

Mountain Lions (Cougar, Puma, Panther)

(Felis concolor)



Geographical Range: North America, South America, Canada, and Mexico – desert to forest, sea level to 10,000 feet

Home Range: Female – 40 - 80 sq. miles
Male – 80 - 300 sq. miles

Size: Female – 7' long
Males - 8' long

Weight: Female – 65 - 90 lbs.
Male – 130 - 150 lbs.

Habits: Solitary – mountain lions live and hunt alone. Most commonly found in areas with plentiful prey and adequate cover. Active – around dusk through night time to dawn. Generally elusive, quiet. Territorial.

Vocalization: Purr, growl, hiss

Diet: Primarily deer. It requires approximately 50 deer per year (1 per week) to sustain one solitary adult. Also birds, small mammals, bighorn sheep.

Sexual Maturity: Female – approximately 21 months
Male – approximately 24 months

Gestation: Approximately 90 days

Litter Size: 1 - 6 usually 2 - 4 of which ½ survive to adulthood

Young: 8 - 16 oz.
Eyes closed at birth, open 10 -14 days
Covered with blackish-brown spots and have dark rings around their tails.
Markings face as they mature.

Dispersal: Move up to 100 miles from natal (birth) range to establish adult range.

Population: Approximately 4,000 - 6,000 adults in California – additional research is needed to make more accurate estimates.

Longevity: 10 -15 years, maximum 25 years in captivity

Mortality: Other lions, disease, road hazards, depredation permits

Legal Status: 1907 – 1963 - bountied predator
1969 – 1972 - game mammal
1990 – current - special protected mammal Prop. 117

Research:

Due to their solitary and elusive nature, mountain lions are one of the most difficult large mammals to study in North America.

Much of what has been learned about these animals in California is the result of the development and use of radio telemetry equipment in the 1970's. Prior to the development of radio telemetry, individual lions could not be easily followed. *Steve Torres, California Department of Fish and Game*

In recent years we have begun to learn more about the habits of mountain lions as a result of field research efforts to collect and analyze data.