed any wildlife. Prey attract predators.
- Do not approach any wildlife; stay at least 100 yards away.
- Steer clear of baby wildlife. The mother likely is nearby.
- Be alert when sitting quietly or stopping to rest.
- Be especially alert at dawn and dusk when cougars are most active.
- Be aware that animal calls and animal kills can attract a cougar.
- Report any cougar sighting or encounter to a local ODFW office or Oregon State Police office.

Encountering a Cougar

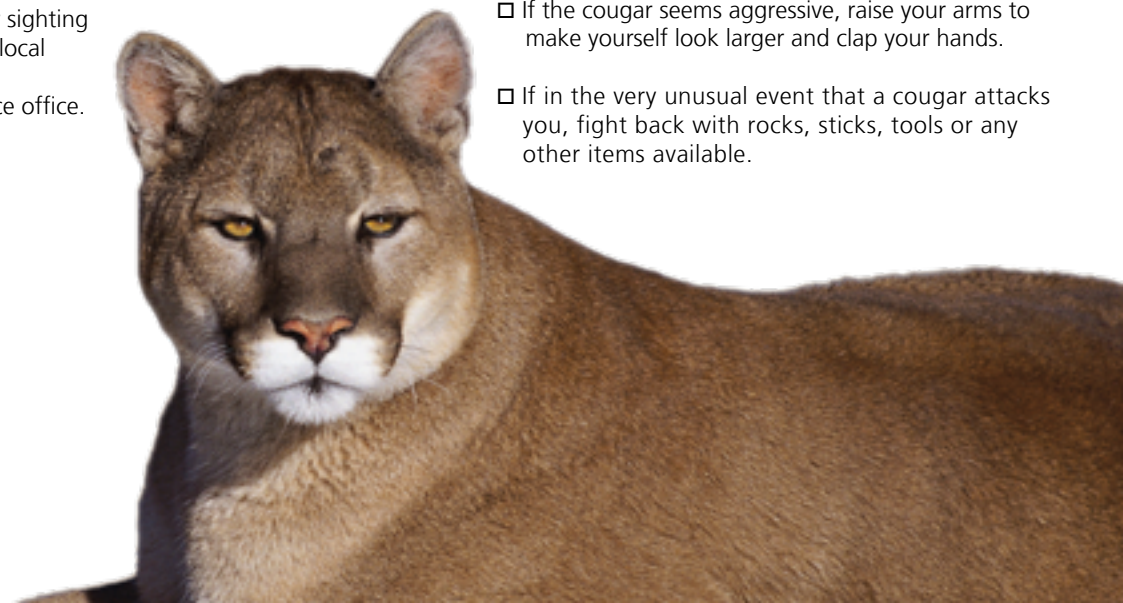
Cougar attacks on people are extremely rare. There has been one known attack by a wild cougar in Oregon, which was fatal. Attacks have happened in other states and in Canada.

Cougars are considered public safety risks when they are seen repeatedly in daylight around areas of human activity, or are attacking pets or livestock. If this happens, call your local ODFW office or 911.

Just glimpsing a cougar in the wild is not a cause for alarm, especially if the cougar leaves the area. Cougars will often retreat if given the opportunity so if you do encounter one, give it a way to escape.

If you encounter a cougar that does not retreat, follow these guidelines:

- Stay calm and stand your ground.
- Maintain direct eye contact.
- Pick up any children, but do so without bending down or turning your back on the cougar.
- Back away slowly.
- Do not run. Running triggers a chase response in cougars, which could lead to an attack.
- Raise your voice and speak firmly.
- If the cougar seems aggressive, raise your arms to make yourself look larger and clap your hands.
- If in the very unusual event that a cougar attacks you, fight back with rocks, sticks, tools or any other items available.



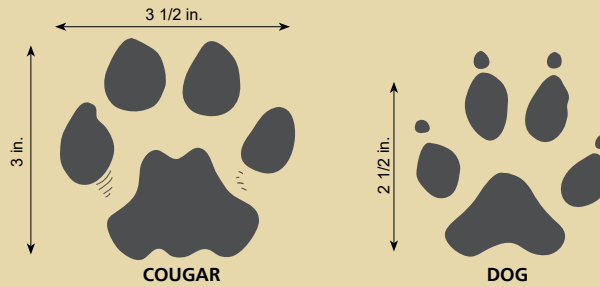
Cougars, also called mountain lions, are Oregon's largest cat species. Historically, cougars were one of the most widely distributed wildlife species in North America.

Native to Oregon, cougars are found throughout the state. Population densities vary depending on habitat with the highest densities in northeast Oregon and the southwest Cascade Mountains.

As they were in many other western states, cougars were originally bounty-hunted in Oregon. Until the late 1960s, they were classified as predators and had no protections under state law. Only about 200 cougars were estimated to be left when they were reclassified as game mammals in the late 1960s and came under ODFW management. With regulated hunting, the statewide population rebounded to an estimated 6,600 cougars of all age classes as of 2018.

Cougars are carnivores. Their primary food sources are deer, elk, and bighorn sheep where available. Cougars, especially males, are very territorial and will defend their territory against other cougars, particularly other male cougars.

Attention on cougars has increased as both the human and cougar populations have grown and more people work, play and live in areas inhabited by these big cats. By following the guidelines in this brochure, you can reduce your chances of a negative encounter.



Oregon is COUGAR COUNTRY



Cougar tracks versus dog tracks

Cougar tracks

- Tracks do not generally include claw marks because cougars have retractable claws.
- The heel pad has three lobes at the base and is indented at the top, forming a distinct "M" shape.

Dog tracks

- Tracks usually include claw marks.
- The heel pads are more rounded.

Guidelines for living with cougars



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