

Identifying Florida's Wild Cats

Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*)

Color: light to dark tan. There are no black Florida panthers.

Tail: 3 feet long, black tip

Weight: 60-160 lbs.

Mainly found in southwest Florida; but males can travel great distances and are often not seen where they occur.



Bobcat (*Lynx rufus floridanus*)

Color: Typically reddish brown with spots. White spots on backs of ears. Black bobcats have occasionally been documented in Florida.

Tail: 6 inches with white underside

Weight:

12-28 lbs.

Bobcats are common across Florida, including urban areas, though they are often not seen where they occur.



Size comparison:

Bobcat:

Nose to tail: 2 ½ feet

With tail: 3 feet

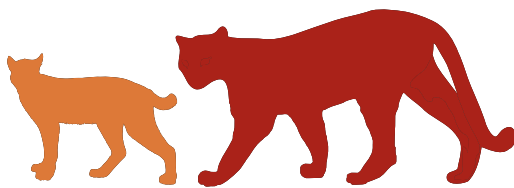
Height: 1 ½ feet at the shoulder

Panther:

Nose to tail: 4 ½ feet

With tail: 7-8 feet

Height: 2 ½ feet at the shoulder

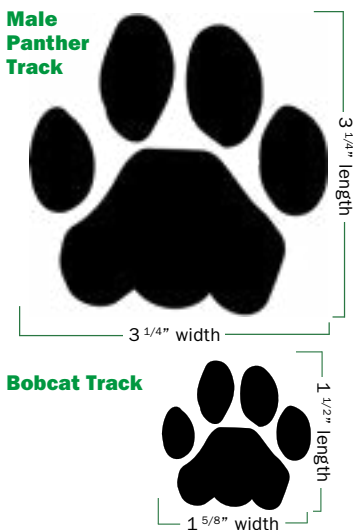


Track comparison:

Florida panther tracks are the size of a baseball.

Bobcat tracks are the size of a golf ball. They are approximately 1/3 the size of a panther track.

Note the lack of claws in the tracks. Cats' claws retract when walking and are rarely seen, but dog and coyote claws do not retract and are usually visible.



Florida panther & bobcat safety:

- Don't feed wildlife that panthers or bobcats prey on: birds, squirrels, rabbits, deer, hogs.
- Keep pets indoors and secure livestock in predator-resistant enclosures.
- Reduce low vegetative cover, like bushes, that can provide hiding spaces for wild cats.

Seeing a Florida panther or bobcat in the wild is not an immediate cause for alarm. However, if you're faced with a threatening encounter:

- Do not run.
- Keep children close to you.
- Make yourself look larger to appear more threatening.
- Fight back if attacked.

Protect people and wildlife on the road:

- Observe posted speed limits.
- Be aware when driving during dusk, dawn, and nighttime.
- Scan the road for the reflective eyes of animals or animals on the roadside and slow down.

Who to contact and when:

- Call your regional FWC office to speak to a Wildlife Assistance Biologist for help with species identification or how to avoid conflicts with panthers, bobcats and other wildlife. Wildlife Assistance Biologists will answer your wildlife concerns and provide solutions for conflict wildlife issues.
- Call the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-3922 (FWCC) to report injured, sick or dead panthers or to report livestock or pet loss due to a Florida panther or bobcat.

For more information about Florida's wild cats: www.MyFWC.com



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