



Bobcat

(Lynx rufus)



The elusive bobcat is the most common wild cat in North America. Ranging in color from solid tan to brown with black spots, bobcats have a broad cheek ruff and tufted ears. They are distinguished by their black and white ears and short, bobbed tail.

Habitat & Diet

Bobcats are highly territorial, and in many areas of their habitat, have pushed out the less aggressive lynx. Nocturnal hunters, bobcats prefer to feed mainly on members of the rabbit family, though their diet covers a wide range of small mammals. They are one of the few predators of the porcupine and skunk, and a sole bobcat can kill a deer.

Fascinating Facts

Many local residents do not realize that bobcats can be found living in their own backyards! These cats have established territories in many of the suburban areas of New York. Though they are very shy, and tend to avoid man, bobcats find it difficult to resist their feline curiosity. Many campers are surprised to discover a pair of eyes in the background of many of their photographs. These solitary cats spend most of the year living apart from each other, coming together only during mating season.



Length: 25-41 inches
Weight: 14-29 pounds
Habitat: Brushland & forests
Range: Most of North America, except in the Midwest
Life Expectancy: Up to 25 yrs
Young: Kittens

Status

The bobcat's numbers are low in the north-east due to human encroachment, and almost nonexistent in the Midwest due to farming. Their two main dangers are persecution by humans and collisions with automobiles. Bobcat populations are currently reestablishing themselves in many northern states, where the species had formerly been decimated by intensive trapping.



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