



Facts About Cougars

Cougars are the largest members of the cat family in North America. Adult males average approximately 130 pounds and measure 7-8 feet in length from nose to tip of tail. Adult females average 93 to 100 pounds. They stalk and ambush prey and are known to take down animals larger than itself. Their primary food sources include deer, elk, moose, and bighorn sheep. Cougars have large paws and strong hind legs that give them great leaping and running ability. They can leap as high as 18 feet and run at speeds of 40 to 50 mph but is best adapted for short, powerful sprints rather than long chases. They are also great climbers.



Here are some helpful tips to remember:

- Do Not hike alone.
- Do Not approach any wildlife. Stay away from baby wildlife, since the mother is usually nearby.
- Do Not feed wildlife. By attracting other wildlife, you may attract a cougar.
- Do Not leave children unattended while playing outdoors. Closely supervise them.
- Be especially alert at dawn and dusk when cougars are most active.
- Be aware that animal calls and animal kills can attract a cougar.
- If there have been cougar sightings, escort children to the bus stop in the early morning.

If you encounter a cougar in the wild:

- Do Not run from a cougar. Running may trigger a predator-prey chase response. Back away slowly.
- Do Not take your eyes off the cougar or turn your back.
- Do all you can to appear larger.
- Pick up children without bending over.
- If the animal displays aggressive behavior (crouches with ears back, teeth bared, hissing, tail twitching and hind feet pumping in preparation to jump), shout, wave your arms and throw anything you have to convince the cougar that you are not prey, but a potential danger.
- If a cougar attacks, fight back aggressively and try to stay on your feet. Cougars have been driven away by people who have fought back.

Please contact the CTFW Department at **509.634.2110** to report sightings of cougars near residential areas, commercial areas, or other areas of potential safety issues.

