



## BASIC FACTS ABOUT BOBCATS

**The most common wildcat in North America, the bobcat is named for its short, bobbed tail. They are medium-sized cats and are slightly smaller but similar in appearance to their cousin, the lynx. Their coats vary in color from shades of beige to brown fur with spotted or lined markings in dark brown or black.**

### DIET

Bobcats mainly hunt rabbits and hares.

Bobcats are also known to eat rodents, birds, bats and even adult deer, which they usually consume during the winter months, as well as lambs, poultry and young pigs when a ranch is near.

### POPULATION

Approximately 725,000 to 1,020,000 bobcats remain in the wild.

### RANGE

Bobcats were once found throughout most of North America from northern Mexico to southern Canada. In the early to mid 1900s, bobcat populations in many Midwestern and eastern states of the United States were decimated due to the increased value of its fur. However, international laws began to protect the world's spotted cats in the 1970s, and populations have rebounded since then. Today, populations are stable in many northern states and are reviving in many others.

## BEHAVIOR

Bobcat habitat varies widely from **forests** and mountainous areas to semi-**deserts** and brush land. A habitat dense with vegetation and lots of prey is ideal. Bobcats are excellent hunters, stalking prey with stealth and patience, then capturing their meals with one great leap.

Usually solitary and territorial animals, females never share territory with each other. Male territories, however, tend to overlap. Territories are established with scent markings and territory sizes are extremely varied – generally 25-30 square miles for males and about five square miles for females.

**Dens:** Each bobcat may have several dens, one main den and several auxiliary dens, in its territory.

- **Main den:** Usually a cave or rock shelter, but can be a hollow log, fallen tree, or some other protected place. (Also called the natal den)
- **Auxiliary dens:** Located in less-visited portions of the home range and are often brush piles, rock ledges or stumps. These are also called shelter dens.

### Reproduction

**Mating season:** Late winter, but throughout the year is possible.

**Gestation:** 50- 70 days. Kittens are usually born around early spring.

**Litter size:** 1 – 6 kittens.

The kittens begin eating solid food at around two months and begin learning to hunt at 5 months. When they are between 8 and 11 months, the kittens are evicted from their mother's territory.

## Fast Facts

**Height:** 17-23 inches.

**Length:** 25-41 inches.

**Weight:** 16-28 lbs (males); 10-18 lbs (females). **Lifespan:** 12-13 years.

Range Map

