



Safety Tips Around Mountain Lions

Deadwood is home to mountain lions (*Puma concolor*). These animals should always be considered unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Although many times they may detect your presence and flee the area before you notice them, encounters may occur in developed areas as well as in the backcountry.



- Even at a distance a brief glimpse should be cause for awareness. Though the mountain lion is most likely to leave the area, you should travel with caution.
- Make your presence known. Make noise, sing, talk loudly, or wear a bell.
- Avoid walking alone between dusk and dawn when lions are most active.
- Watch children closely and talk to children about lions and what to do if they meet one.
- Hike during daylight hours and stay on established trails.
- Watch for signs of mountain lion use along the trail; scat, claw marks, scratch piles usually made of grass, dirt, pine needles and leaves.
- Stay far away from kittens, their mother is nearby.
- Keep pets on a leash - they are easy prey and may attract mountain lions.
- Do not leave pets or pet food outside and unattended, especially at dawn and dusk. Pets can attract mountain lions into developed areas.
- If there are repeated sightings, be prepared to aggressively defend yourself and others. Be alert and on guard.

If You Encounter a Mountain Lion

- If you spot a mountain lion and the animal is unaware of you, alter your route so that you will move away from its area.
- Never bend over or crouch down, avoid looking like a four-legged prey animal. Again, do not bend over to pick up a rock or stick off the ground. This action may trigger a pounce response in a mountain lion.
- Continue facing the mountain lion and maintain eye contact.
- Never approach a mountain lion especially one that is feeding or with kittens.
- Mountain lions typically avoid confrontation – give them a way to escape.
- Do not run. Remain calm. Hold your ground or back away slowly.
- Do all you can to appear larger; Stand upright, raise your arms, raise your walking stick, open your jacket.
- If you have small children or pets with you, try to pick them up without turning away or bending over.
- If the lion behaves aggressively, wave your arms slowly and speak firmly in a loud voice, and throw objects like the water bottle in your hand. The goal is to convince it that you are not prey and may be dangerous yourself.
- Try to remain standing to protect your head and neck.
- If attacked, fight back! Use rocks or sticks to turn away the mountain lions.
- Report any mountain lion encounters or incident to the local police department or the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Department.

