

COUGARS in Lions Bay

COUGARS ARE PREDATORS AND CAN BE DANGEROUS so reporting sightings can increase the safety of your neighbourhood. **Please report all cougar sightings to the COS 24/7 line (1-877-952-7277) so that cougar activity can be accurately assessed by Conservation Officers to ensure timely and appropriate response.** The COS will not respond with tracking dogs unless recent, credible cougar sightings indicate predatory behaviour.

Cougars are continually sighted in the Village because we live in a forested, mountain-side community, where proximity to wildlife needs to be expected by residents. The only way to prevent wildlife from wandering through Lions Bay would be to enclose the entire area in a high voltage electric fence. Without a fence, destroying wildlife that trespass would be cruel and futile, since other wildlife would just fill the feeding area vacated. The best way to prevent wildlife conflict in interface areas is to eliminate food attractants.

ABOUT COUGARS

Cougars mostly feed on deer, but also eat smaller animals like raccoons, rats or mice, so remove anything attracting raccoons or rodents to your property. Domestic cats left outdoors in forested areas of Lions Bay risk becoming prey. Cougars are most active dawn and dusk, but will hunt anytime of day.

Cougars are unpredictable, but usually avoid confrontation unless they are starving. During summer, yearling cougars become independent of their mothers and may attack inappropriate prey like humans since they are inexperienced hunters. Young cougars searching for an unoccupied feeding territory may come into conflict with humans.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A COUGAR

Always give the cougar an avenue of escape

Do not run, try to back away slowly.

Sudden movement or flight could trigger an instinctive attack.

Do not turn your back on a cougar.

Enlarge your physical form.

Remain upright, wave your arms or sticks, be ready to fight back

Do not crouch or make shrill noises. Behave like a **threat not prey** by speaking loudly, keeping children close and quiet, throwing rocks.

If a cougar attacks fight back! Many people have survived cougar attacks by being very difficult and physically aggressive prey.