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**Date:** Fri, 28 Oct 2005 02:22:55 -0400**Subject:** Requested NewsBank Article**From:** infoweb@newsbank.com**To:** djeichenberger@yahoo.com

Paper: Sacramento Bee, The (CA)

Title: Mountain lion on the prowl in River Park - Unusual sighting of cougar rattles neighborhood

Author: Bill LindelofBee Staff Writer

Date: August 17, 2005

Section: METRO

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River Park, a verdant neighborhood just a few miles east of downtown Sacramento, is like a scene from a nature film.

A rookery of black-crowned night herons lives in tall trees around the neighborhood's school.

Early risers glimpse raccoons scurrying past ranch-style homes like masked burglars after a night of prowling.

Earlier this summer, a coyote trotted over the levee near the community park where neighbors jog and walk their dogs.

The latest wildlife sighting, however, is unnerving some residents: A mountain lion has been spotted.

Erin Hare, 28, who lives in western River Park where the neighborhood abuts the Capital City Freeway, said the mountain lion first appeared in her backyard Thursday night. The cat, she said, has slunk down the levee and hopped over the fence into her backyard every night since.

Hare, who manages a midtown tattoo business, said she got a close look at the cat just outside her sliding glass door on the first night.

"I saw something moving right up on the levee. I saw kitty ears," she said. "I thought my neighbor's cat got really fat. Then I saw a full silhouette of it. I thought I was seeing things. It was about 200 pounds."

She watched as the mountain lion moved down the levee, leaped and cleared the fence. Hare ran to close the doggy door to keep the lion from coming inside her house, then called police.

Soon, she said, a law enforcement helicopter bathed her backyard in light, sending the lion over the fence into a neighbor's property. The neighbor also saw the cougar, she said.

A mountain lion sighting that far downstream on the American River is rare, but not unheard-of, said Patrick Foy, spokesman for the state Department of Fish and Game. Usually, reports of lion sightings in the parkway come from farther upstream in places such as Rancho Cordova, he said.

The last time a lion was reported that close to downtown was a few years ago at a spot near California State University, Sacramento, Foy said.

He suggests that River Park residents keep potential lion bait, such as pet food and pets, inside for at least a few weeks.

"If that lion does not have anything to attract it, it will most likely will continue on its way," he said.

Some neighborhood residents are understandably on edge.

Norman La Clair, Hare's next-door neighbor, said he's already following Foy's advice.

"We won't even let our animals outside now in the backyard," he said. "We have three cats and two dogs. They don't go outside unless we are right there with them."

Hare is worried about her dogs and her own safety.

Saturday night, she saw the big cat reclining and called police again. Sunday night, she spotted the lion and tried to capture a photo.

And Monday night, Hare said, the animal returned to her yard just before 11 p.m.

Hare, who wants fish and game officials to capture and remove the animal but does not want it killed, called her city councilman and state senator, pressing for the cougar's removal.

Only when a lion becomes a threat to public safety will it be killed, Foy said.

"If the lion continues to go through the yard even though those things that may be attracting it are gone, then the lion strays into the area (of being) a threat to public safety," he said. "But we are not there yet."

Mountain lions can swim, so the cougar may be eating elsewhere.

Just across the American River from River Park is the American River Parkway, a riparian corridor well-populated with deer, a main food source for mountain lions, Foy said.

In 1990, California voters passed Proposition 117, a law designating the mountain lion as a specially protected animal. Its main provision is a ban on sport hunting of mountain lions.

There has been pressure from cattle ranchers to loosen the law, which makes it difficult to obtain a permit to shoot the cats.

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Paper: The Sacramento Bee  
Title: Deputies shoot, kill mountain lion in yard  
Author: Elizabeth HumeBee Staff Writer  
Date: August 8, 2003  
Section: METRO

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Sacramento County sheriff's deputies Thursday shot and killed a mountain lion that was in a tree in the back yard of an Orangevale residence.

A resident was inside his home about 10:30 a.m. when he heard his two dogs barking in the back yard. Outside he found the mountain lion in a tree and called 911.

When deputies arrived, the male mountain lion appeared to be extremely agitated and bleeding from the nose and back of the head, Sacramento County Sheriff's Lt. Doug Lee said.

The California Department of Fish and Game was called, but before officers arrived, the 70- to 80-pound animal started climbing down the tree.

Concerned that it might harm someone, officers fired several shots, sending the cat back up the tree, snarling, Lee said.

The mountain lion then jumped and charged toward an officer. After another round of shots were fired the cat changed direction, slamming into a 6-foot fence before climbing over it and into the neighbor's back yard.

Officers followed the cat, firing more rounds, before it finally died, Lee said. Fish and Game workers disposed of the body.

Although Fish and Game officials describe lions as "calm, quiet and elusive," they often have been reported over the years at California State University, Sacramento, a Roseville golf course and the American River Parkway.

They are the state's largest carnivore. Adult males can grow to be 8 feet long and weigh 150 pounds. State biologists estimate between 4,000 and 6,000 mountain lions statewide, a number that has increased since the 1920s, when there were thought to be about 600.

In 1990, state voters approved a referendum classifying mountain lions as a "specially protected mammal," meaning they cannot be hunted or trapped but can be killed if deemed a human threat.

In May, Fish and Game officers killed a mountain lion near Burney after it stalked a person and ate a search dog. Last week, a mountain lion jumped a fence in Clear Lake and killed a dog.

In 1994, jogger Barbara Schoener was fatally attacked about 45 miles northeast of Sacramento. It was the only reported killing of a human by a mountain lion in California in more than 90 years. The animal was later tracked down and killed.

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Paper: SACRAMENTO BEE  
Title: COLLEGIATE COUGAR IS ONE SICK KITTY - MOUNTAIN LION CAUGHT AT CSUS HAS LEUKEMIA, MAY HAVE TO BE KILLED  
Date: JANUARY 8, 1991  
Section: METRO  
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The mountain lion found at California State University, Sacramento, last week apparently is suffering from feline leukemia, kidney failure and anemia and may have to be put to death, according to a state wildlife official. The 18- to 24 -month- old male lion has lost eight pounds since it was captured Jan. 1, and blood tests taken Wednesday showed positive for the feline leukemia virus, renal failure and anemia, said Dr. David Jessup, veterinary medical officer for the state Department of Fish and Game.

The lion was spotted New Year's Day by a boy who was coming from a car parked behind the CSUS facilities management building. The animal was anesthetized by authorities and taken to a state laboratory for examination.

Plans had called for his being released in the mountains of either El Dorado or Placer counties at the end of this week.

It's a bummer, said Jessup, who has dubbed the lion Hornet.

He's a sick animal. He feels rotten, Jessup said.

Furthermore, he said the lion is very unhappy being caged up. He has been sulky and stressed out.

Surveys of free-ranging mountain lions in California have never turned up any with the feline leukemia virus. Hornet probably was infected by domestic cats, Jessup said.

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Paper: SACRAMENTO BEE  
Title: STATE TO KICK MOUNTAIN LION OUT OF SCHOOL AND BACK INTO NATURE  
Date: JANUARY 4, 1991  
Section: METRO  
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The mountain lion that went to college is headed for higher elevations, not higher learning, state wildlife officials said. The future home for the male mountain lion found lounging at California State University, Sacramento, Tuesday like a student with two hours between classes will likely be in the mountains of either El Dorado or Placer counties.

We will probably take him out and release him next week, said Dr. Dave Jessup, veterinary medical officer for the state Department of Fish and Game.

The 18- to 24-month-old lion apparently followed the American River Parkway down the Sierra foothills in search of food. We have to assume he ended up there because he was a young animal and could not defend his territory. He basically got hungry and started to look around, Jessup said.

Jessup said as the number of humans and cougars increases, so do the mountain lion sightings in urban areas. Humans and mountain lions are on a collision course, he said.

The lion was spotted New Year's Day by a boy who was just coming from a car parked behind the CSUS facilities management building. The animal was anesthetized by authorities and taken to a state laboratory for examination.

Pending lab results for feline leukemia, Jessup declared the cougar well, although a bit thin.

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Paper: SACRAMENTO BEE  
Title: PICNICKERS' SURPRISE GUEST AT CSUS: A LION  
Date: JANUARY 2, 1991  
Section: METRO  
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A group of people picnicking at California State University, Sacramento, on New Year's Day were startled when they discovered a young mountain lion lounging near a garbage can. The lion, which measured about 5 feet from nose to tail and weighed 75 to 80 pounds, apparently followed the American River Parkway down from the Sierra foothills in search of

food, said Sgt. Douglas Jensen of the CSUS Department of Public Safety.

It was first sighted about 2 p.m. by one of the picnickers, a boy who was just coming from a car parked behind the school's facilities management building.

He went to his mother and said he had spotted a cougar. Skeptical, she went to see for herself and found the lion lying next to a tree near a garbage can.

Agents from the state Department of Fish and Game and Sacramento city animal control were notified. After about 90 minutes during which people were milling about within sight of the big cat the lion was anesthetized and trapped.

Until zapped with the dart, the friendly feline didn't move.

It must have been used to people, because it didn't display any fear, Jensen said. I was amazed myself. The cat lay by the tree, just kicked back, enjoying itself.

Once struck by the dart, the lion ran nearly 200 yards to an arboretum, where it collapsed. It was then caged and carted away by the Fish and Game agents, who will now decide what to do with it.

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