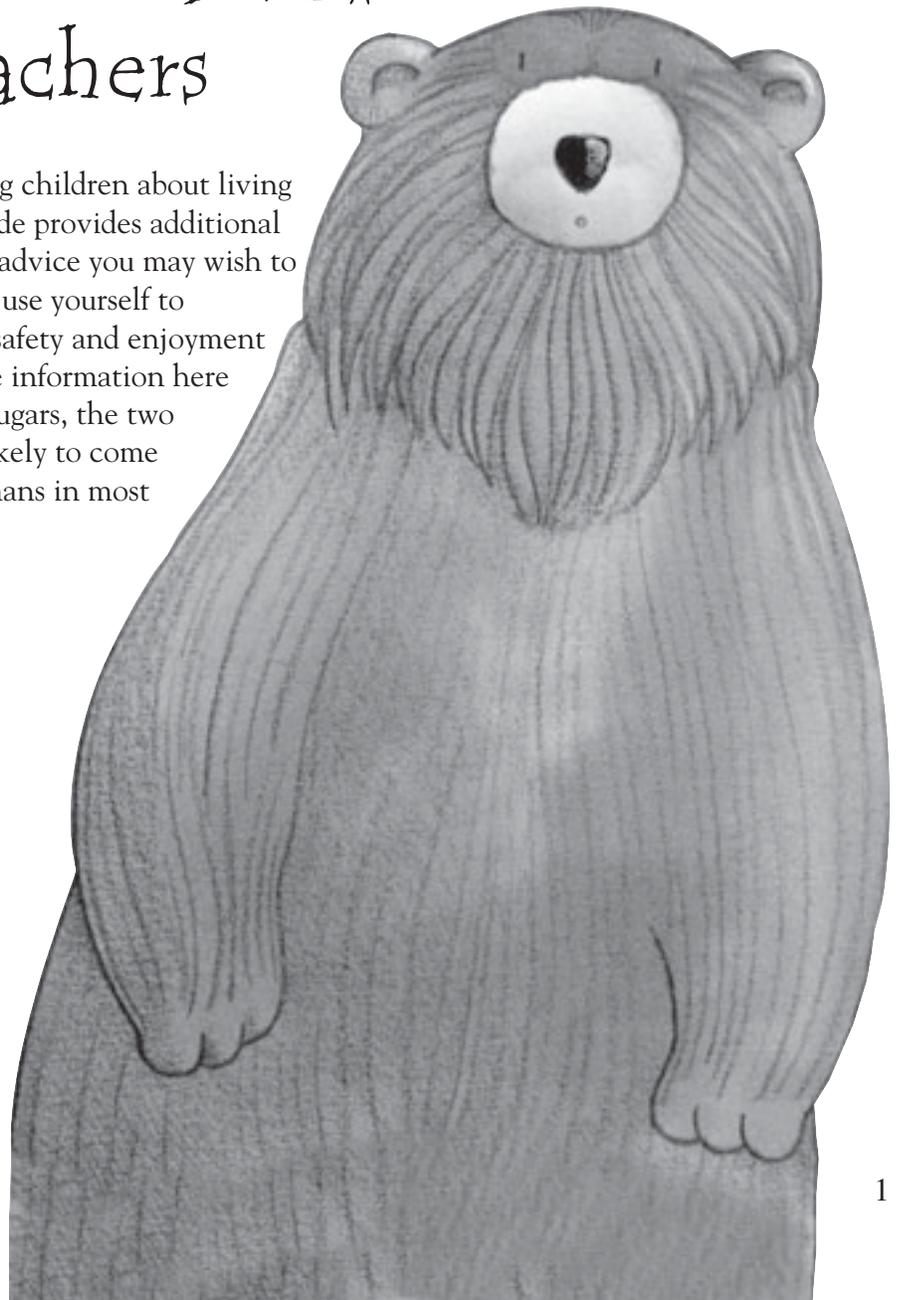


# Bears Barge In

## Guide for Parents and Teachers

Thank you for teaching children about living with wildlife! This guide provides additional information, tips, and advice you may wish to share with children or use yourself to increase your family's safety and enjoyment of wildlife. Most of the information here relates to bears and cougars, the two large predators most likely to come into conflict with humans in most of North America.



## Key messages

What we'd like children to learn from *Bears Barge In*:

- People and animals both need good places to live.
- Sharing a region with wild animals is a fun and exciting privilege.
- Some large animals *can* be dangerous, but with a little care, we can safely enjoy sharing wild areas with them.

## What's in this guide:

- Wildlife you might encounter in or near your neighborhood
- Why bears and cougars sometimes conflict with people
- Bears and cougars in the news
- Did you know? — Fun facts about bears and cougars
- How to tell if bears or cougars live near you
- How to recognize animal tracks in your neighborhood
- How to discourage bears or cougars from moving in *too* close
- When you're in *their* neighborhoods
- What to do if you see a bear, cougar, or other large wildlife
- Why it's a bad idea to feed wildlife
- Why it usually doesn't work to relocate animals
- Keep it in perspective!
- Ideas for projects related to suburban wildlife
- Other resources
- Glossary of terms

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## Please note

The information in this document has been drawn from and reviewed by respected authorities, and represents current, commonly accepted understanding of animal behavior and general advice about avoiding and handling conflicts. Like people, however, wild animals can be unpredictable, and we're still learning about them. The information here may not work in every situation, and guidance from your local authorities should take precedence. There are no guarantees when dealing with large predators.

# Wildlife you might encounter in or near your neighborhood

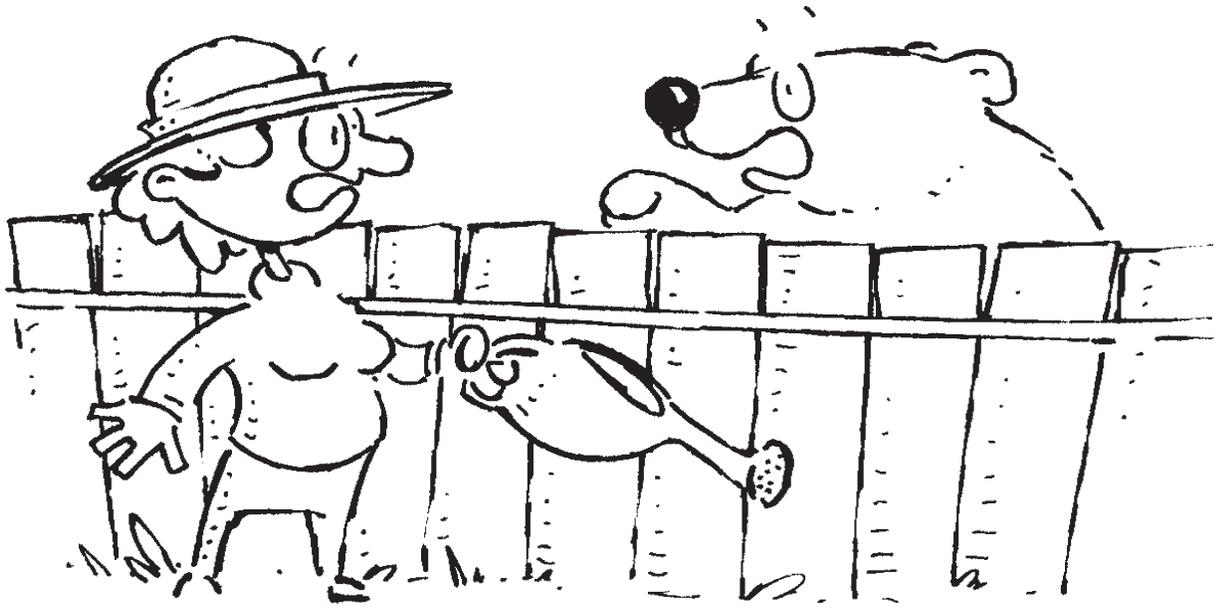
Depending on where you live,  
you might get to see:

- Field mice, moles, or voles
- Snakes
- Lizards or other reptiles
- Turtles
- Frogs, newts, or other amphibians
- All kinds of birds, including large birds such as herons, hawks, vultures, cormorants, condors, and eagles
- Squirrels or chipmunks
- Prairie dogs, woodchucks, or marmots
- Armadillos
- Alligators
- Opossums
- Rabbits
- Raccoons
- Deer
- Bats

Because they're shy, you're less  
likely to spot:

- Beavers
- Otters
- Porcupines
- Foxes
- Pine martens
- Ringtail cats
- Badgers
- Muskrats
- Wild pigs
- Wolverines
- Elk
- Moose
- Bears
- Cougars, bobcats, or lynx
- Coyotes
- Wolves





## Why bears and cougars sometimes come into conflict with people

Our homes are encroaching on areas that used to be wilderness. In addition, efforts to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat have helped dwindling populations of bear and cougar to increase.

There are simply more people everywhere, and that means there are more opportunities for large predators and humans to come into conflict. When young animals leave their mothers and start looking for their own territories and food supplies, they're less likely to find anywhere without people. That's why reports of bear and cougar in suburban areas are rising.

Although these animals generally would rather find habitat without people, sometimes they have no choice. Others learn that human neighborhoods can mean easy sources of food because people have interesting garbage cans, penned livestock, and small pets. Even in areas that aren't so densely populated, young bears or cougars ready to leave their mothers and fend for themselves may discover that there's nowhere else to go except the nearest ranching or farming community, where food is easy to find or catch.

In many states, wildlife authorities respond to hundreds of calls each year about bear or cougar sightings. Although actual attacks are rare — for instance, there were eight cougar attacks on humans in Washington state during the last decade, less than

one per year — they are on the rise compared to earlier in the century, when animal populations were higher but human populations were lower. As less wildlife habitat is available, the more likely animals are to be found in places that used to be their habitat but now have become ours.

### Bear blunders

Bears are not likely to attack humans, but they will occasionally try to make a meal of farm livestock. Conflicts with humans happen most often when people appear to be threatening bear cubs, stand in the way of a tempting garbage can or camp food supply, or simply startle the bear in the woods. Rather than actual attacks, bears are more likely to come into conflict with people by damaging property in search of food or food scraps in garbage. That means that many potential conflicts with bears can be prevented simply by better managing our garbage.

### Cougar chases

Cougars are shy and much less likely than bears to be seen, but because they're used to dining on large animals such as deer, they are more likely to think of a lone human — especially a small woman or a child — as a potential meal. They have a strong instinct to chase fleeing animals (including joggers and mountain bikers), so they can be dangerous.

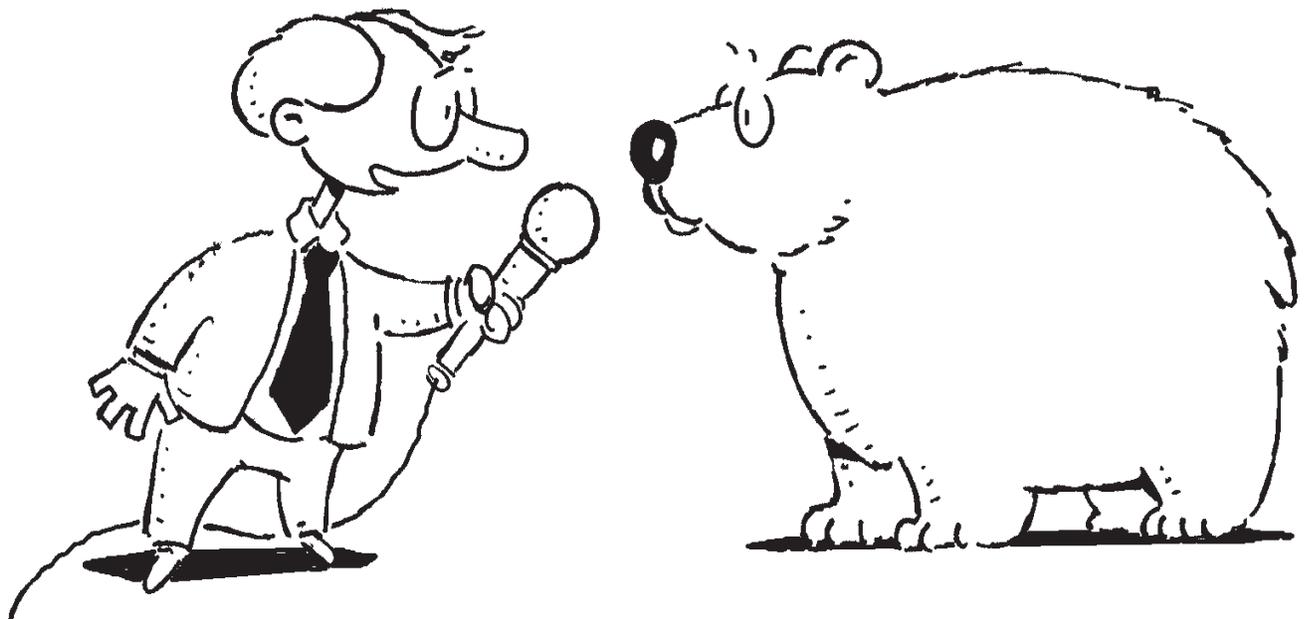
# Bears and cougars in the news

There have been legislative efforts in several states that have put bears and cougars in the news. A few examples:

- In 1990, **California** voters approved Proposition 117 making it illegal for anyone, including state wildlife officials, to kill a cougar except in extreme cases.
- In 1996 **Washington** state voters approved Initiative 655, which made it illegal to hunt bears or cougars with dogs, and also outlawed bear “baiting,” which was formerly done by some hunters to make the bears easier to hunt. Later state actions in 2000 reversed the initiative and reinstated cougar hunting with dogs, based in part on publicity following cougar attacks on young children in 1996 and 1999 (both children survived.).
- In the last decade, **Colorado** and **Oregon** have banned or heavily regulated cougar hunting with hounds.
- A plan has recently been approved to reintroduce grizzlies into the adjacent Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return wilderness areas in

central **Idaho** and western **Montana**. The plan will proceed slowly and will incorporate a public advisory committee to try to respond to the concerns of ranchers, farmers, and some communities in the vicinity who are against the reintroduction.

- There also has been much discussion by media and environmental groups in recent years about the possibility of removing grizzly bears from the Endangered Species List. In the mid-1990s, a team representing several U.S. agencies developed a Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan aimed partly at delisting the bear, but after a federal lawsuit by environmentalists, the courts decided the plan was inadequate and had to be revised.
- The euthanasia of an orphaned bear cub found in a dumpster in **British Columbia** recently focused public attention on the province’s policies for handling orphaned cubs.
- Finally, when a person anywhere is attacked by a bear or cougar, it often gets widespread attention. Since attacks have been increasing over the past decade, so has news coverage.



When a person anywhere is attacked by a bear or cougar, it often gets widespread attention. Since attacks have been increasing over the past decade, so has news coverage.

# Did you know? Fun facts about bears

- Bears are closely related to dogs.
- Bears are very strong — they've been known to bend open car doors to get at food.
- There are at least 600,000 black bears in the United States. At least 25,000, plus perhaps 30 grizzly bears, live in Washington, which ranks among the top five states in bear population (not counting Alaska).
- Bear moms usually have two cubs every other year.
- Cubs live with mom for about two years before leaving to fend for themselves.
- Except for moms with cubs, bears are loners. Once it's grown, a young bear looks for its own territory to call home.
- A bear may live 20 years in the wild, 30 years in captivity.

Bears have a good sense of smell — even better than dogs.



## Bear appearance

- Black bears are more likely to be black in areas near the coast and more likely to be lighter colors in arid climates away from the sea.
- Grizzly bears also range from blonde to dark brown, or even black, but usually have hair with light-colored tips, giving them that “grizzled” look.
- Grizzlies have a more prominent hump at their shoulders.
- Black bears have “roman” noses and usually paler muzzles; grizzlies have “turned up” (concave) snouts.

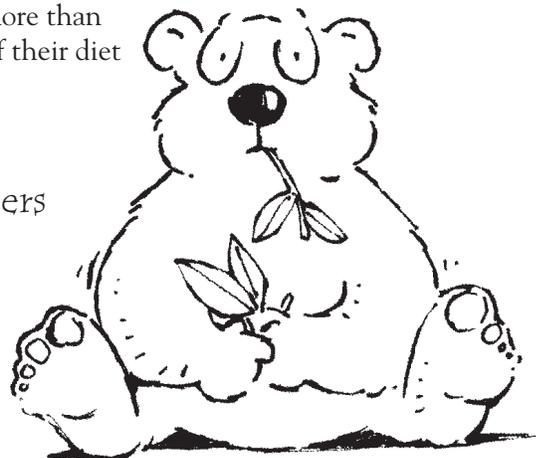
## Bear habits

- Bears are “crepuscular” — most active at dawn and dusk.
- Bears have a good sense of smell — even better than dogs.
- Bears hear better than people, too.
- Bears don't see particularly well, though. If they stand on their hind legs, it doesn't mean they're ready to attack — they're just trying to see or smell you better. They might even circle or approach you to get a better whiff before they figure out that you're a person — and will often flee.
- Usually, cubs will be within 100 yards of mom, but may be hidden in tall grass or brush.
- Although black bears are not considered “true” hibernators, they may hole up in their dens from 2 to 7 months a year, depending on their local climate. While dormant in this way, they can be awakened fairly easily, and may even move to a different den.
- Bears have been known to make their winter dens in the areas underneath the porches of empty houses, as well as the more usual hollow trees, brush piles, or rocky nooks.
- Bears can run just as well downhill as they can uphill.
- A black bear is just as likely to climb a tree to get away from you as you are from it.
- At least one study has shown that the popular “bear bells” may annoy the bear as well as letting it know that you're near. (Do you really want to annoy a bear?)

## Bear food

- Like most people, bears are omnivores, which means they'll eat both plants and meat; but more than three-quarters of their diet is usually plants.

More than three-quarters of a bear's diet is usually plants.



- Their favorite foods are berries or other fruit; nuts; ants, grubs and other insects; fish when they can catch them; and small mammals. In the early spring or anytime when they can't find much else, they'll also eat grasses, roots, young plant shoots, and trees' inner bark or sapwood.
- Bears really do like honey, honeycomb, and bee larvae when they can find it or steal it from beekeepers.
- They're also happy to steal pet food or bird food from your yard.
- Black bears also like to eat dandelion flowers!

### Grizzly bits

- Grizzly bears are usually called brown bears in Alaska and western Canada.
- In the United States, grizzly bears are protected as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.
- Around 1850, as many as 100,000 grizzlies lived in North America.
- Today about 20,000 grizzlies live in Canada, and about 15,000 in Alaska.
- Other than Alaska, just about the only grizzlies left in the United States are approximately 350 - 450 bears in and around Yellowstone National Park in

Grizzly bears have especially long claws that look scary — but they're used mostly for digging and ripping apart logs.



Wyoming and 550 to 650 grizzlies in an area that stretches from the North Cascades National Park in Washington through Glacier National Park in northern Montana.

- Unlike black bears, most grizzlies don't climb trees very well or very often.
- Grizzly bears have especially long claws that look scary — but they're used mostly for digging and ripping apart logs.



## Bears

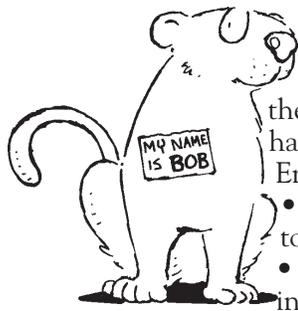
- Eats grubs, fish, berries, apples, and stinging nettle
- About 5 feet long, 2 to 3 feet tall at the shoulder (on all fours)



- 5 toes (dogs, cougars, and coyotes have 4)

- Black bears can be black, blond, brown, golden, reddish or cinnamon-colored
- Black bears weigh 60 - 75 pounds when young, 130- 225 pounds as adults. Grizzlies are larger -- usually between 300-600 pounds as adults.

# Fun facts about cougars



- There are more names for cougars than any other animal in the world. North Americans alone have 25 Native American and 40 English names for this animal.
- Cougars are more closely related to leopards than lions.
- There are about 20,000 cougars in the United States. Roughly one

quarter live in California with another 2,500 in Washington.

- Cougars once roamed coast to coast, but now are found only west of the Mississippi and in a small corner of Florida.
- Cougars are not endangered — except for the Florida Panthers, of which there are only 30 or 40 left in the world.
- Experts estimate that perhaps 80 percent of reported cougar sightings are actually deer, bobcats, dogs, or house cats!
- Cougars can hit top speeds around 40 miles per hour; leap 15 feet into the air (roof height); drop safely from 60 feet (several stories) high; and spring forward about 40 feet.

## Cougar appearance

- Kittens have black spots.
- Cougars are about the size of a larger dog such as a mastiff or Great Dane. That's smaller than jaguars but much bigger than bobcats.



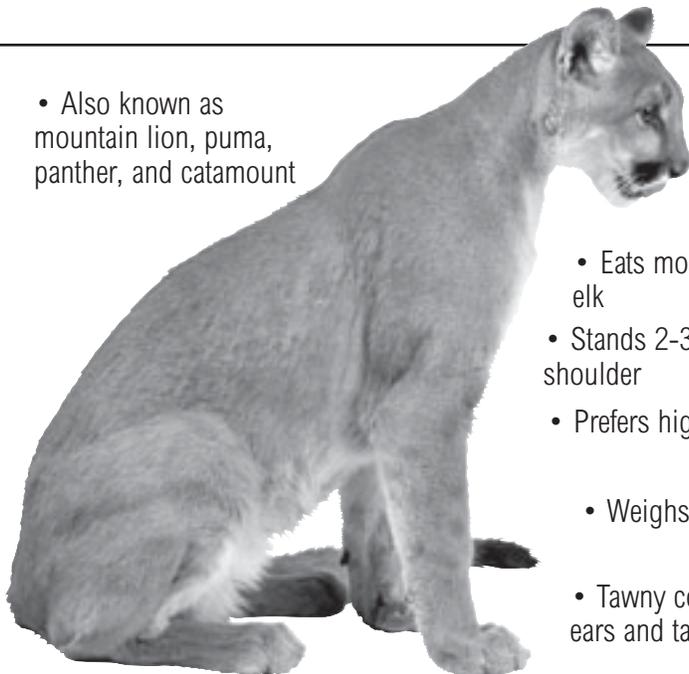
## Cougar habits

- Cougars are shy, solitary, and secretive, so you may live near one without ever seeing it.
- Cougars are crepuscular, which means they are most active at dawn and dusk.
- Cougars generally prefer high, rocky homes, but they adapt pretty well to other environments when they must.
- Cougar moms have from 1 to 6 kittens, with 2 or 3 most common. Usually only one survives more than a year.
- When young cougars are about 2 years old, they leave their mothers to find their own territories. These “teenagers” looking for new homes are the most likely to get into trouble.
- Cougar territories range from 20 to 100 square miles. Crowded territories foster conflicts with humans.
- Cougars live 8 to 12 years in the wild and up to 25 years in captivity.

## Cougar food

- Cougar are carnivores: they eat meat.
- Deer or elk are a cougar's favorite meal. They also like wild pig, mountain goats, moose, bighorn sheep, or coyotes. If necessary, they'll make do with smaller mammals such as porcupine, raccoon, or opossum, and they don't mind eating farm animals and pets.

- Also known as mountain lion, puma, panther, and catamount



## Cougar

- 5-8 feet long, with tail

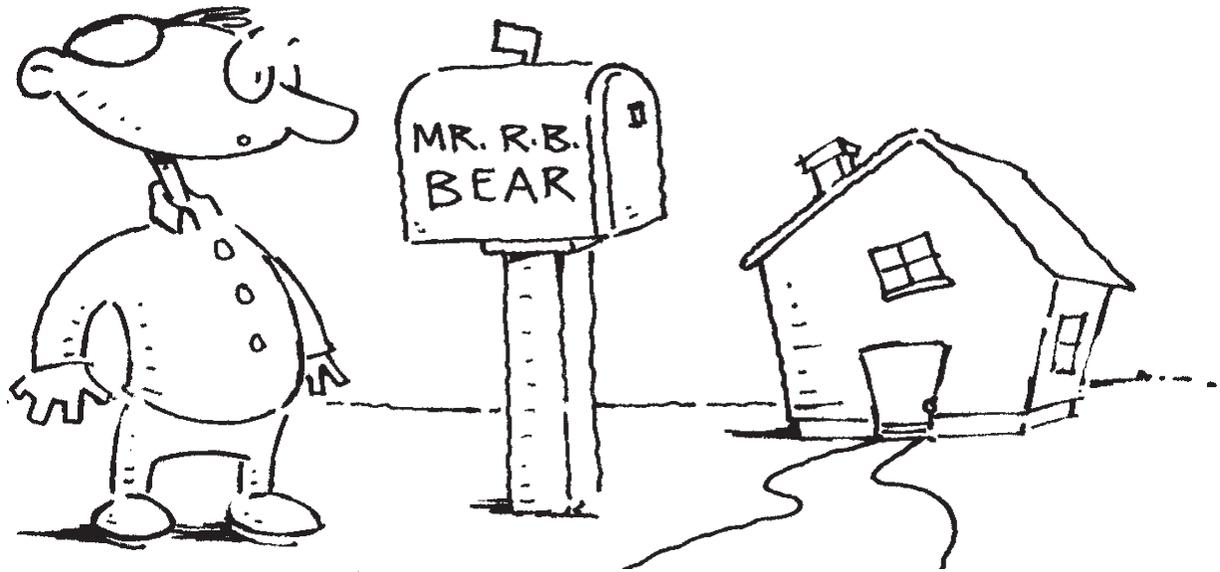
- Eats mostly deer and elk
- Stands 2-3 feet high at the shoulder
- Prefers high, rocky homes

- Weighs 65-200 pounds

- Tawny colored, reddish or grey with black-tipped ears and tail



- 4 toes  
no claws  
in tracks



## How to tell if large predators live near you

If a large predator begins visiting your neighborhood, it's important to recognize the signs early. Early actions to discourage the animal and keep it afraid of people will correct any problems before they get started. But visiting animals will get bolder as time goes by, so if you wait until you see the animal in daylight to decide you may have a problem, it's probably too late.

### Bears

Bears like to stay in forest or brushy areas where they forage (look for food) most of the time. Neighborhoods near forests, though, sometimes have enough shrubbery and landscaping for a bear to feel safe coming to visit. And they do like to travel where it's easy to walk, such as on game trails, hiking trails, or even roadsides.

If you see these signs, you might have a bear dropping by:

- Raided garbage cans (though dogs or raccoons might also be guilty).
- A sudden disappearance of birdseed in a feeder.
- Trees or fence posts with worn patches and bear hairs stuck where the bear rubbed.
- Trees with bark shredded or ripped off in early spring.
- Rotting logs, stumps, or trees ripped apart (to get at insects).
- Rocks overturned (in search of insects beneath).
- Bear tracks in mud, dirt, or snow.
- Earth — or your garden — dug up (for tasty plant roots).

- Berries scattered on the ground beneath bushes.
- Partly buried bodies or parts of dead animals.
- Bear scat (poop), which you might otherwise think came from a human or a small horse. The bear's is more likely to contain visible seeds, insect parts, hair, or plastic or aluminum bits from garbage.

### Cougars

Cougars are secretive. They like to stay hidden or lie in wait on rocky outcroppings, tree branches, or other high spots. While they generally prefer high, rocky homes in forests or deserts, they adapt pretty well to other environments. Since one cougar may consider from 25 to 200 square miles "home," cougar territory can encompass many environments, including human neighborhoods.

Cougars generally won't venture far into a neighborhood without plenty of bushes, shrubs, and trees to hide in.

You're not likely to know a cougar is visiting. Even actual sightings often turn out to be some other animal. But you might notice:

- Cougar tracks in mud, dirt, or snow.
- Several neighborhood pets missing.
- Animal carcasses covered with dirt or leaves.
- The distant yowls of courting cougars.

If you live anywhere west of the Mississippi with a substantial deer population, odds are you have a (perhaps distant) mountain lion neighbor, too.

# How to recognize animal tracks in your neighborhood

## Bear

- 5 toes (dogs, coyotes, wolves have 4)
  - Claws show
  - 4-5 inches wide
  - 4 inches long (front foot)
  - 7-8 inches long (rear foot)
- Grizzly toes are more straight across, rather than arched, and closer together



## Cougar

- 4 toes
- No claw marks (unlike most dog tracks)
- About 3 inches square (larger than housecats)
- Front feet appear larger

## Other animal tracks

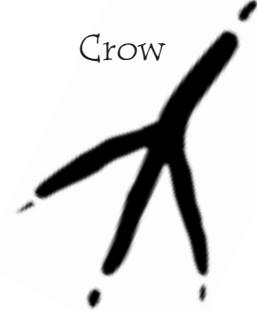
Raccoon



Coyote



Crow



Opossum



Elk



Porcupine



Armadillo



Note: these are *not* to scale — unless the world's biggest crow and smallest elk provided these prints.

# How to discourage bears and cougars from coming too close

If you think a bear or cougar may be visiting, notify your local wildlife authority. In addition to the important tips in *Bears Barge In*, discourage bear and cougar visitors by doing these things:

- Think carefully about your landscaping. Plant and trim shrubs and plants well away from the house, children's play areas, and walking areas.
- Light walkways and children's play areas, and keep them well-lit from dusk through dawn.
- If you have livestock, enclose them at night in a building with a roof and keep one or more guard dogs that will bark to alert you to prowling wildlife.
- Keep all food scraps out of the garbage and compost pile. Instead, invest in a garbage disposal or burn them. Keep your compost strictly yard clippings.
- If you have curbside garbage pickup, put the can out an hour or two before the truck comes, not the night before.
- If you have fruit trees, don't let fallen fruit lie to attract bears as it rots.
- Protect fruit trees and beehives with electric fencing if bears may live nearby.
- Don't feed any wildlife. Feeding deer or raccoons in your yard is like setting up a cougar-feeding station at the same time.
- Don't allow children to be outside alone at dusk and dawn. That includes getting the newspaper or going to the bus stop.
- If you have reason to believe a cougar might be about, don't allow children to play alone outside, period.

## When you're in their neighborhoods

- Avoid hiking at dusk and dawn, when predators are hunting.
- Don't jog or hike alone; nearly all cougar attacks are on lone people. For the same reason, don't allow children on hikes to run ahead of the group or straggle behind.
- Make noise by talking, shouting, or singing as you go through the woods so animals can hear your approach (and get away).
- Leave pets at home.
- Avoid wearing perfumes or scented cosmetics and hair products.
- Avoid lunch foods, such as tuna, with strong odors.
- Keep an eye out for signs a bear or cougar may be near (just as you might at home).
- Be especially alert for bears near clumps of wild berry bushes or other food sources.
- Don't investigate animal carcasses or dead-animal smells; the carcass might belong to a cougar or bear who will protect it.
- Avoid deer and elk trails, where a cougar might be lying in wait for a meal.
- If you camp overnight, do *not* keep food in your tent. Learn exactly how and where to hang your food properly to avoid a bear conflict.
- If you do see an animal, observe from a distance, but don't try to approach for photos or any other reason.
- *Never* approach or pet bear cubs or lion kittens. You may not see her, but Mama is nearby and *very* protective.

# What to do if you see...

## ...a bear

Experts recommend different actions depending on whether you are confronted by a black bear or a grizzly. But in excitement, most of us couldn't 1) correctly identify the bear or 2) remember which actions went with which bear. Since the odds *heavily* favor any bear you meet being a black bear, this information is for black bears. If you live in Alaska or Canada, though, you're a bit more likely to meet a grizzly, so you'd better learn to tell the difference and what to do for grizzly sightings. (Check with your local wildlife authorities for help.)

- Don't run.
- Speak in a loud voice, bang rocks, clap, or yell.
- Stay near any other people with you.
- Adults should pick up children if possible.
- Back away slowly. Leave the animal an obvious escape route.
- Avoid direct eye contact. (The opposite of what you should do with a cougar.)
- Unless you are *sure* it's a grizzly, don't climb a tree — black bears are excellent climbers.
- Don't shoot or throw things. Hurt or angry bears are more likely to fight instead of leaving.
- If the bear runs at you (charging), try to stand your ground. Charging is usually a bluff and may be repeated before the bear goes away.
- "Playing dead" is a last resort, but if you actually are attacked, rather than just receiving a bluff charge, playing dead can cause the bear to lose interest.

## ... a cougar

• **Don't run.** Cougars have a natural instinct to chase. Stand your ground.

- Don't turn your back.
- Look the animal in the eye. (The opposite of what you should do for a bear. To help you remember, think how most house cats dislike being stared at.)
- Try to look larger (by raising your arms, waving a coat, or stepping onto a stump).
- Stay near other people with you.
- Pick up children — try to do it without bending over too far or crouching. Hold the children or put them on your shoulders to look bigger.
- Speak in a loud, firm voice (if you can!) Don't squeak.
- Don't sit, crouch, or kneel — it makes you look like four-legged prey.
- Don't climb a tree. Cougars are excellent climbers.
- Throwing rocks or sticks may discourage the cougar.
- A cougar that's thinking about attacking will look a lot like a housecat about to pounce — crouched, ears flattened, tail quivering.
- If that happens, make loud noises, grab a big stick or anything else handy, stay standing, and get ready to fight. Cougars are often fought off successfully.

## ... other large wildlife

Stand still and enjoy it while you can! Most other large — and small — wildlife will slip away at the first opportunity. Attacks on people by coyotes and wolves are almost unheard of. Elk and moose have been known to charge when threatened, but elk will simply move away unless you attempt to get too close. Moose are a bit more unpredictable; backing away slowly is a good idea.

# Why it's a bad idea to feed wildlife or give it other incentives to get too close

Whether you're talking about bears and cougars or smaller creatures like raccoons, when animals become too comfortable around humans, conflicts increase. The people — or their livestock, property, or pets — can be in danger. Feeding animals such as deer or raccoons in your yard can be like setting up a cougar-feeding station at the same time. And when large predators lose their fear of people and draw too close, human injuries and deaths can happen.

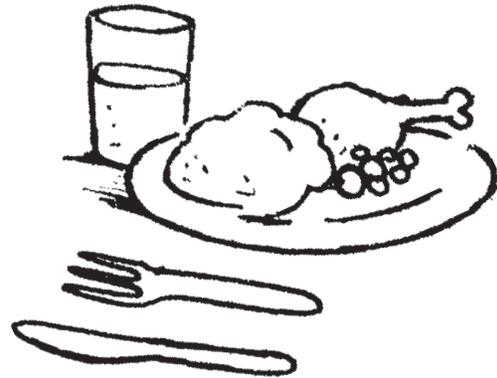
Sometimes the conflicts are the result of foolish behavior by the people — such as trying to feed, pet, tease, or take close-up photos of wild animals in a park setting. Other times the animal has decided people aren't so scary, but they often have food, so it might as well see if you have any it can take. Finally, some conflicts are simply the result of a large animal correctly considering us a threat or sizing us up for dinner. (And we might not like it, but for a few animals, people make a very respectable dinner. We are, after all, part of nature.)

Either way, with large animals it's almost always the animal that loses because "problem" animals — even those that merely appear too often or act too unafraid — are frequently killed in the interest of preventing a human loss.

Even with smaller wildlife such as squirrels, getting too close is playing with fire. Small mammals can have dangerous teeth and claws when startled or cornered.

From an animal welfare viewpoint, too much human contact increases the chances that smaller wildlife will be killed by dogs, cats, or cars. It also tends to reduce the animals' ability to find their own food, so they starve later.

About the only exception is feeding birds. The Audubon Society recommends ongoing bird feeding in some areas, especially in cities, where natural food sources may no longer exist and continuous feeding can help some species survive. You may need to decide whether feeding the birds will work for your family depending on how likely you might be to



attract bears at the same time. If you do feed the birds, you can bring the feeders inside at night and clean up spilled feed regularly to help avoid attracting a bear.

## Why relocation doesn't always work

It seems like a good idea: simply "move" a bear or cougar that's causing problems. While relocation can be successful for smaller animals, and even larger ones encountering people for the first time, biologists generally agree that relocation rarely works with large predators that have become habituated to people. In that case, the relocated animals either:

- Find their way home or to a new human town and remain a problem.
- Are killed by large predators already living in the new area.
- Die soon because they can't adjust to a different habitat.

In addition, most experts believe that a bear or cougar that has attacked a human, livestock, or pets will probably do so again. So usually a predator that can't get along with human neighbors must be killed. Finally, a situation that attracts one bear or cougar is likely to attract another one sooner or later. The cause, not the symptom, needs to be addressed.

These are strong arguments for respecting wild creatures, appreciating them from a distance, and taking responsibility for avoiding conflicts, without trying to feed, touch, or "tame" them.

# Keep it in perspective!

When it comes to large wild animals, be smart, but don't be unduly scared. Neighborhood dogs, cars, and bees are *far* more dangerous — and you're not afraid of those, are you? Being attacked by a bear or cougar is kind of like being struck by lightning — it does happen, and attacks have increased as we crowd closer to the animals, but it's still very rare. (Your odds of winning a lottery are better.)

About a dozen people die from dog attacks each year. Bears and cougars combined are not responsible for more than a few deaths a year. And while dogs send more than 334,000 people to the emergency room each year, not more than a handful of people are injured by bears or cougars. In fact, more people are attacked and injured each year by goats. (That

doesn't mean we should get rid of dogs or goats! — it just means that life has hazards. We should act accordingly, and not panic unreasonably.)

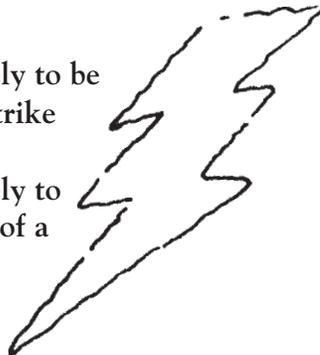
Another way to look at it: One large study of black bear behavior in a National Park indicated that people behaved aggressively toward bears — such as by throwing rocks — more than 10 times as often as the bears behaved aggressively toward the people.

So play it safe, but remember: We all can be good neighbors if we stay alert, recognize when a bear or cougar may be nearby, and leave a little space for the animals, too.

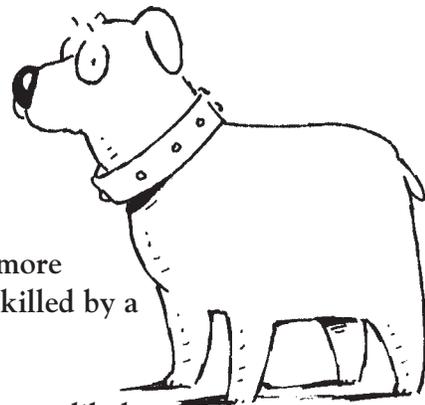
## What's more dangerous?

Cougars are more likely to attack a person than a black bear. Even so, here are a few of the ways a human in North America is statistically more likely to be killed, based on actual fatality rates from cougar attacks and some other outdoor hazards. You are:

- 300 times more likely to be killed because your car hits a deer
- 250 times more likely to be killed by a lightning strike
- 100 times more likely to be killed as the result of a bee sting



- 30 times more likely to be killed by a dog



- 30 times more likely to be killed by a rattlesnake

- 10 times more likely to be killed by a black widow spider

If you live in certain states, or spend a lot of time hiking or camping in the backcountry, you are more likely to see bears or cougars, and thus more likely to have a problem with them. Even so, neither is very likely. And according to surveys of national park visitors, campers, and hikers, most people believe the risk is worth the enjoyment they receive.

# Ideas for kids' projects related to suburban wildlife

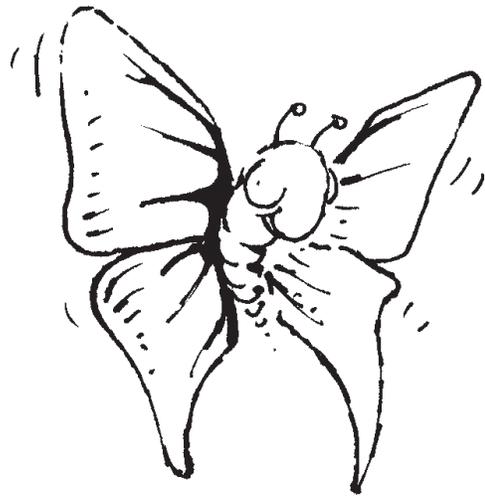
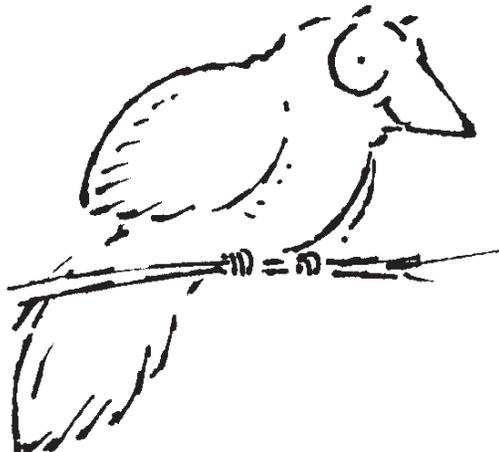
## Track casts

Find an animal track outside in dirt or mud (maybe even persuade your dog or cat to create one) and fill the track with plaster of paris to make a casting.



## People tracks

Fill a shallow dish with tempera or "poster" paint that's been diluted with water. Dip a bare foot into it, then step on butcher paper, construction paper, or newspaper to make your own tracks. You could also step into the dry bathtub. Or better yet, go outside and step on the sidewalk or driveway. Try walking on tip-toe, too. Compare the shape of your tracks with the animal tracks. Which animal track is most like yours? What animals have the same number of toes? (Don't forget to wash your feet before walking in the house!)

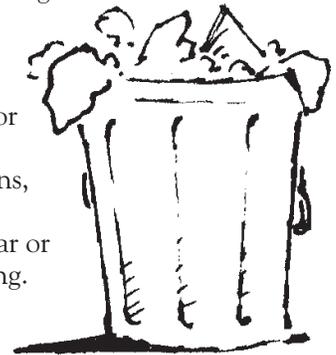


## Backyard wildlife

Attract birds, butterflies, and bats to your backyard (without attracting bears) by planting the right plants and providing good places for critter homes. To show you how, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will send you a Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary packet for just \$5 postage. Mail to WDFW, 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek WA 98012.

## Good yard/bad yard

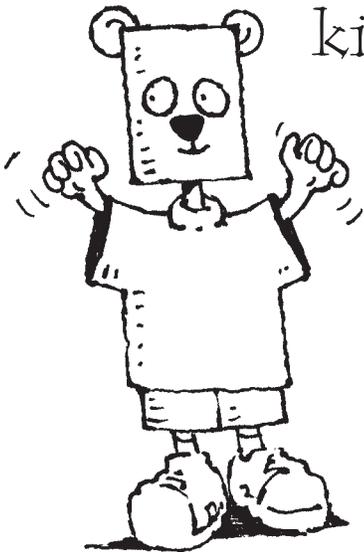
Drawing pictures or cutting and gluing photos from magazines, create a picture of a yard that is likely to attract a bear or cougar. (Think of overflowing garbage cans, for instance.) Create a second image that a bear or cougar would find boring. Which looks most like your yard?



## Backyard bird surveys

You can birdwatch and help scientists, too! Many states enlist volunteers to track bird species and distribution over the winter. Contact your state department of wildlife to see how you can help.

## kids' projects continued

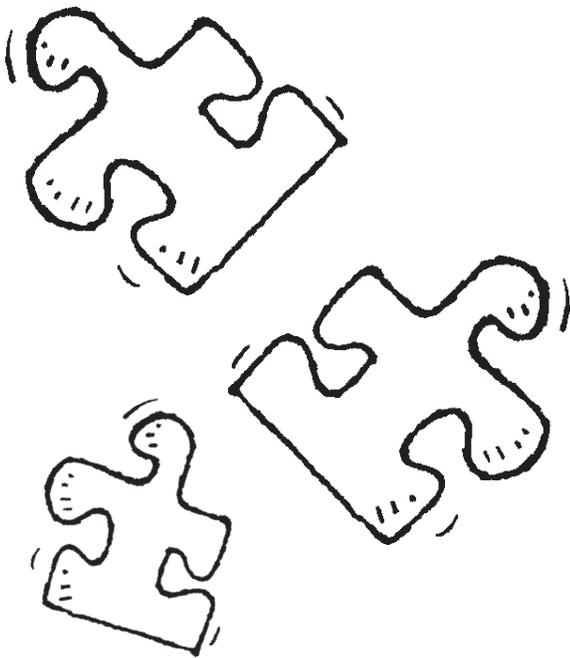


### Creature encounter skit

Put on a skit with two or three family members or friends. While one of you pretends to be a bear or cougar, the others can make believe you're playing outdoors. Surprise each other. How should the people behave to make the "bear" go away peacefully? How can you discourage an attack by the "cougar"?

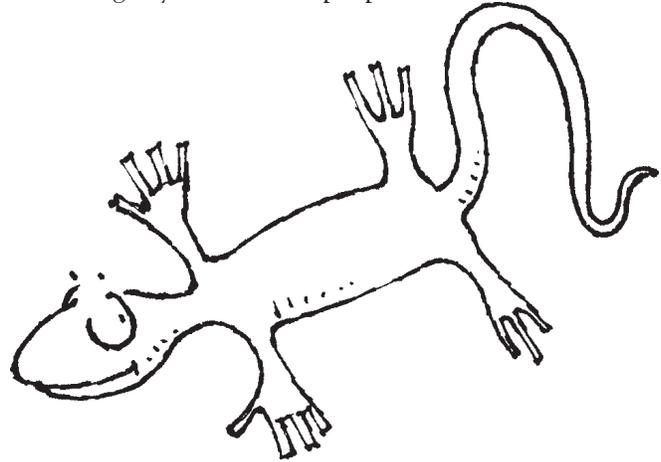
### Predator puzzles

Go to [www.puzzle.com](http://www.puzzle.com), where you can make up crossword and word-search puzzles for the animal vocabulary term on the last page of this guide. Then work the puzzles and share them with friends.



### Creature catching

Write a list of all the animals, wild and tame, you've ever seen in your local area, not counting a zoo, pet store, or aquarium. Add animals (such as coyotes) you may have heard but not seen, or found other evidence of (such as tracks, droppings, eggshells, or hair). Don't forget birds, lizards, frogs, even insects. How long is your list? Are people on it?



### Raccoon real estate

Pretend to be a raccoon. Go into your yard and give yourself the following points for finding each of the items that make a good place for raccoons to live:

- 5: A dry home safe from dogs
- 1: A water source
- 3: Polliwogs or minnows
- 5: Frogs (2 if heard, not seen)
- 4: Grasshoppers
- 5: Bird's nest (for eggs)
- 2: Mouse or gopher hole
- 2: Earthworms
- 4: Fruit or berries
- 1: Manmade food

Deduct points for dangers:

- 3: Hawk
- 5: Dog or coyote, or tracks
- 5: People

Is your yard good for raccoons? Do you want it to be?



# Sites on the World Wide Web

## [www.wa.gov/wdfw](http://www.wa.gov/wdfw)

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife — check out WildWatchCam to see creatures live on candid camera!

## [www.wilderness.ws](http://www.wilderness.ws)

Bear Safe, neat educational stuff for reducing conflicts between bears and people

## [www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca](http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca)

Click Hinterland Who's Who on this Canadian Wildlife Service site for facts about many species

## [www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch.default](http://www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch.default)

Loads of beastie bits from the U.S. Forest Service's NatureWatch

## [www.pbs.org/kids](http://www.pbs.org/kids)

## [www.pbs.org/kratts](http://www.pbs.org/kratts)

## [www.pbs.org/zoboo](http://www.pbs.org/zoboo)

Animal Helpers, animal games, and other fun stuff from the Public Broadcasting System

## [www.nwf.org/kids](http://www.nwf.org/kids)

Ranger Rick's Kid Zone at the National Wildlife Federation

## [www.georgetown.edu/cball/animals/animals.html](http://www.georgetown.edu/cball/animals/animals.html)

Real animal sounds and what we call them in different languages

## [www.epa.gov/kids](http://www.epa.gov/kids)

Games about our environment from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## [www.kidsplanet.org](http://www.kidsplanet.org)

## [www.worldwildlife.org/fun/kids.cfm](http://www.worldwildlife.org/fun/kids.cfm)

Endangered animals around the world

# Glossary of terms

**Blind or bluff charges** — running toward something as if to attack, then stopping abruptly before making contact

**Carnivore** — a meat eater

**Crepuscular** — active at dawn or dusk

**Dormant** — in a long period of rest, sleep, or reduced activity

**Endangered species** — An animal (or plant or other living creature) whose numbers have gotten so small (because of loss of habitat, over-hunting, or too many predators), that experts believe they might die out completely (like dinosaurs).

**Forage** — searching for food, or the food itself

**Habitat** — the type of environment where a creature normally lives and can find the shelter and food the animal needs

**Habituation** — becoming familiar with, accustomed to, and not afraid of something, in this case people

**Hibernation** — becoming dormant to pass the winter

**Home range** — the living area or territory of an animal, especially one like the cougar that may travel extensively looking for prey

**Nocturnal** — active at night

**Omnivore** — eats “everything” (both meat and plants)

**Prey** — other animals that may be food for a larger animal

**Scat** — dung, droppings, feces

**Territory** — the area that a single animal (or pack) lives in, forages or hunts in, and protects as its own

# Other resources

## Books

*Bear Attacks: Their Causes & Avoidance*, Stephen Herrero, Nick Lyons Books (Winchester Press) New York, 1985. Herrero is an acknowledged authority on black bear and grizzly bear encounters with humans.

*Cougar!* Harold P. Danz, Swallow Press, 1999

*Shadow Cat: Encountering the American Mountain Lion*, Susan Ewing & Elizabeth Grossman, Sasquatch Books, 1999

*Wild Neighbors: The Humane Approach to Living with Wildlife*, The Humane Society of the United States, Fulcrum Publishing, Golden Colorado, 1997

*Sharing Nature with Children*, Joseph Cornell, Dawn Publications, Nevada City, CA, 1979

## Agencies & Associations

Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
600 Capitol Way N.  
Olympia WA 98501-1091  
(360) 902-2515  
[www.wa.gov/wdfw](http://www.wa.gov/wdfw)

California Dept. of Fish & Game  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 653-7664  
[www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov)

*Bear/Human Conflicts Committee*  
Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks  
P.O. Box 9374 Stn Prov. Gov.  
Victoria, British Columbia  
V8W 9M4 Canada  
(250) 387-9793  
[www.elp.gov.bc.ca/wld](http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/wld)

*U.S. Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee*  
[www.fs.fed.us/r/wildlife/igbc](http://www.fs.fed.us/r/wildlife/igbc)  
*Center for Wildlife Information*  
P.O. Box 8289  
Missoula, MT 59807  
(406) 523-7750  
[www.marsweb.cocm/~rattlesnake/](http://www.marsweb.cocm/~rattlesnake/)

Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
2501 SW First Ave.  
Portland OR 97207  
503-872-5260  
[www.dfw.state.or.us](http://www.dfw.state.or.us)

*World Society for the Protection of Animals*  
P.O. Box 190  
29 Perkins Street  
Boston MA 02130  
800-542-BEAR (2327)

*The Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)*  
P.O. Box 1037  
Lynwood WA 98046  
[www.paws.org](http://www.paws.org)

Sources for this document (in addition to the previous resources)

1. *Outdoor California* magazine, Special Mountain Lion Issue, March 1996
2. *National Parks* magazine, Nov/Dec 1998
3. *National Wildlife* magazine, February/March 2000
4. The Washington state legislative web site at <http://access.wa.gov>
5. Various internet web sites, including Mountain Lion Attacks on People in the U.S. and Canada at [http://tchester.org/sgm/lists/lion\\_attacks.html](http://tchester.org/sgm/lists/lion_attacks.html)
6. Professor Paul Beier, wildlife ecologist at Northern Arizona State University, Flagstaff
7. The American Veterinary Medical Association

## Suggestions?

This guide is regularly updated. If you have suggestions or corrections, please contact Dream Factory Books at the address below and help us improve. Thanks!

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