



Idaho Department of Fish and Game NEWS RELEASE

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Mountain lion kills dog in Gimlet, another lion injures dog in west Ketchum

Local Fish and Game officers were notified Monday of two mountain lion attacks over the weekend in the Wood River Valley. On Sunday evening December 15, 2019, a domestic dog was killed in Gimlet, south of Ketchum. According to Fish and Game officers, the lion was in a fenced backyard when it killed the home owner's dog, a pudelpointer.

In response, with the permission of the homeowner, Fish and Game will immediately attempt to trap and remove the lion from that location. According to Regional Conservation Officer Josh Royse, "once a lion gets a food reward from a kill, they will often return to the site."

Decisions regarding what to do with wildlife involved in conflict situations are determined on a case-by-case basis. Each situation is unique. Once the facts are known and evaluated, a decision is then made about the required course of action. In this specific situation, the department has determined that once caught, the lion will be euthanized to ensure public safety of area residents and their pets.

An unrelated mountain lion encounter occurred on Saturday evening in west Ketchum. A local homeowner let his Australian shepherd outside in an unfenced area when a chance encounter occurred with a mountain lion on their porch. The dog sustained injuries and is under the care of a local veterinarian. The pet owner was able to stop the attack shortly after it began. The lion immediately left the area when confronted. At this time, no actions will be taken to capture the lion involved in this situation.

Predator and prey

Mountain lions typically prey on deer and elk, as well as small animals such as rabbits and hares. The Wood River Valley has many resident deer and elk living in close proximity to neighborhoods, which increases the chances of mountain lions coming into local neighborhoods in search of food. Lions are opportunistic predators, meaning they may prey on whatever they encounter, which can include pets.

Residents are strongly encouraged to not leave their pets outdoors unattended.

Wood River Valley residents and visitors are cautioned to be aware of potential encounters with wildlife, especially mountain lions, during evening or early morning hours.

How to be safe around your own home

Do not feed pets outside. Pet food or their dishes left outside can also attract other small wild animals which can bring more prey into your neighborhood for lions to pursue.

If you encounter a mountain lion, you should follow these rules to stay safe:

- Stay calm. Either hold your ground or back away slowly. Do not turn your back on the lion.
- Do NOT run. Running may stimulate its natural instinct to chase.
- Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or has kittens.
- Never crouch down or bend over. Make yourself appear as big as possible. Aggressively wave your arms.
- Make loud sounds that do not sound like those made by prey.

If attacked, fight back! It's critical to protect your neck and throat.

For more information about how to stay safe in lion country please visit the Idaho Department of Fish and Game website and search for "[Living with Mountain Lions](#)".

To report direct encounters with mountain lions contact the Magic Valley Regional Office at (208) 324-4359.

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