

A mountain lion is lying on a rocky outcrop, looking towards the camera. The background shows a mountain landscape with a blue sky and some trees.

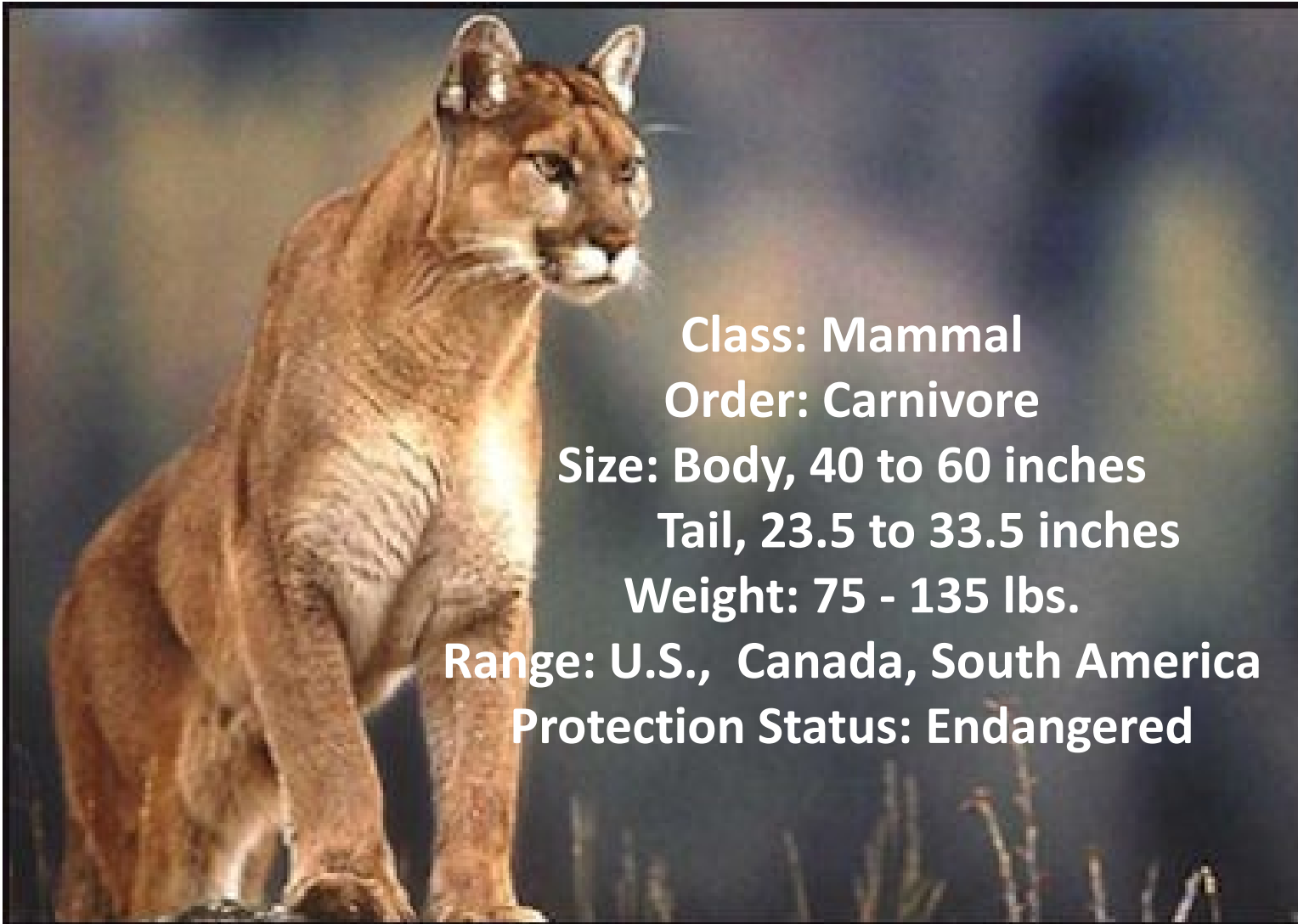
Hiking & Camping Safely in Mountain Lion Country

LION SMART

Aleta Walther, Park Aide

Mount San Jacinto State Park

Mountain Lion: **AKA: Cougar, Puma, Panther, Ghost Cat**



Class: Mammal

Order: Carnivore

Size: Body, 40 to 60 inches

Tail, 23.5 to 33.5 inches

Weight: 75 - 135 lbs.

Range: U.S., Canada, South America

Protection Status: Endangered

Mountain Lions

Play a Pivotal & Critical Role in Nature

- A top predator: helps maintain biodiversity and ecosystems.
- An umbrella species: conserving its habitat, ensures conservation of other species.
- Helps control deer, big horn sheep by reducing overgrazing.
- May kill coyotes and bobcats, thereby influencing their populations and contributing to a more balanced ecosystem.



Mountain Lion Attacks By the #s

• Mountain Lion Foundation



Photo, Courtesy of Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game

Year	U.S.A. and Canada		California	
	# of Attacks	# of Deaths	# of Attacks	# of Deaths
1991	4	2	0	0
1992	4	1	1	0
1993	3	0	2	0
1994	9	2	3	2
1995	3	0	1	0
1996	6	1	0	0
1997	7	1	0	0
1998	9	0	0	0
1999	6	1	0	0
2000	8	0	0	0
2001	7	1	0	0
2002	5	0	0	0
2003	2	1	0	0
total	73	10	7	2
Average per year	5.6	0.8	0.5	0.2

How to Avoid or Survive an Encounter With a Mountain Lion

1. Don't plan outdoor activities between dusk to dawn
2. Don't hike, walk or camp alone
3. Don't walk, camp near dense growth, rock outcroppings
4. Don't act afraid of a lion, don't freeze or panic
5. Don't [try to soothe it verbally](#), yell, but don't scream
6. Never turn your back on a lion
7. Don't bend over, crouch, or kneel
8. **NEVER, NEVER RUN OR PLAY DEAD**



Photo, Courtesy of Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game

How to Avoid or Survive an Encounter With a Mountain Lion

1. Do walk, hike, camp in groups
2. Do camp in open areas, meadows
3. Do make noise when in mountain lion territory
4. Do give the lion an escape route
5. Do stand your ground, back away slowly, keep eye contact
6. Do bunch together, keep children close
7. Do place small children on your shoulders, without bending
8. Do raise arms, bike, or jacket, above your head to look larger
9. Do throw items, yell, make noise: low pitch, growl, snarl

If Attacked, Fight Back

1. Use anything as a weapon if the lion displays aggression, but do not turn your back, crouch, kneel, or bend over to get one.
2. Use fists, sticks, rocks, tools, a pocket knife, a bicycle, whatever you can hit with, throw, and/or use as a shield.
3. Target an eye with your thumbs, fingers, or a weapon.
4. Carry pepper spray, but learn how to use it first.
5. Often the lion will give up.



the cat was still alive here and trying to fight back





the mule stomped the cat then pinned it to the ground and bit the heck out of the dead cat several more times.

Anne Hjelle, Mountain Biker, 2004 Cougar Attack, May 2008



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ANNE HJELLE

Several days after initial surgery with husband James Poindexter
Published in The LA Times 05/2008



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARC MARTIN

Anne Hjelle in 2008 - Published in The LA Times 05/2008

So what are you going to do if you encounter a Mountain Lion?



Photo, Courtesy of Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game

MOUNTAIN LION HABITAT



Mountain lions are a natural part of this region's environment. Lions typically live alone and hunt between dusk and dawn.

Adult lions are generally wary of people and try to avoid contact. In the rare case of an encounter with a mountain lion, use caution.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A MOUNTAIN LION:



FACE LION. BACK AWAY SLOWLY.



BE LARGE. SHOUT.



KEEP CHILDREN CLOSE.

PICK UP CHILDREN WITHOUT BENDING.



Report all mountain lion sightings to a park ranger or park staff member.



If attacked, call 911 immediately.

Remember



Mountain lions are an essential player in Mt. San Jacinto State Park's ecosystems.



Without mountain lions, park's ecosystems could collapse.

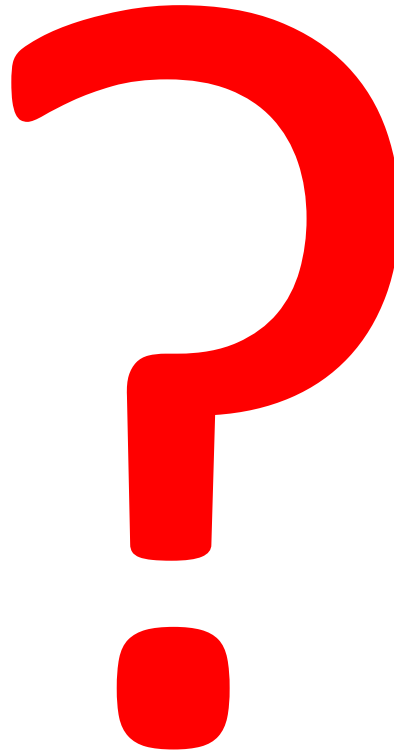


Discourage mountain lion attacks by knowing how to travel and camp safely in mountain lion country.



**Photo, Courtesy of
Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game**

THE END



Resources

<http://www.bear-tracker.com/cougar.html>

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/keepmewild/lion.html>

<http://www.sandiegozoo.org/animalbytes/t-puma.html>

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/keepmewild/docs/lionbrochure.pdf>

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/mountain-lion/>

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