Discouraging Bobcats from coming into your yard cont'd

Try these tactics:

- Use noise and/or motion-activated deterrents to make a bobcat uncomfortable.
- Try an air horn or motion-activated sprinkler; bang pot lids together, or put a radio outside set to a news or talk channel.
- Clear any excess vegetation to remove secluded hiding spots.
- Do not leave pet food or water outside when your pet is indoors.
- Pick fruit from trees as soon as it ripens and pick up all fallen fruit.
- If you feed the birds or squirrels, ensure there is no overflowing bird seed on the ground to attract rodents at night, or restrict feeding. Bobcats can be attracted to the squirrels and birds that come to our yards to feed.
- Use fencing to deter bobcats. Fencing must be at least six feet high with the bottom extending 6-12 inches below ground level. Add an angle at the top facing outward at 45 degrees, and 16 inches in width.
- Do not leave small pets outdoors unattended or in a poorly-enclosed yard.
- If you have chickens or fowl, ensure they are put up at night.

Precautions for your Pets

Here's how you can protect your pets from bobcats and other wild animals:

- Always walk your dog on a leash.
- Always keep pets vaccinated as some wildlife are susceptible to diseases transmissible to dogs and cats, i.e. feline panleukopenia (feline parvo), canine distemper, and rabies.
- Take steps to ensure you are not attracting predators to your yard clean up brushy areas or woodpiles, and remove any food sources.
- Do not allow cats to roam free outdoors. Some cities have laws against free-roaming cats. Cats prey on many wildlife species, i.e. songbirds, face many dangers outside, and can attract predatory wildlife to your yard, as well.
- Avoid bushy areas or paths near abandoned properties.
- If you notice a coyote or bobcat in your area, never let it go by without scaring it. Yell or clap loudly to scare wildlife away; carry something with you to make noise, i.e. an air horn, or something to throw, like a rock or baseball. In the long run it's much safer for us, our pets, and the wildlife as well if they remain fearful of humans.
- Never encourage or allow your pet to interact or "play" with wildlife.
- Make sure your fence is in good repair.
- Do not leave pets unattended outdoors.
- Remove food sources, i.e. fallen fruit, food refuse, pet food.
- Small mammals such as opossums, raccoons, and skunks, are not a threat to domestic pets. In fact, it is usually the other way around, as such animals are often the victims of dog attacks.

Bobcat Behavior



The bobcat is two to three feet long, with a 4-6 inch tail, and weighs only 15 - 40 lbs.

Bobcats are indigenous to the Verdugo Mountains and sightings of them in adjacent residential areas are not uncommon.

Bobcats do not attack people. In fact, bobcat attacks are virtually unknown; however, no one should ever attempt to touch or handle a wild bobcat or her kittens. Bobcats weigh between 15-40 pounds. Carnivore biology studies show that carnivores in this weight range take prey that is much smaller than they are.

> Burbank Animal Shelter 1150 N. Victory Place Burbank, CA 91502

Phone: 818-238-3340 Fax: 818-238-3346 E-mail: BurbankAnimalShelter@burbankca.gov

What do Bobcats eat?

Bobcats eat a variety of animal species, including mice, rats, squirrels, chickens, small fawns, wild birds, feral cats and rabbits. It's very unlikely, but possible, that free-roaming cats or small dogs left outside unattended might be taken as well.

Many people accidentally and unknowingly encourage bobcats and other wild animals to live near their homes by leaving pet food outside, failing to pick up fallen fruit from trees, leaving pets to roam outdoors unattended, leaving bird seed on the ground, and leaving wood piles or dense vegetation to provide hiding places for wildlife. Most urban wildlife is "opportunistic" and "omnivorous," meaning the animals will eat about anything (animal or vegetable matter), and will take the food that is easiest to get. If pet food is left outside, or even in a garage with a pet door entrance, wild animals may find it easier to help themselves to pet food every night than to hunt down rodents.



The bobcat eats a variety of animal species, especially small rodents.

Why not trap and relocate Bobcats?

There are many reasons why trapping and removal is not a long-term, viable solution. For instance:

- Predator species, such as the bobcat, establish and defend a territory. When such an animal is relocated to an established territory, the defending (established) animal will attack - potentially killing, injuring, or driving the relocated bobcat from its new territory. An injured bobcat may not survive, since survival depends upon the ability to hunt, capture and kill prey.
- A wild animal that lives within the boundaries of a city and has lived its life as a scavenger may not have adequate hunting skills, and therefore may not be able to survive without the opportunistic foraging of outdoor pet food, plentiful rodents, backyard fruit, vegetables, and trash of its urban upbringing. Wildlife studies show that urban wildlife learns survival skills for urban living, and country wildlife learns survival skills for country living; they do best when left in the environment for which they have developed survival skills.
- Wildlife disease is another factor. Wild predators in urban settings may have been exposed to diseases associated with domestic pets, which could be transmitted to other wildlife not normally exposed to these threats.
- Trapping and removing animals has done nothing to correct the human equation. The cycle of imbalance will continually repeat itself, at great cost to the community, if people fail to change their own habits and environments.
- Recommended long term solutions for homeowners involve modification of the premises.

Address the factors that attract wild animals, such as gaps in construction that allow access to the attic or under the deck; eliminate thick undergrowth in landscaped areas. Modification to the environment creates an inhospitable atmosphere, and will encourage wild animals to relocate. Such changes will prevent roaming wildlife from showing an interest in staying on your property.

Relocating animals, on the other hand, simply leaves a "vacancy sign", inviting other wild animals to move in. The belief that the solution is to remove and relocate animals is like assuming that if you moved out of your home, no one would move in.

Discouraging Bobcats from coming into your yard

Bobcats are quiet, shy and reclusive – usually seen by themselves or a female with kittens. Typically, it is easy to persuade them to leave. We recommend the use of deterrents and adjustments around the exterior of your home (all endorsed by the Humane Society of the United States) for making your yard and home less inviting to wildlife.