

## BOBCAT (*Lynx rufus*)



### Description

The bobcat is a small cat (2-3 ft long, 10-30 lbs.) found in forests, mountains, and brushlands. It has brown to buff fur /w dark spots. Its short bobbed tail gives it the name "bobcat" and distinguishes it from domestic cats. Bobcats also have prominent sideburn-like cheek tufts. Its eartips and tail tips are black.

### Ecology & Range

Bobcats are primarily nocturnal, solitary, and fiercely territorial animals. They often only interact during mating season, once a year in early spring. Litters are usually 1-3 kittens. Young stay with the mother for about 8 months before becoming independent. They communicate through yowling calls and scent-marking. Bobcats live up to about 12 years in the wild, but old as 30 in captivity. Bobcats range from S Canada, throughout the US (in all 48 lower states) to S Mexico.

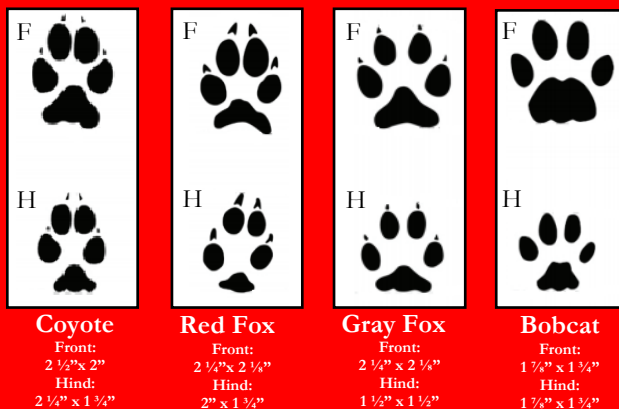
### Diet

Bobcats, like all cats, are carnivores and eat only meat. Their diet includes rodents, rabbits, and birds. Very rarely they will prey on deer, usu young fawns.

### Did You Know?

The bobcat is the only wild cat species left in New York State. At one time, cougar and lynx were also found here, but they were both hunted to extinction long ago.

## KNOW YOUR TRACKS



## DISEASE

### RABIES

Rabies is a viral central nervous system disease in mammals, transmitted in saliva, usu. by a bite from an infected animal. **Vectors:** Any mammal can become infected /w rabies but its most often in bats, raccoons, skunks, coyotes and foxes. **Symptoms:** no fear, hyperaggressiveness, self-mutilation. No coordination, drooling, paralysis, difficulty breathing. **Human health risk:** serious; can be transmitted to humans and pets and is almost always fatal w/o post-exposure treatment.

### DISTEMPER

Distemper is a viral nervous, respiratory, & digestive system disease transmitted via nose/eye secretions, urine, feces. **Vectors:** Many mammal groups incl canids (incl foxes), mustelids (weasels and skunks), raccoons, bears, and others. **Symptoms:** drooling, difficulty breathing, jaw movements, seizures, circling, paralysis, wasting, foot/nose hardening. **Human health risk:** unknown to infect humans, but highly fatal to non-vaccinated dogs (~50% adult dogs, ~80% puppies)

### MANGE

Mange (usu. refers to sarcoptic mange) is a skin disease caused by parasitic mites in non-human mammals. **Vectors:** domestic cats and dogs, livestock esp sheep, wild canids (incl foxes, coyotes), bears, and some cats. **Symptoms:** excessive scratchin/biting, hair loss, skin damage, matted/crusted hair, wasting. Often fatal— exposure, etc. **Human health risk:** humans can contract mites but the risk is minimal. Risk of mange is greater to pets, livestock.

**Harvesting:** These species are protected in NYS. They may be harvested in season per NYS Regulations. For more, see: [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). Hunting at West Point is coordinated thru and harvests reported at : [www.westpoint.isportsman.net](http://www.westpoint.isportsman.net)

## BASIC WILDLIFE SAFETY REVIEW

*Do these things to keep people and animals safe:*

- **NEVER FEED WILDLIFE** - Nuisance animal issues, often begin over food. And so feeding wild animals is illegal.
- **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE** - Never approach or corner wildlife Risks incl. disease, attack. Enjoy from afar.
- **REPORT ANIMAL ISSUES** - call a wildlife responder if human or animal well-being is a concern.

## REPORTING WILDLIFE ISSUES

*Know when and what to report and who to contact*

- **WHEN:** Call right away If you see wildlife 1) being handled by people 2) being fed or baited. 3) hurt, sick or acting odd. 4) has been harvested illegally.
- **WHAT:** Be sure to say: 1) when and 2) where wildlife issue happened, 3) what the animal did 4) where animal (if known), 5) your name, phone number.
- **CALL:** For a bat indoors: Service Desk (315) 774-9240 or Balfort Beatty/ODIA. Other issues: MP Desk: (845) 938-3333 (anytime) NRS: (646) 208-9431(M-F 0745-1630)

# CANIDS & FELIDS OF THE WEST POINT MILITARY RESERVATION



West Point Natural Resources Section (NRS)  
Bldg 667A Ruger Road  
USAG—West Point, NY 10996  
[www.westpoint.isportsman.net](http://www.westpoint.isportsman.net)

## CANIDS & FELIDS AT WEST POINT

Besides the many domestic cats and dogs that live here, the West Point Military Reservation is home to four closely-related animals. Three canids, members of Canidae - the dog family, are present incl. the coyote, the red fox, and the gray fox. Meanwhile, our sole resident felid - member of Felidae, the cat family - is the bobcat. It is our goal, in putting out this brochure, to help its readers correctly identify and better understand these four species. What follows here is a short description of each species including pictures and brief summaries of their appearance, ecology habitat, range, and diet. While we hope this material proves useful, this is by no means a comprehensive guide. For more information, visit the NYSDEC website at: [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov).

### COYOTE (*Canis latrans*)



#### Description

The coyote is a mid-sized canid (2½ - 4 ft long, 15-50+ lbs.) found in many different habitats - forests, prairies, deserts, farmlands, and urban/suburban areas. It has gray-brown to yellow fur on its upper head, body, and tail, reddish brown sides and a white underside. It has a long tail up to half body length.

#### Ecology & Range

Coyotes are nocturnal but can be seen during the day. They live and travel solitarily or in pairs but may also live in family units or packs. They mate once a year in mid winter to early spring. Litters are 1-10+ pups, usually 5-6 pups. Pups stay with their mother 6-8 months before independence. They communicate via howls, yelps and scent-marking. Coyotes can live 10+ years in the wild and 15-20 in captivity. They range t/o North America - from Alaska and N.Canada to Panama.

#### Diet

Coyotes are omnivorous, but their diet is primarily carnivorous - rabbits, mice, deer, foxes, etc. Coyotes also often scavenge carcasses, browse.

#### Did You Know?

Coyotes are our largest canid species at West Point. Moreover, coyotes in the northeast U.S. are larger than their counterparts in the western U.S. (*see next page*)

## Q&A: COYOTES, COYDOGS, WOLVES

**Q: Are coyotes around here bigger?** A: Yes, coyotes in the NE US are bigger than in W US. Genetically, they're about 65% coyote, 25% wolf, and 10% dog.

**Q: How did this happen?** A: For a long time, eastern coyotes were overhunted and overtrapped. As coyotes migrated back here from Canada they bred /w wolves .

**Q: I've heard the term "coywolf". What is that?** A: This new hybrid coyote subspecies, the Eastern coyote, is sometimes called a "coywolf". It is not a new species.

**Q: I've heard the term "coydog?" What is that?** A "coydog" is a coyote-domestic dog hybrid. Despite claims to contrary, these hybrids do not exist in nature.

**Q: What about wolves? Are they here?** A: No. While wolves were once native here, the last wolves in New York disappeared well over a century ago.

### RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*)



#### Description

The red fox is a mid-sized canid (2-3½ ft long, 6-30 lbs) also found in many different habitats - forests, prairies, deserts, farmlands, and urban/suburban areas. It has yellow -red to deep red fur across its upper head, body, and tail /w a white underside. Its upper ears and lower legs/feet are black. The tip of its tail is white or black.

#### Ecology & Range

Red foxes are most active at night or dawn and dusk but can be seen out in day and are mostly solitary. They mate in late winter or early spring, den in family units until young are older. Litters range from 1-10+ pups, usually 4-5. Young stay with mom until their first fall. They communicate by barking, growling and scent-marking. They live up to 7 years in the wild and 15 in captivity. They range from Alaska and Canada to Panama, t/o Europe, Asia, N. Africa, and Australia.

#### Diet

Red foxes are omnivores, eating mostly prey like rabbits, rodents, and insects but they supplement their diet with nuts and fruit. They are very animated hunters.

#### Did You Know?

The red fox is the largest fox species in the world. It also has the widest geographic range of any canid species, and today can be found on five different continents.

## Q&A: NUISANCE FOXES, COUGARS, LYNX

**Q: Why is there a fox in my neighborhood?** A: Foxes are a more common sight in neighborhoods due to the spread of human housing, predatory coyote populations.

**Q: Is a fox out during the day a sick fox?** A: Not necessarily. It's true that foxes are mostly nocturnal, but may be active during the day. Sick foxes show other signs.

**Q: Why is there a fox in my yard?** A: Your fox may have a den nearby and it is probably hunting for rodents and rabbits. Tall grass and messy bird-feeders can attract both.

**Q: Is there anything I can do about the fox?** A: Mowed lawns and clean bird-feeder areas deter rodents and rabbits that foxes eat. Less rabbits and rodents means less foxes.

**Q: What about cougars and lynx. Are they here?** A: No. Both species once lived in New York but disappeared long ago. Alleged sightings are usu. hoaxes or misidentifications.

### GRAY FOX (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)



#### Description

The gray fox is a small canid (~2 ft ong, 4-20 lbs.) found in and around forests. It has brown to buff fur /w dark spots and stripes. It has a gray head and face, body, and tail. Its ears, neck and cheeks, limbs, sides , and underside are red. They have black stripes around their eyes, running down muzzle and often black tail tips.

#### Ecology & Range

Gray foxes are primarily nocturnal but may be seen in day and are solitary animals. They mate in winter or early spring, den in family units until young are older. Litter sizes range 1-7 pups. Young stay with the mother for about 10 months before becoming independent. They communicate by barking, growling and scent-marking. Gray foxes live 6-8 years in the wild, but up to 12 years in captivity. They range from S Canada, t/o US, Mexico, Central America, Columbia and Venezuela.

#### Diet

Gray foxes are omnivores, eating meat and plants. Most of the year they eat rodents and rabbits, insects and fruit. In winter, they eat only rodents and rabbits.

#### Did You Know?

The gray fox is one of only three canid species in the world capable of climbing trees. Their sharp rounded claws give them this ability.