

SAFETY ALERT



Department of Public Safety
Saint Mary's College



Mountain Lion Sightings

Mountain lions are quiet, solitary and elusive, and typically avoid people. Mountain lion attacks on humans are extremely rare. However, conflicts have increased as California's human population expands into mountain lion habitat.

To reduce the chances of encountering a Mountain Lion:

- Avoid hiking alone, especially between dusk and dawn, when lions normally do their hunting. Make plenty of noise while you hike so as to reduce the chances of surprising a lion.
- Always keep children in sight while hiking and within arm's reach in areas that can conceal a lion. Mountain Lions seem to be drawn to children.
- Hike with a good walking stick; this can be useful in warding off a lion.

To reduce the chances of an attack when encountering a Mountain Lion:

- Do not approach a lion, especially if it is feeding or with its young. Most lions will avoid confrontation. Give them a way to escape.
- Stay calm and face the lion. Do not run because this may trigger the lion's instinct to attack. Try to appear larger by raising your hands.
- Pick up small children so they don't panic and run. This will also make you appear larger. Avoid bending over or crouching.
- If the lion acts aggressively, throw rocks, branches, or whatever can be obtained without turning your back or bending over.
- Fight back if attacked. Since a mountain lion usually tries to bite the head or neck, try to remain standing and face the attacking animal. People have successfully fought back with rocks, sticks, or bare hands.

As with any emergency situation call 925-631-4282 from a cell phone.

This alert was distributed as a public service to the Saint Mary's College community

Some of the above information is from www.desertusa.com and <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/keepmewild/lion.html>