

PUTTING COUGARS ON THE FURBEARER LIST

After a long absence from Iowa, cougars¹ periodically travel into the state.²

The cougar has no protection from hunting. In order to allow cougars to continue expanding in Iowa, they must be protected from hunting pressure. The way to accomplish this is to add the cougar to the furbearer list, Iowa Code Section 481A.1(20). Initially the cougar can be given a closed season. Once the population expands, a sustainable hunting season can be established.

Cougars favor eating deer, a species in abundance in Iowa, although they do eat smaller animals such as rabbits, beavers, raccoons, and coyotes. Adult female cougars weigh from 90 to 110 pounds while males reach from 140 to 160 pounds.³ Cougars are elusive, avoiding humans.



Photo by National Park Service



Photo NPS – Reine Wonite

The Iowa Chapter supports placing the cougar on the furbearer list.

¹ Cougars are also known as mountain lions, pumas, panthers, painters, and catamounts.

² The cougar was extirpated from Iowa by over-hunting in the mid 1800's. For more information, see [A Country So Full of Game](#) by James J. Dinsmore, University of Iowa Press, 1994, pages 42 to 49;

Also see

“Status of Selected Other Species in Iowa – Large Carnivores”, Iowa Department of Natural Resources;
Brittney J. Miller, “Mountain lion shot and killed in Johnson County”, Cedar Rapids Gazette, February 3, 2023;

Associated Press, “Hunters find dead mountain lion in Iowa”, Cedar Rapids Gazette, December 11, 2021;

Orlan Love, “Time to consider Iowa as bear habitat?”, Cedar Rapids Gazette, August 7, 2014

³ Vince Evelsizer, Cougars in Iowa – Myth or Reality? Iowa Department of Natural Resources