

Living with Wildlife

Avoid conflicts with coyotes

Coyotes, an icon of the American West, are common in Oregon, where they are widely distributed across the landscape. Coyotes have been romanticized in western novel and movies. They have also been vilified and even persecuted for killing livestock and pets. Aided by their intelligence and adaptability, coyote populations are flourishing, and subject of considerable public interest.

Most of the time, coyotes are considered to be more of a nuisance than actually a threat. Prevention is always the best medicine when it comes to avoiding, minimizing or correcting problems with coyotes. By far the greatest number of conflicts between humans and coyotes are those in which the animal has become habituated to a residential area by the behavior of human beings. Fortunately, most of these situations are easily prevented or corrected by removing food sources and access to shelter.



Coyote
-Oregon Fish and Wildlife-

- Do not leave small children unattended outdoors if coyotes have been frequenting the area
- Feed pets indoors and do not leave pet food or water bowls outside
- Supervise pets when they are outside; if possible, keep them leashed
- Do not leave cats or small dogs out after dark
- Secure garbage and garbage cans in an area inaccessible to wild animals (use bleach as necessary to remove odors that could attract coyotes)
- Harvest fruits and vegetables as they become ripe and do not allow them to accumulate and create an attraction for coyotes
- Never leave food or water out for feral animals or wildlife
- Bring livestock and fowl into barns, sheds or coyote-proof enclosures at night
- Trim and clear vegetation that provides cover for coyotes or their prey
- Remove birdfeeders. Coyotes are attracted to them and the birds and rodents that use the feeder
- Secure compost piles
- Clean barbecues regularly
- Build a coyote-proof perimeter fence

Key facts about cougars in Oregon and the cougar management plan

Cougars are an Oregon success story. After being nearly eliminated by the mid-1960s, today they have a healthy population. The current cougar population in Oregon is estimated to be more than 6,400 as of April 2017.

As both the cougar and human populations have grown, so have the number of conflicts and damage complaints. This management plan is designed to address the conflicts between the growing numbers of cougars and humans.

ODFW works within the framework of the law. Oregonians have twice said through initiative petition that hounds may not be used to sport hunt cougars. This plan abides by that determination.

However, existing law does allow federal and state employees to use the full range of management tools, including hounds and snares but not including poison, to deal with cougars that are causing human, pet or livestock conflicts. ODFW will continue to respond to safety and damage complaints. Problem cougars that pose a risk to humans, pets or livestock will be humanely euthanized.

This plan follows the same prescription as other management plans by incorporating specific actions to deal with conflict while maintaining recreational – hunting and viewing – opportunities.

As is the case with all similar wildlife management plans, the costs of cougar management are funded by the sales of hunting licenses and tags.

[The Cougar Management Plan \(pdf\)](#)

Track Comparison

COUGAR TRACKS



DOG TRACKS



*Tracks do not generally include claw marks because cougars have retractable claws
*The heel pad has three distinct lobes at the base of the heel pad, forming an "M" shape.

*Tracks will usually include claw marks.
*Tracks of dogs' rear pads are more rounded

Oregon is cougar country: Tips on living safely with cougars



Cougar
-Oregon Fish and Wildlife-

If you live in cougar country

- Learn your neighborhood. Be aware of any wildlife corridors or places where deer or elk concentrate.
- Walk pets during the day and keep them on a leash.
- Keep pets indoors at dawn and dusk. Shelter them for the night.
- Feed pets indoors.
- Don't leave food and garbage outside.
- Use animal-proof garbage cans if necessary.
- Remove heavy brush from near the house and play areas.
- Install motion-activated light outdoors along walkways and driveways.
- Be more cautious at dawn and dusk when cougars are most active.
- Do not feed any wildlife. By attracting other wildlife, you may attract a cougar.
- Keep areas around bird feeders clean.
- Deer-proof your garden and yard with nets, lights, fencing.
- Fence and shelter livestock. Move them to sheds or barns at night.

If You Recreate in Cougar Country

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Leave your dog at home or keep it on a leash. Pets running free may lead a cougar back to you.
- Hike in groups. Make noise to alert wildlife of your presence.
- Keep children close to you. Teach them about wildlife.

- Keep campsites clean. Sleep 100 yards from cooking areas.
- Store food in animal-proof containers.
- Carry deterrent spray.
- Be cautious at dusk and dawn.
- Never feed any wildlife. Prey attracts predators.
- Do not approach any wildlife; stay at least 100 yards away.
- Steer clear of baby wildlife. Mother is likely nearby.
- Be alert when sitting quietly or stopping to rest.
- 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 You Encounter a Cougar

- Cougars often will retreat if given the opportunity. Leave the animal a way to escape.
- Stay calm and stand your ground.
- Maintain direct eye contact.
- Pick up children, but do so without bending down or turning your back on the cougar.
- Back away slowly.
- Do not run. Running triggers a chase response in cougars, which could lead to an attack.
- Raise your voice and speak firmly.
- If the cougar seems aggressive, raise your arms to make yourself look larger and clap your hands.
- If in the very unusual event that a cougar attacks you, fight back with rocks, sticks, tools or any items available.

Deer and Elk

Oregon is home to mule or black-tailed deer, white-tailed deer and elk — all of which are wonderful to watch, but can become a nuisance when they damage trees, crops and landscaping plants. Here are some tips for living with deer and elk:

- Never feed deer or elk. It is bad for them, helps spread disease and creates problems for you and your neighbors.
- Never pick up a fawn or calf. Animals will leave their young for long periods of time while feeding nearby.
- Fencing may be effective in protecting crops.
- Repellents are available commercially at farm garden stores.
- Select unpalatable or "deer-resistant" plants can reduce browsing damage.



*White-tail Deer Fawn
-U.S. Fish and Wildlife-*

Contact ODFW (Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife) to answer your questions or immediately contact Bend Police if you see an incident involving wildlife which concerns you. <http://www.dfw.state.or.us>