



## Cougar? Mountain Lion? Panther?

Felis concolor: “Cat of one color”

### Fast Facts

	Male	Female
<b>Average Weight</b>	150-200 lbs	75-150 lbs
<b>Average Size:</b>		
• From tip of nose to tip_of tail	9'	7'
• Stands @ shoulder	24"	18-21"
<b>Home range size</b>	100-700 sq miles depending on food	40 sq miles
<b>Color</b>	Adults are grayish tan to light tan to reddish with lighter coloration on belly, chest and throat; a black spot on end of tail; small rounded ears with black coloring on back	
<b>Sounds</b>	Little noise; May sound like a person whistling or bird chirping; raspy growl or meow similar to house cat	
<b>Reproduction</b>		
• Mating season	December-March	
• Gestation	91-95 days	
• Litter size	2-3	
• Weaned	6-12 weeks	
<b>Diet</b>	80-90% is deer and elk; will eat other wild game such as bighorn sheep, mountain goats, porcupines, raccoons, skunks, turkeys	
<b>Habitat in Colorado</b>	Rocky mountain cliffs and dense coniferous forests	
<b>Threats</b>	Habitat loss, hunting, and poaching	

## Did you hear a Mountain Lion?

Listen to the many sounds of a mountain lion. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVZCAQP6eQM>  
(Please allow 15 seconds for the video to download.)

## Cool Mountain Lion Facts



The *Guinness Book of World Records* recognizes the cougar as the animal with the most names, more than 200. Commonly known as Mountain Lion, Panther, Puma, Catamount, and Mountain Screamer, Native Americans called the second largest cat in North America “Father of Game,” “Lord of the Forest,” and “Powerful Beast.” However, “Ghost Cat” seems the most appropriate name since the mountain lion is a rarely seen, solitary, and reclusive cat.



A cougar’s tail can be as long as 3 feet, one-third of its total body length.



A cougar is the largest cat that purrs.



A cougar is an excellent long jumper able to leap 16 feet straight up and 45 feet across in a single bound. That is over a school bus, an RV or a small house.



The average sprinting speed of a cougar is 35 mph.



A cougar is a good swimmer.



Males are “absent fathers”. They do not participate in raising cubs.



Mountain lion cubs have spots and blue eyes.



A young cougar will stay with its mother in her home range for about two years, then head out on its own.



### Have 8 minutes?


Watch this video on cougar biology and behavior


<http://www.mountainlion.org/featurevideobiology.asp>

(Please allow 15 seconds for the video to download.)

## More Cool Mountain Lion Facts



 A cougar's field of vision spans 130 degrees as compared to a human's which is 60 degrees.

 A mountain lion can kill an animal up to six times its size.

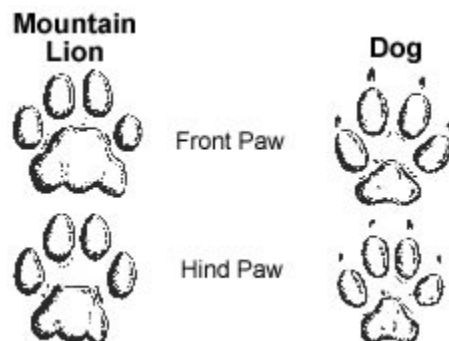
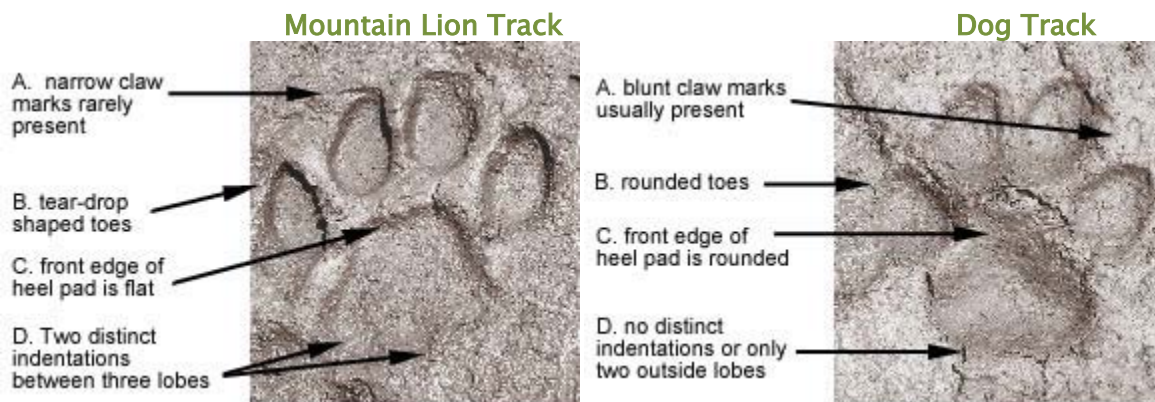
## Do you think you saw cougar tracks?

Check out this video to help you identify mountain lion tracks.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YGUoQ4LVTc&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YGUoQ4LVTc&feature=player_embedded)

(Please allow 15 seconds for the video to download.)

## Comparison of mountain lion and dog tracks





## What to do IF you meet a cougar



First and foremost, avoid an encounter by hiking with a partner or group. Lone individuals have the greatest risk of attack. Additionally, keep children near adults and pets under control.

However, if you see a mountain lion, no matter how thrilled you are to be one of the very few who gets such an opportunity, stay well back, and take the encounter seriously.



### ***Make yourself appear as large as possible.***

Make yourself appear larger by picking up your children, leashing pets in, and standing close to other adults. Open your jacket. Raise your arms. Wave your raised arms slowly.



### ***Make noise.***

Yell, shout, bang your walking stick against a tree. Make any loud sound that cannot be confused by the lion as the sound of prey. Speak slowly, firmly and loudly to disrupt and discourage predatory behavior.



### ***Act like a predator yourself.***

Maintain eye contact. Stare at the cougar eyeball to eyeball. DO NOT RUN! Cougars like moving targets (just like your domestic cat). Never bend over or crouch down. Aggressively wave your raised arms, throw stones or branches, all without turning away.



### ***Slowly create distance.***

Assess the situation. Consider whether you may be between the lion and its kittens, or between the lion and its prey or cache. Back slowly to a spot that gives the mountain lion a path to get away, never turning away from the animal. Give a mountain lion the time and ability to move away.



### ***Protect yourself.***

If attacked, fight back. Protect your neck and throat. People have utilized rocks, jackets, garden tools, tree branches, walking sticks, fanny packs and even bare hands to turn away cougars. Bear spray or pepper spray may be used. If the cougar is coming at you, aim the spray at the ground in front of the cougar.

Have a question? Send your email to [askanaturalist@forestconservancy.com](mailto:askanaturalist@forestconservancy.com)