

**6. Since mountain lions are rarely seen in Wyoming, there are probably very few of them in the state.**

- a. True
- b. False

**7. Which of the following statements about mountain lions is true?**

- a. Any sighting of a mountain lion can be potentially dangerous.
- b. Mountain lions are seen very commonly and should be ignored.
- c. Mountain lions are rarely found near farms or towns.
- d. Mountain lions have spots and a short tail.

**8. If an attack becomes obvious, drop to the ground and play dead.**

- a. True
- b. False

**9. If you encounter (within 50 yards) a mountain lion, you should:**

- a. Watch the cat closely and never lose sight of it's location.
- b. Never turn your back to the cat.
- c. Pick up and hold small children.
- d. All of the above, plus other precautions.

**10. Mountain lions will more likely attack children because:**

- a. Their small size is closer to the normal size of the cat's prey.
- b. Their quick and erratic movements attract the cat's attention.
- c. Children have a tendency to try and run away.
- d. All of the above.

**11. Mountain lion tracks:**

- a. Are up to 3 ½ inches long.
- b. Look similar to a dog or coyote but have a 3-lobed foot pad.
- c. Usually don't show claw marks, since claws are retractable.
- d. All of the above.

**12. Making direct eye contact may help prevent a mountain lion attack, but it is not recommended during bear encounters.**

- a. True
- b. False.

**Answers:**

1. c, 2 .d, 3. d, 4. d, 5. b, 6. b, 7. a, 8. b, 9. d, 10. d, 11. d, 12. a

**How did you do??**

All Information courtesy of Wyoming Game & Fish Department  
For more info on the web: <http://gf.state.wy.us/mountainlion/index.asp>

## Camping & Hiking in Lion Country Preventing Conflicts & Avoiding Confrontations

Although not commonly seen, mountain lions are widespread throughout Wyoming. They prefer rocky, brushy areas with steep slopes or cliffs, and scattered openings in the trees, but in the past few years have been encountered in more marginal habitats, often close to human habitation.



*Mountain lion tracks look a lot like any other cat tracks, except they're very big. Scientists who study mountain lions can tell the tracks of different mountain lions apart by the shape and size of the pad. The claws do not make a mark when the lion is walking.*

Mountain lion tracks are up to 3 ½ inches long. The tracks are distinguished from the coyote, dog, or wolf by a distinctive 3-lobed appearance of the heel pad and the absence of claw marks, since the claws are retractable.

### Mountain Lion Encounters:

Mountain lions are normally shy and stay hidden, so any time you see one it should be considered potentially dangerous. This is especially true if the cat does not leave after it sees you, if it is relatively close, or continually disappears and reappears in different sites.

### ***Pay particular attention to the animal's "body language":***

1. The cat is aware of your presence but paying no attention to you, is at a relatively safe distance (>100 yards): Be extremely cautious. The probability of attack is slight with appropriate actions. Avoid any rapid movements, running, or loud, excited talking. Stay in a group. Keep children close to adults so they are not seen as small prey. Change direction to avoid the animal. Walk or back slowly out of the area.
2. The cat has its ears up, is watching you closely, is otherwise obviously attentive to your presence, and is about 50 yards away: This is a potentially dangerous situation. The probability of an attack is unpredictable and must be assumed to be likely. Watch the cat at all times. **Never turn your back.** Hold small children, and keep larger children behind the adults. Move to a safer location or one above the lion if available. If not carrying a firearm or bow, look for stick, rocks, or anything else to serve as a weapon and keep it on hand.
3. The cat is less than 50 yards away, has its ears laid back, is staring intensely at you or moves into hiding without any signs of leaving. An attack may occur at any time. Prepare to defend yourself using anything available as a weapon.

### ***Avoiding Encounters:***

**Never go out alone.** Groups of two or more are less likely to be attacked. If an attack does occur there is a much greater chance of defense.

**Keep children near adults.** Never let small children hike alone or get out of sight if walking with adults. The small size, rapid and often erratic movements, higher pitched voice, and instinct of children to run may attract a lion. If a lion is sighted, have all children move between or behind adults. **Be very careful with hunting dogs and small pets.** Dogs may actually serve as "bait" to attract the cats.

**Do not intentionally approach a lion.** Avoid making the animal feel cornered, trapped, or harassed.

**Never run.** This will trigger their natural instinct to chase. Always stand still, facing toward the cat, and making eye contact.

### ***Minimizing Confrontations:***

**Make and maintain eye contact.** Face toward any cat that you encounter, keep your eyes directly on it, and do not look away until it is gone. (This will not work with bears.) It keeps you facing the cat and they prefer to attack the head and neck area from the rear.

**Do not crouch, bend over, squat, or lie down.** An upright human does not resemble any of their usual prey, and also appears large. Although it is quite awkward, pick up small children, or find rocks or sticks for weapons, without bending over or turning around.

**Appear as large as possible** by raising your arms, opening your coat, placing children on your shoulders, standing on a rock, or any other method that is available. Wave your arms above your head slowly and talk in a loud, firm voice to convince the lion you are not prey and may even present a danger to it.

**Find or devise a weapon.** A stout walking stick or rocks that are at arm height that you don't have to bend over to pick up work well.

**Fight back if attacked.** If a lion is within 50 yards of you, has its ears laid back, is silently moving toward you, or is attempting to sneak around you, it could attack at any time. This is the time to shoot if you have a gun with you. If not, use any weapon available. Throw rocks or sticks, yell, growl, and "smile" to show your teeth. Fight back with any means available. Never attempt to "play dead". Lions are not trying to scare you away, they are hunting you as a prey animal. Very few people can actually defeat a mountain lion by hand, but you can hopefully make it decide to go look for an easier meal.

### ***Take this short quiz to test your knowledge!***

**1. If you see a mountain lion in the distance, and don't know whether or not it has seen you, you should:**

- a. Immediately run to get away.
- b. Bend over and attempt to hide.
- c. Back away slowly while keeping your eyes on the cat at all times.
- d. Yell very loudly to scare him away.

**2. During an encounter, the chances of attack can vary due to:**

- a. The distance between you and the cat.
- b. How you react and what actions you take.
- c. The animal's attitude and body language.
- d. All of the above.

**3. When a mountain lion attack appears likely, you should:**

- a. Face the cat and always look directly at it.
- b. Remain standing upright and make yourself appear as large as possible.
- c. Use anything available as a weapon to fight back.
- d. All of the above.

**4. To help avoid encounters when you're in lion country:**

- a. Always go alone so there is less chance of being seen.
- b. Take a small dog to bark and warn you when another animal is around.
- c. Walk directly toward any mountain lion you see to make him run away.
- d. Never run, since that triggers a cat's instinct to chase.

**5. Which of the following signs would most likely indicate a mountain lion may be preparing to attack?**

- a. The lion's ears are up and it appears to be ignoring you.
- b. Its ears are laid back and it is staring directly at you.
- c. The cat is watching you closely, ears are up, and occasionally looks away.
- d. When it sees you it immediately walks off in the opposite direction.