

MAMMALS



cougar *(Puma concolor)*

DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE: Though listed as endangered in the State, it is believed that the cougar was extirpated by the early 1900s. The eastern cougar (*Puma concolor cougar*) is listed as endangered federally. At this time, no conclusive evidence exists to suggest the presence of a breeding population in the State. It should be noted that western populations are expanding eastward and may eventually result in reestablishment of cougars, particularly in the Western Upper Peninsula.

ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE FEATURES: lowland hardwood; lowland conifer; inland emergent wetland; swamp; pond; river/stream/riparian/floodplain corridor; other (cervid prey); large contiguous natural landscape

ASSOCIATED THREATS: climate change; conversion to agriculture lands; fragmentation; removal of wildlife; social attitudes

COMMENTS: Numerous sightings have been reported over the years and DNA evidence of cougars has been found in some locations. A difficulty lies in verifying sighting reports. While some appear to be credible documentation of the existence of a cougar, many others have been investigated and turned out to be misidentifications. In addition, there is no corroborating information on the origin of animals sighted, or of animals documented through DNA. This species may also be known by the name *Felis concolor*.