

# Living with Wildlife in Lion Country

Much of Colorado, including the Front Range, is prime mountain lion country. This simple fact is a surprise to many residents and visitors. These large, powerful predators have always lived here, preying on plentiful deer and playing an important role in the ecosystem. You may live in or recreate in lion country. Like any wildlife, mountain lions can be dangerous. With a better understanding of mountain lions and their habitat, we can coexist with these magnificent animals.

## **DIVISION OF WILDLIFE INFORMATION:**

(719)-227-5200 If the number is reached after hours or on weekends or holidays, there is a message regarding who to call if there is a wildlife emergency. You may also contact the Manitou Springs Police Department non emergency line (719)-685-5407 or "**911**" for emergency help.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU LIVE IN LION COUNTRY:**

We can live with these incredibly efficient predators if we respect mountain lions and their habitat. To reduce the risk of problems with mountain lions on or near your property, we urge you to follow these simple precautions:

- Make lots of noise if you come and go during the times mountain lions are most active - dusk to dawn.
- Install outside lighting. Light areas where you walk so you could see a lion if one were present.
- Closely supervise children whenever they play outdoors. Make sure children are inside before dusk and not outside before dawn.
- Landscape or remove vegetation to eliminate hiding places for lions, especially around children's play areas. Make it difficult for lions to approach unseen.
- Planting non-native shrubs and plants that deer often prefer to eat encourages wildlife to come onto your property. Predators follow prey.
- Keep your pet under control. Roaming pets are easy prey and can attract lions. Bring pets in at night. If you leave your pet outside, keep it in a kennel with a secure top. Don't feed pets outside; this can attract raccoons and other animals that are eaten by lions. Store all garbage securely.
- Place livestock in enclosed sheds or barns at night. Close doors to all outbuildings since inquisitive lions may go inside for a look.
- Encourage your neighbors to follow these simple precautions. Prevention is far better than a possible lion confrontation.

## **• DON'T FEED ANY WILDLIFE!**

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU MEET A MOUNTAIN LION:**

- When you walk or hike in mountain lion country, go in groups and make plenty of noise to reduce your chances of surprising a lion. A sturdy walking stick is a good idea; it can be used to ward off a lion. Make sure children are close to you and within your sight at all times. Talk with children about lions and teach them what to do if they met one.
- Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kitten. Most mountain lions will try to avoid confrontation. Give them a way to escape.
- **STAY CALM** when you come upon a lion. Talk calmly yet firmly to it. Move slowly.
- **STOP OR BACK AWAY SLOWLY**, if you can do it safely. Running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase and attack. Face the lion and stand upright.
- **DO ALL YOU CAN TO APPEAR LARGER.** Raise your arms. Open your jacket if you are wearing one. If you have small children with you, protect them by picking them up so they won't panic and run.
- If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on without crouching down or turning your back. Wave your arms slowly and speak firmly. What you want to do is convince the lion you are not prey and that you may in fact be a danger to the lion.
- **FIGHT BACK** if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back. People have fought back with rods, sticks, caps or jackets, garden tools and their bare hands successfully. Remain standing or try to get back up!