



Mountain Lions

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TPWD keeps track of mountain lion reports and sightings. To date, Hays County has NO confirmed mountain lion sightings in TPWD records.

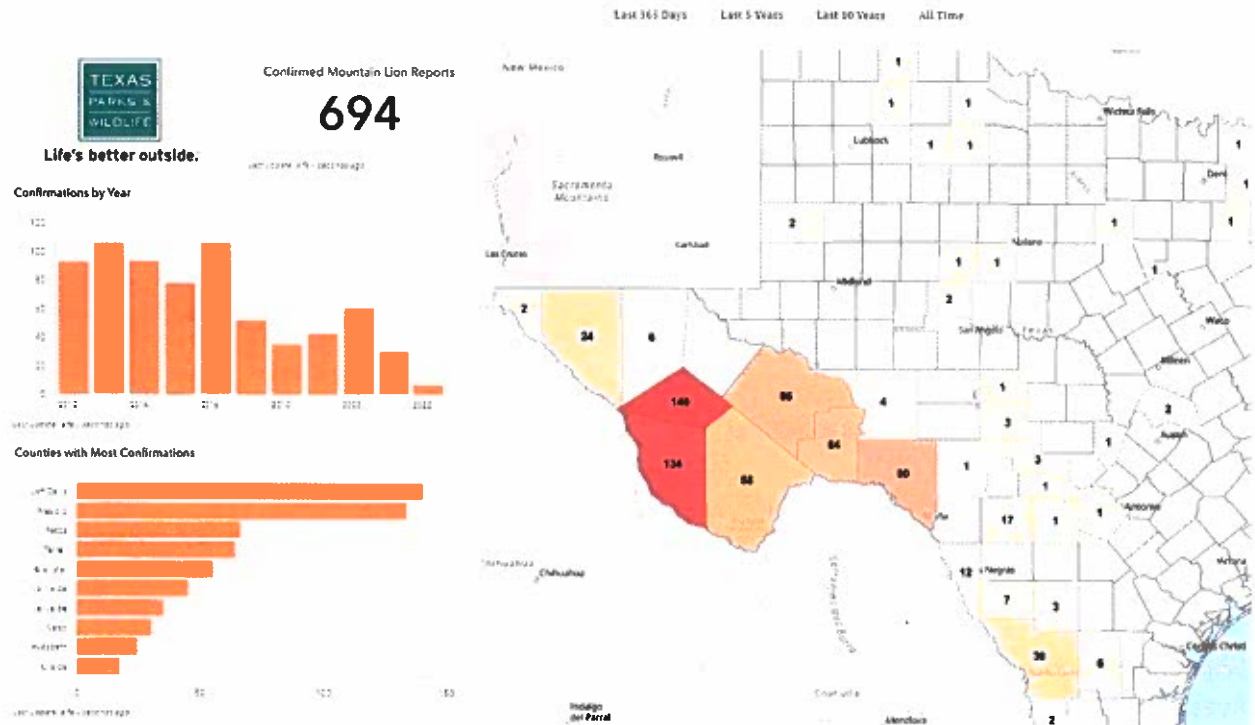


Figure 1. Map of Confirmed Mountain Lion Reports over the last 10 years.

TWPD receives occasional reports about possible sightings. However, to date, none of these reports have been confirmed to be a mountain lion. They are confirmed as another animal, most commonly, house cats, bobcats, or coyotes, or the reports are considered inconclusive.

Mountain lions are the largest native cat in Texas. The total length of a mountain lion can be 6.5+ feet. Male mountain lions can weigh between 100 - 150 lbs. and females weigh between 45 - 90 lbs. Their color is a light, tawny brown, which can appear grey or almost black, depending on the light conditions.

Mountain lions are very rarely active during the day. They are crepuscular (active during early mornings and late evenings) as well as nocturnal (at night). Additionally, adult mountain lions are strictly solitary animals. Adults are only together during a 3-to-5-day period during breeding which occurs late winter-spring. Male home ranges vary from 80 - 200 square miles. While female home ranges are normally between 20 - 100 square miles. It would be unlikely to have a female and cubs in this area as the known breeding populations in Texas occur in the western and southern parts of the state.

TPWD encourages anyone who believes they have sighted a mountain lion to contact your local wildlife biologist with either detailed information on what they saw (inc. pictures). If anyone spots tracks, try to take pictures of the tracks with a common object laid next to it to show size. Good objects include rulers, pens, dollar bills, etc.

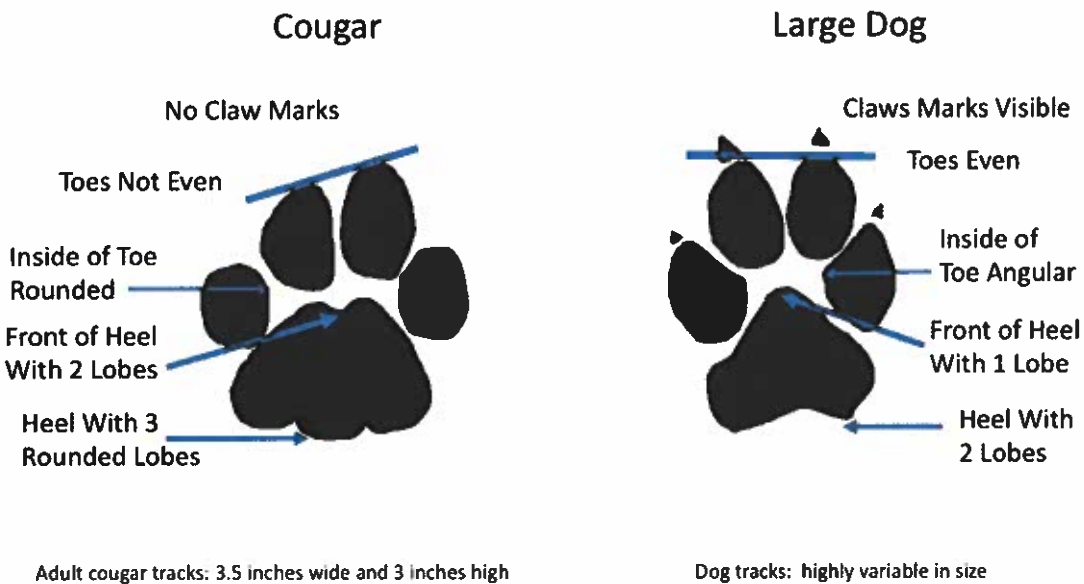


Figure 2 A comparison between dog and cat tracks. To the untrained eye, dog tracks are commonly misidentified as mountain lion tracks. However, there are fundamental differences between cat and dog tracks as shown in this figure.

Wild animal (mountain lion, coyote, bobcat, etc.) attacks on humans or pets are extremely rare.

Regardless, here are some easy things you can do to minimize risk to pets and children in wild areas.

- Install outdoor lighting in areas where you walk after dark.
- Remove any vegetation a predator could hid in near children or pet play areas.
- **DO NOT FEED WILDLIFE**, including deer. Remember, predators follow prey.
- Keep pets under control, if pets are left outside overnight, confine them to kennels with tops.
- Store all garbage securely.
- Hike with others, carry pepper spray and a walking stick. Avoid early morning and late evening.
- **DO NOT APPROACH** a mountain lion to get a better picture.

IF you do encounter a mountain lion:

- Pick up small children to prevent them from running and triggering a rush or attack
- Stay calm, talk calmly, and slowly back away, keep eye contact with the cat. **DO NOT RUN OR TURN YOUR BACK.**
- Do what you can to appear larger by raising your arms or waving a stick.
- If the lion is aggressive throw rocks or sticks and speak firmly and loudly.
- If attacked, fight back. Even children have successfully driven off a mountain lion by fighting back.

Urban Coyotes

- The **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department** provides information and advice on urban wildlife issues but does not implement nuisance wildlife control.
- **Texas Wildlife Services**, in partnership with local governments, provides nuisance coyote control services in some urban areas. Call the regional Texas Wildlife Services office in College Station at (979) 599-5070.
- Urban and suburban coyotes, like urban deer, are symptoms of a broader issue. People continue to expand subdivisions and other human development into what used to be rural lands. This is increasing the potential for encounters and conflicts between people and wildlife.
- Trapping and similar nuisance control actions cannot eliminate urban coyote concerns.
- The real solution and the greater need facing Texans right now is education on urban wildlife. We need to inform and empower people to take steps to coexist with coyotes and other urban wildlife.
- There are some commonsense precautions people can take to manage coyotes:
 - Do not feed coyotes! Keep pet food and water inside. Keep garbage securely stored, especially if it must be put on the curb for collection; use tight-locking or bungee-cord-wrapped trashcans that are not easily opened.
 - Keep compost piles securely covered; correct composting never includes animal matter like bones or fat, which can draw coyotes more quickly than decomposing vegetable matter.
 - Keep pets inside, confined securely in a kennel or covered exercise yard, or within the close presence of an adult.
 - Walk pets on a leash and accompany them outside, especially at night.
 - Do not feed wildlife on the ground; keep wild bird seed in feeders designed for birds elevated or hanging above ground and clean up spilled seed from the ground; coyotes can either be drawn directly to the seed, or to the rodents drawn to the seed.
 - Keep fruit trees fenced or pick up fruit that falls to the ground.
 - Do not feed feral cats (domestics gone wild); this can encourage coyotes to prey on cats, as well as feed on cat food left out for them.

- **Minimize clusters of shrubs, trees and other cover and food plants near buildings and children's play areas to avoid attracting rodents and small mammals that will in turn attract coyotes**
- **Use noise making and other scaring devices when coyotes are seen. Check with local authorities regarding noise and firearms ordinances. Portable air horns, motor vehicle horns, propane cannons, starter pistols, low-powered pellet guns, slingshots, and thrown rocks can be effective.**

Response flow chart

Resident has found a deer carcass, observed a sickly animal, scat, or track...and not sure of situation, report of possible mountain lion (sightings, sign, encounter).

→ Contact TPWD Biologist. The Biologist can aid with identification, assessment, and educational materials.

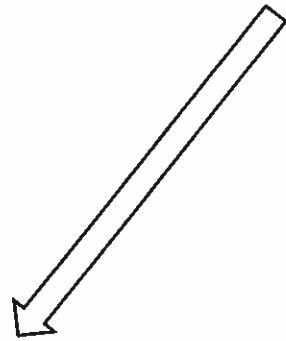


Confirmation of Mountain Lion and concern about encounters, removal, etc.

→ Contact Texas Wildlife Services & TPWD. Texas Wildlife Services will have primary responsibility for removal.

Resident reports attack or concerning encounter with wildlife and the event is considered an immediate public safety concern.

→ Contact Hays County Sheriff's Office, TPWD Game Warden.



Resident observes sick animal or domestic pet and has concerns about distemper, rabies, etc.

→ Contact Hays County Animal Control Officer. ACO will assess situation and dispatch and test if warranted.