



## 7 ways to live safely in Florida panther country

While these guidelines are meant to help you live safely in Florida panther habitat, they also apply to living with more commonly encountered wildlife, including raccoons, snakes, bears and alligators.

### 1. Be alert from dusk 'til dawn (and whenever deer are active)

Florida panthers primarily are active at night. Exercise more caution at dawn, dusk or dark.

### 2. Keep panther prey away

Deer, raccoons, rabbits, armadillos and wild hogs are prey for the Florida panther. By feeding deer or other wildlife, people inadvertently may attract panthers. Do not leave potential wildlife food outside, such as unsecured garbage or pet food. Consider fencing vegetable gardens.

### 3. Keep pets secure

Free-roaming pets, or pets that are tethered and unfenced, are easy prey for predators, including panthers. Bring pets inside or keep them in a secure and covered kennel at night. Feeding pets outside also may attract raccoons and other panther prey; do not leave uneaten pet food available to wildlife.



Keep your pets safe and secure. Bring pets inside or keep them in a secure and covered kennel at night.



Keep livestock safe and secure.

### 4. Keep domestic livestock secure

Where practical, place chickens, goats, hogs or other livestock in enclosed structures at night. Electric fencing can be an effective predator deterrent.

### 5. Landscape for safety

Remove dense or low-lying vegetation that would provide hiding places for panthers and other predatory animals near your house.

- Remove plants that deer like to eat.
- Choose plants that do not attract deer or other panther prey species. For information on plants that deer do not like to eat, visit [edis.ifas.ufl.edu/UW137](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/UW137).
- Appropriate fencing will make your yard or play area uninviting to prey animals such as deer.

### 6. Consider other deterrents

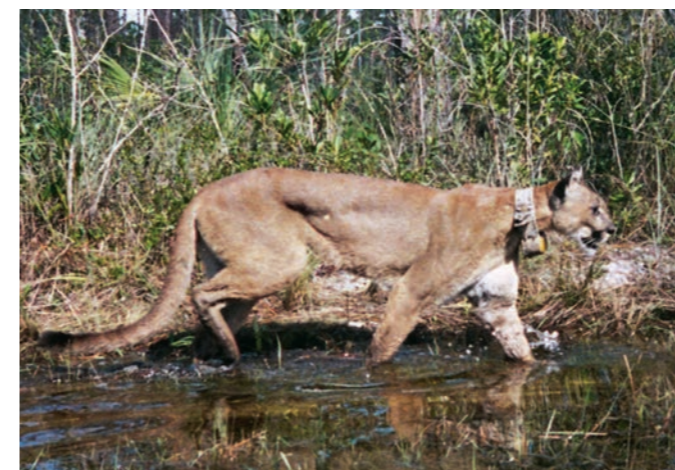
Outdoor lighting, motion sensors and electric fencing also may deter prey animals and panthers from entering your yard. Outdoor lighting also will make approaching prey and panthers more visible to you.

### 7. Hike or bike with a friend

When recreating outdoors, it's a good practice to let friends or family know your whereabouts and when you expect to return. Better yet, take a friend with you!

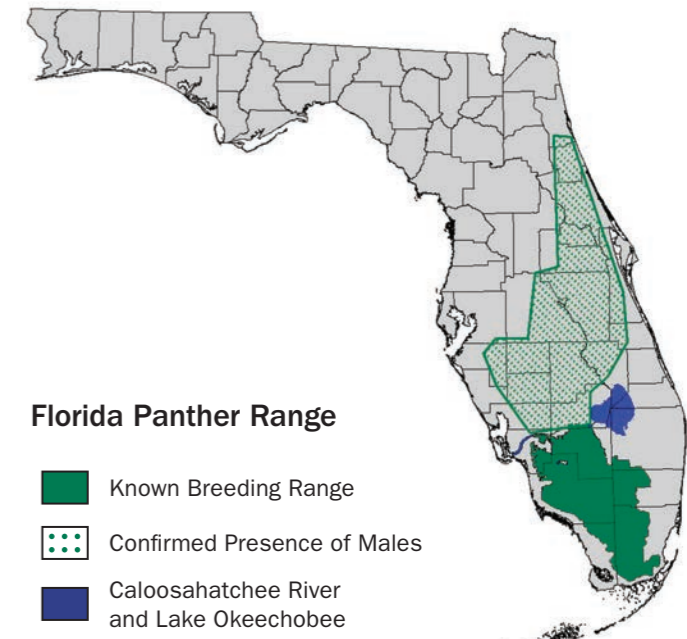
## Florida panther facts

- 🐾 The Florida panther is a subspecies of puma, also known as a mountain lion or cougar. It is the last subspecies still surviving in the eastern United States.
- 🐾 Biologists estimate roughly 100-160 adult and subadult Florida panthers remain in the wild. Most panthers live in southwest Florida, south of the Caloosahatchee River, although some panthers have been documented traveling as far north as central Georgia.
- 🐾 The Florida panther's decline occurred prior to 1950, when it still was legal to hunt panthers. It was listed as endangered in 1967 and is protected under federal and state laws.
- 🐾 Florida panther numbers declined to roughly 30 cats by the early 1980s. Severe inbreeding resulted in many health and physical problems. A genetic restoration project in 1995 was successful in improving the genetic health and vigor of the panther population.
- 🐾 Florida panthers are found primarily in the Big Cypress/Everglades ecosystem in Collier, Lee, Hendry, Monroe and Miami-Dade counties.
- 🐾 Florida panthers' home range sizes vary by sex and by individual. Female home ranges are typically 60-75 square miles whereas males' are typically 160-200 square miles.



FWC panther team

- 🐾 There is no record of a Florida panther attacking a person. Florida panthers are rarely seen.
- 🐾 The biggest threat to the future of the Florida panther is habitat loss. A number of panthers also die each year due to vehicle strikes on roadways.
- 🐾 The Florida panther was chosen as the State Animal of Florida in 1982 by a vote of elementary school students throughout the state.



Florida Panther Range

- Known Breeding Range
- Confirmed Presence of Males
- Caloosahatchee River and Lake Okeechobee



This brochure was produced through a partnership of the Audubon Society of Florida, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Defenders of Wildlife, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Wildlife Federation, Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge, Mountain Lion Foundation, National Park Service, National Wildlife Federation, Seminole Tribe of Florida, University of Florida and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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