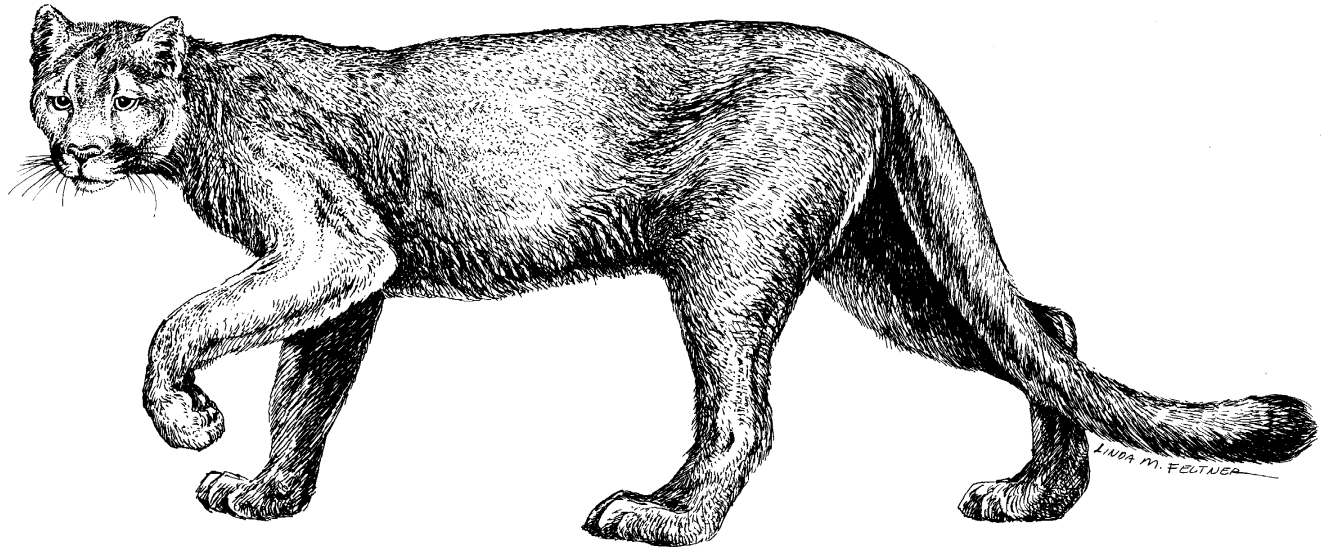


Olympic



Olympic National Park

Cougars



You Are in Cougar Country!

Cougars are large, seldom seen inhabitants of the Olympic wilderness. Like any wild animal, they can be dangerous. Attacks on humans are rare, but can occur. To most visitors, glimpsing a cougar in the wild is thrilling. Though few people will ever see a cougar, if you do see one, the following suggestions can increase your chances of a safe encounter.

Preventing An Encounter

- Don't hike or jog alone
- Keep children within sight & close to you
- Avoid dead animals
- Keep a clean camp
- Leave pets at home
- Be alert to your surroundings
- Use a walking stick

If You Meet a Cougar

- Don't run, it may trigger a cougar's attack instinct
- Stand and face it
- Pick up children
- Appear large, wave arms or jacket over your head
- Do not approach, back away slowly
- Keep eye contact

If Cougar is Aggressive

- Don't turn your back or take your eyes off it
- Remain standing
- Throw things
- Shout loudly
- Fight back aggressively

Please report all cougar sightings to the nearest ranger station or park headquarters, 600 East Park Ave., Port Angeles, WA 98362, (360) 565-3000, or dial 911 in an emergency.



Identifying a Cougar

The cougar, also called mountain lion, puma, or panther, once ranged across North America and from Canada to the tip of South America. Its scientific name, *Felis concolor*, means “cat of one color,” which is usually tawny gray or reddish-brown with black markings on the face, ears and tip of the tail. Young kittens have black spots. Adult males can be over eight feet long (including nearly three feet of tail!) and can weigh over 150 pounds; females weigh about 90 to 110 pounds. An adult cougar’s front paw track is about 3½ inches across, with rear paw tracks slightly smaller.



Life-sized cougar front paw track

Natural History

Cougars usually hunt at night for their primary prey—deer or elk. They typically cover the carcass with leaves or branches and may return to feed for several days. Though they are most active at dusk and dawn, they can be seen any time of day. Cougars are solitary except during mating. Cubs and mothers can stay together for two years. In the wild their life span is about 12 years.

Reporting Sightings

If you see a cougar, please report your observations to the nearest ranger station, park headquarters (600 E. Park Ave., Port Angeles, WA 98362, 360-565-3000), or call 911 if it’s an emergency. A description of the animal, the location, date and time of day, the cat’s behavior and distance, duration of the encounter, and your name and telephone number can help park managers protect visitors and cougars.

