

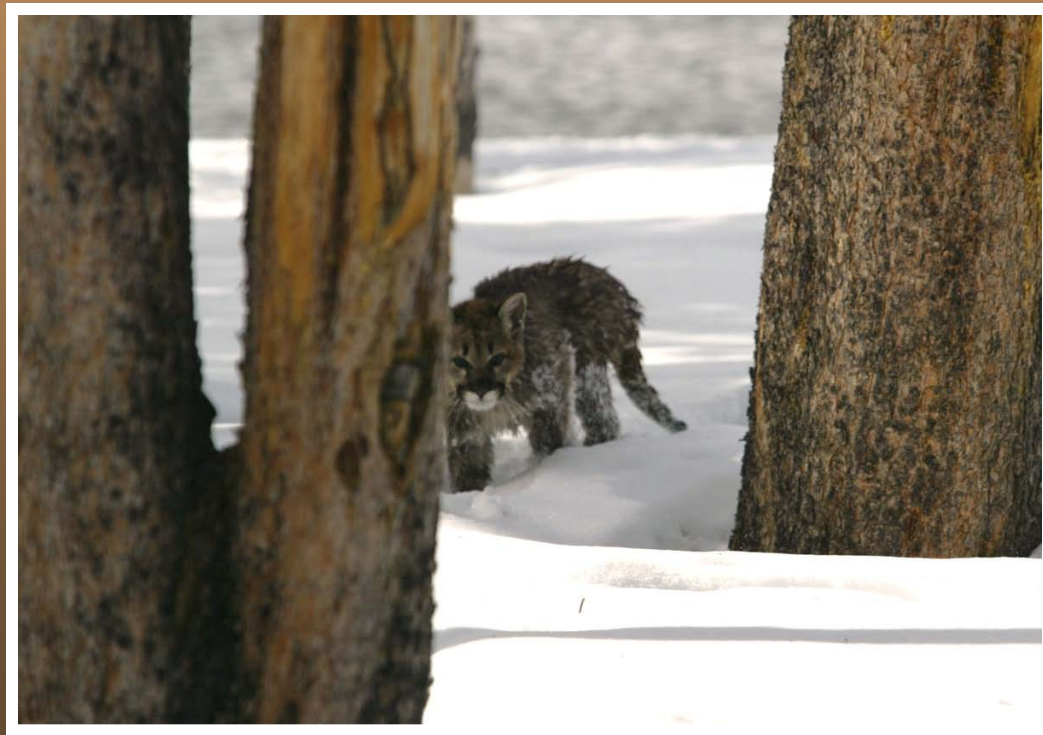
Mountain Lions in Nebraska



Mountain Lions

Felis concolor

Also known as puma, panther, and cougar, and catamount.



Mountain Lion kitten in Yellowstone National Park.

Coloration

Uniformly tan in color with black tipped tail and dark spots behind the ears.

Juveniles have dark spots and a dark-ringed tail until approximately one year of age.



Size



Males are larger than females.

Males can reach approximately 8 feet and weigh between 100 and 150 lbs.

Females can reach 7 feet and weigh between 60 and 90 lbs.

Habitat

Mountain lions can occur in a wide variety of habitats – forests, swamps, grasslands.

More dependent on adequate sources of food.

Home ranges vary, but are large.



Distribution

Once found across North America from Canada into South America.

It is now more limited – mainly in the west.



Reproduction

Can mate any time of year, although it is more concentrated from December to March.



Litters contain 1~6 cubs, although the average is 2~3 cubs.

Cubs remain with mother for 15~24 months.

Food and Hunting

The primary food source of Mountain Lions is White-tailed deer (in Nebraska).

Mountain Lions will often stalk their prey. They can jump 15 to 20 feet vertically and 30-45 feet horizontally.

Primarily hunt at dawn and dusk.



History in Nebraska

Mountain Lions were native to Nebraska's fauna.

Extirpated by the end of the 19th century.

No confirmed sightings in Nebraska until the early 1990's.



Now there is a resident population in the Pine Ridge area of northwest Nebraska. Young males searching for a female of sometimes spotted in central and eastern Nebraska. They are transient individuals.

Why are we seeing more of them?

The majority of confirmed sightings come from the panhandle.

The majority of non-confirmed sightings come from urban areas – more people.



Pine Ridge Resident Population

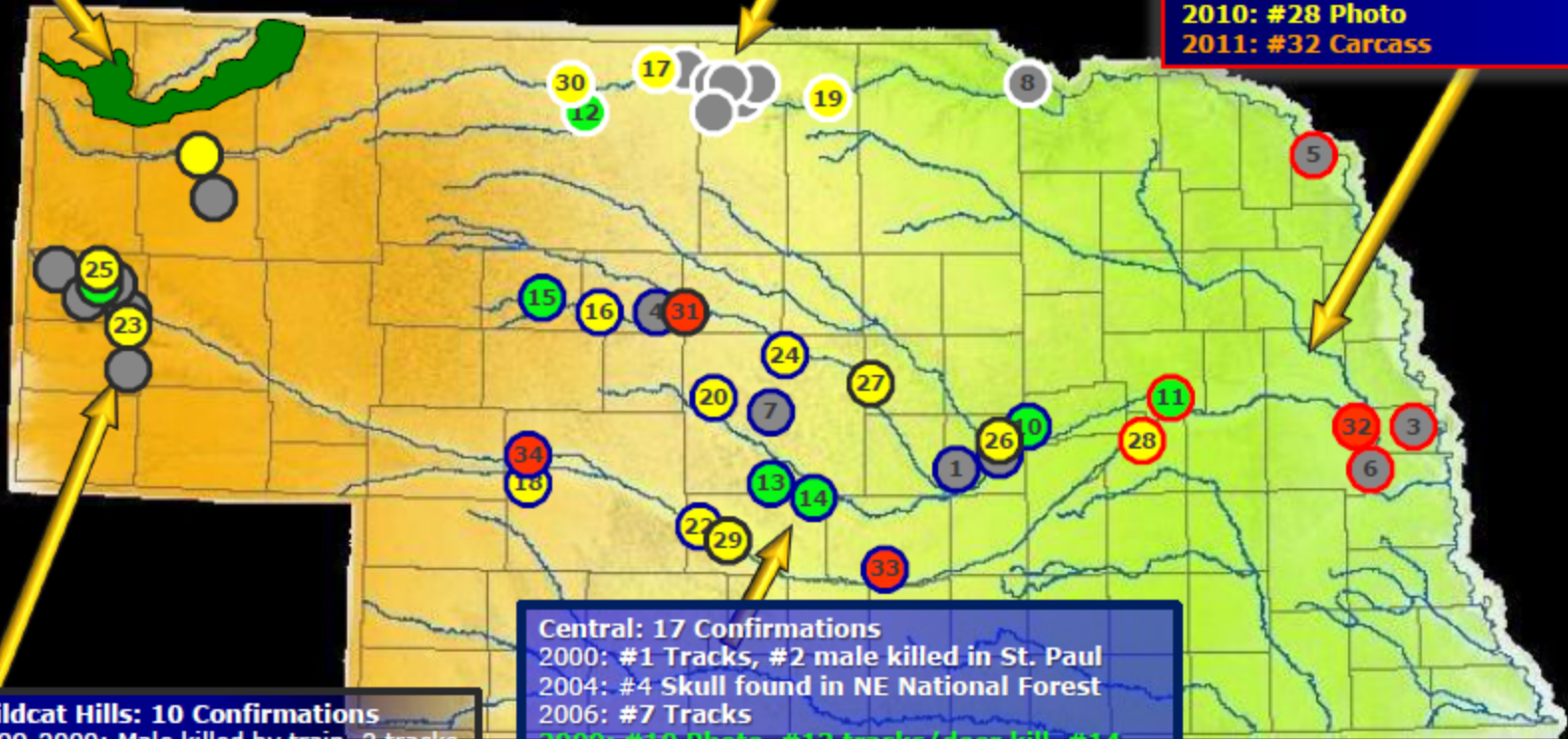
1991: First confirmation in modern times
2007: 1* kittens documented, resident population

North Central: 10 Confirmations

2001-2005: Video, 2 photos, 2 tracks
2006: Male w/SD collar road-kill
2008: #8 Photo
2009: #12 Tracks
2010: #17 Scat, #19 and #30 photo

East: 5 Confirmations

2003: #3 Male captured in Omaha
2004: #5 Male killed S. Sioux City
2005: #6 Male road-killed I-80
2009: #11 Tracks/photos
2010: #28 Photo
2011: #32 Carcass



Wildcat Hills: 10 Confirmations

1999-2000: Male killed by train, 2 tracks
2006: Photo, male shot in Scottsbluff
2007: Photo
2008: Male shot in Scottsbluff
2009: #9 Female shot in Scottsbluff
2010: #23 tracks, #25 female shot

Central: 17 Confirmations

2000: #1 Tracks, #2 male killed in St. Paul
2004: #4 Skull found in NE National Forest
2006: #7 Tracks
2009: #10 Photo, #13 tracks/deer kill, #14 tracks, #15 photo
2010: #16 Tracks, #18, #20, #21, #22, #24, #26, #27, #29 photos
2011: #31 Tracks, #33 male killed in Kearney, #34 tracks

- 1991-2008 Confirmations
- 2009 Confirmations
- 2010 Confirmations
- 2011 Confirmations

Mountain Lion Presence in Nebraska, 1991-present
49 confirmations outside the Pine Ridge Population.

Future of Mountain Lions in Nebraska

Considering the large number of recent confirmed sightings and the large number of deer in the state it is likely that additional mountain lions will be encountered in Nebraska.

~ Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

How do you identify them?: Sightings



Use binoculars.

Remember that Mountain Lions are 7-8 feet long.

Watch how it is moving... like a cat.

Remember that Mountain Lions are “concolor” – no spots or stripes.

How do you identify them?:

Scat



3-6 inches long

Will often have remnants of fur and bone in it.



May be pointed at the ends.

How do you identify them?: Confirmed Kill



Will often have drag marks around animal.

May be found in brush or covered by leaves – mountain lions DO NOT drag their prey into trees.

How do you identify them?:

Tracks

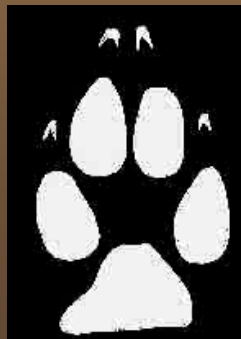


3 to 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches long
3 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide

Claws usually do not register.



Bobcat



Coyote



Domestic Dog

2 lobes in front, 3 lobes in back.

What do you do if you find scat, tracks, or a kill?

Tracks: cover tracks with a bucket to avoid destruction. Take a picture, be sure to put a reference (coin, key, etc.) in the photo.

Scat: Take a picture, be sure to put a reference in the photo.

Kill: Take a photo. Leave carcass in place, call NGPC.

What do you do if you have a
track, scat, kill, or photo?

Call the nearest Game and Parks Commission Office



What do you do if you if you encounter a live Mountain Lion?

- Do not approach.
- Leave the lion an avenue to escape.
- Stay calm, move slowly, do not run.
- Back away, do not turn your back on the lion or run.
- Raise your arms or backpack to appear larger.
- Lift-up children to prevent them from running.
- If attacked, fight back. Use rocks or twigs.
- Try to remain on your feet. Never “play dead.”

Mountain Lions in Nebraska

