



Bobcats



HEALTH

Height: 20-24" at the shoulder

Length: 30-50" long
(tail length 5-8")

Weight: 13-30 lbs.

Lifespan: 15-30 years in captivity



OVERVIEW

The Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), occasionally known as the Bay Lynx, is a North American mammal of the cat family, Felidae. With twelve recognized subspecies, it ranges from southern Canada to northern Mexico, including much of the continental United States. The Bobcat is an adaptable predator that inhabits wooded areas, as well as semi-desert, urban edge, and swampland environments. It persists in much of its original range and populations are healthy.

With a gray to brown coat, whiskered face, and black-tufted ears, the Bobcat resembles the other species of the mid-sized Lynx genus. It is smaller than the Canadian Lynx, with whom it shares parts of its range, but about twice as large as the domestic cat. It has distinctive black bars on its forelegs and a black-tipped, stubby tail, from which it derives its name.

Though the Bobcat prefers rabbits and hares, it will hunt anything from insects and small rodents to deer. Prey selection depends on location and habitat, season, and abundance. Like most cats, the Bobcat is territorial and largely solitary, although there is some overlap in home ranges. It uses several methods to mark its territorial boundaries, including claw marks and deposits of urine or feces. The Bobcat breeds from winter into the spring and has a gestation period of about two months.

The Bobcat has been subject to extensive hunting by humans, both for sport and fur, but its population has proven resilient. The elusive predator has featured in Native American mythology and the folklore of European settlers.