



# Mountain Lion

Any statewide estimate of the mountain lion population is just a "guesstimate." Mountain lion studies over the last 30 years have estimated population densities of between 4,000 and 6,000 mountain lions statewide. More than half of California is prime mountain lion habitat. Generally speaking, mountain lions can be found wherever deer are present, since deer are a mountain lion's main food source. Foothills and mountains are the most suitable mountain lion habitat, while valleys and deserts are considered unsuitable.

## Identification

Mountain Lions are slender and agile members of the cat family. Adult males are around 8 feet long, nose to tail. Females average 6.5 feet with overall ranges between 4.9 to 9.0 feet nose to tail for the species in general. 25 to 37 inches of this length is compromised by the tail. Males typically weigh 115 to 220 pounds. Females typically weigh between 64 and 141 pounds. The lions neck and body are long and narrow, and their legs are very muscular. Their hind legs are longer than their front legs. Mountain Lions are two main colors: reddish brown and gray. The sides of their muzzle are black and so is the tip of its tail. The upper lip, chin and throat are white.

## What should a person who encounters a Mountain Lion do or not do?

- Do not hike alone
- Keep children close to you
- Do not approach a mountain lion
- Do not run from a mountain lion
- Do not crouch or bend over
- Do all you can to appear larger
- Fight back if attacked

**Mission Viejo Animal Services Center takes all sightings very seriously. Call us immediately and report your sighting to the Department of Fish & Wildlife. Give specific details on location.**



**MISSION VIEJO**  
Animal Services Center

Serving the Cities of Mission Viejo, Laguna Niguel,  
Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, and Rancho Santa Margarita

28095 Hillcrest  
Mission Viejo, CA 92692  
(949) 470-3045  
cmvas.org