

Canada Lynx

Lynx canadensis

STATUS

Not At Risk 

Endangered 

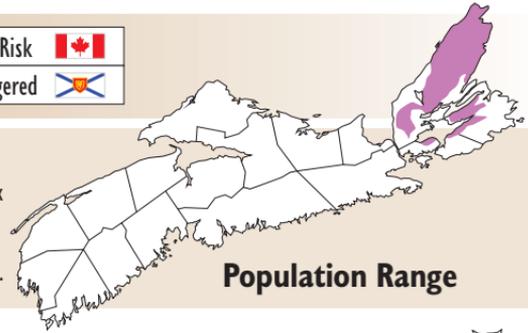


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Species Description

The Canada Lynx is a medium-sized cat (80-90 cm long) with long legs, large paws, and a short tail with a solid black tip. In the winter its coat is a mottled greyish colour, changing to reddish brown in the summer. It has long black-tipped ear tufts. It is a secretive and shy species that is mainly active during the night.

Found in high elevation areas in Cape Breton. Lynx populations are cyclic and range from 100-500 individuals in Nova Scotia.



Population Range

Habitat

Canada Lynx are typically found in coniferous forests in areas with deep winter snow and snowshoe hares (their main prey). They require forests that exhibit patterns of disturbance (insect outbreaks, fire) and regeneration, which creates pockets of different forest types. These areas are used for hunting, denning, and shelter.



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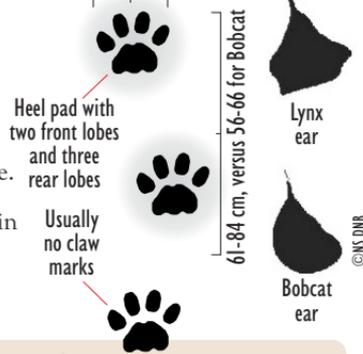
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Lynx are typically observed in high elevation areas in Cape Breton such as Cape Breton Highlands, North Mountain, Keppoch Highlands, and Boisdale Hills.

Interesting Points

- The Mi'kmaw name for Lynx is "Apuksikn"
- Has cyclical population fluctuations approximately every ten years.
- Extirpated from mainland Nova Scotia in the 1950s, but lynx from Cape Breton can travel as far as Yarmouth County when food is scarce.
- Its large paws, covered in dense hair, act like snowshoes during the winter in deep snowy conditions.

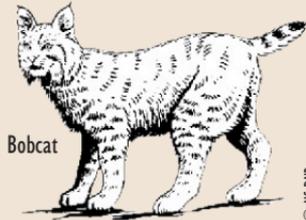
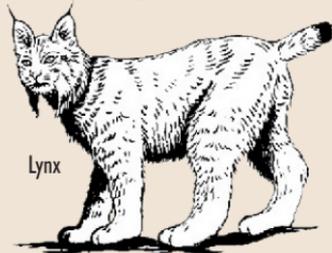
8.9-12 cm, versus
4.5-5.7 for Bobcat



Similar Species

Bobcat:

Found throughout the province; slightly smaller (80-88 cm long); shorter limbs and smaller paws; short ear tufts; more spotty and darker coloured fur; tail with black stripes.



Threats to Survival

- Historically, un-regulated trapping greatly reduced the lynx population. Public trapping was banned in the 1980s, but lynx are still incidentally caught in traps set for other species.
- Climate change may result in more moderate winters and disrupt the snowshoe hare cycle. Forestry activities fragment and modify Lynx habitat.
- Bobcats and coyotes may compete for prey.



How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species and report sightings. Reduce your greenhouse gas emissions at home and work to help maintain the deep snow found in Cape Breton. Be an advocate of sustainable forestry practices and follow the Special Management Practices found in the link under Info. Trappers can learn how to avoid accidentally catching lynx and proper release methods at www.speciesatrisk.ca/martenandlynx

Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: NS DNR (902) 679-6091

Info: Special Management Practices for Canada Lynx:

http://novascotia.ca/natr/wildlife/habitats/terrestrial/pdf/SMP_Canada_Lynx.pdf

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings