



## COUGAR

Phylum: Chordata, Class: Mammalia, Order: Carnivora, Family: Felidae

*Puma concolor*

**Weight:** 70 - 200 lbs.

**Height at shoulder:** 22 - 31 in.

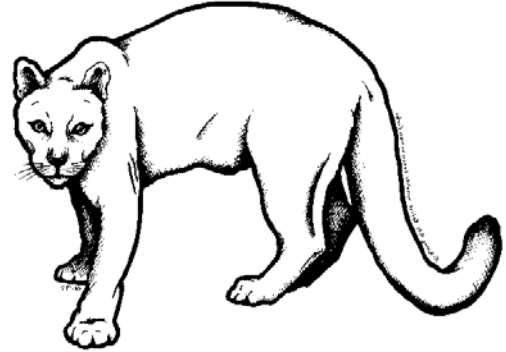
**Body length:** 3.5 - 5 feet

**Tail length:** 2 - 2.5 feet

**Lifespan:** 15 - 18 years

**Habitat:** Cougars are found in a wide variety of habitats including forests, grasslands, swamps, and semi-desert areas.

**Range/distribution:** Various cougar subspecies are found in North America, Mexico, Central & South America.



### Status:

- The type of cougar seen at Rolling Hills Zoo is not endangered.
- However, some subspecies of cougars, such as the Florida panther, are endangered due to over-hunting and habitat loss.

### Special features:

- Cougars are known by several different names: puma, mountain lion, panther, painter, etc.
- The cougar is one of the most adaptive cat species. It is found in a variety of habitats - from rainforests to semi-desert regions.
- In dim light, the eyesight of cats is up to six times more acute than that of humans.
- Cougars have a wide variety of vocalizations: hisses, growls, birdlike whistles, and a vocalization that sounds like a human scream.

**Diet in the wild:** Cougars prey on deer and smaller mammals. A lone male may hunt as infrequently as every 2 weeks, while a female with cubs may eat 1 deer every 3 days. Cougars will drag their prey to a safe spot, feed, cover the remainder with leaves and debris, and return to feed on it over the next several days.

### Behavior:

- Cougars usually live alone.
- Cougars usually do not establish permanent homes in dens, but seek temporary shelter when needed in crevices, caves, and dense vegetation. Females will use dens to rear young.
- Cougars usually have a large home range and will hunt over a large area.
- Males will mark their territory by making scrapes in the dirt or snow and depositing urine or feces.

### Breeding & Caring for Young:

- Most cougar births in North America occur in late winter and early spring.
- Usually 3-4 cubs are born in each litter.
- Cubs weigh 14-18 ounces at birth.
- The cubs nurse for 3 - 6 months and will begin to eat meat at 6 weeks of age.
- Cubs will stay with their mother for several months to a year.
- Litter mates may stay together for 2-3 months after leaving their mother.

