



Safety

Week of March 28th, 2005

Identify the Hazard
Evaluate the Hazard
Control the Hazard
Evaluate the Control

Member Safety

If you encounter a mountain lion

Mountain lions live in and around the Foothills & Mountains on both sides of the Sacramento Valley. The potential for being killed or injured by a mountain lion is lower than the risk of being struck by lightning, according to the Department of Fish and Game. The department also describes the feline as a calm, quiet and elusive animal.

Game wardens offer these tips to anyone encountering a mountain lion:

- Hike in groups.
- Keep children close to adults. Analysis of captured cats reveals they are especially drawn to children.
- Give the animal a way to escape. Most mountain lions try to avoid contact.
- Don't run. Running stimulates a lion's instinct to chase.
- Do not crouch or bend. A person squatting or bending over looks more like a cat's natural prey (four-legged mammals) than a standing human.
- Appear larger. Raise your arms; pick up children; open your jacket; and speak in a firm, loud voice to convince the lion you are not prey. Throw stones or branches, but don't crouch or turn your back.
- Fight back. Try to remain standing and facing the attacking animal. Many victims have successfully fended off an attack using rocks, jackets, garden tools and their bare hands.

Tips for people who live in lion country! They include:

- Don't feed wildlife: By feeding raccoons or deer in your yard you attract their predators, such as the mountain lion.
- Deer-proof landscape. If you have plants that deer prefer, it will attract mountain lions.
- Remove dense vegetation. Thick brush provides safe hiding places for mountain lions.
- Install outdoor lighting around the perimeter of the house and along walkways to keep lions visible.
- Keep pets secure. Roaming pets are easy prey.
- Don't feed pets outside. It will attract mountain lions.
- Keep children safe. Watch them while they play outdoors and make them come inside between dusk and dawn.