

Other Animals that are caught in conflict situations include:


- ⇒ **Black caiman** - shared food resources such as fishes and other wildlife used for human consumption can cause conflicts with black caimans
- ⇒ **Monkeys** - animals such as the red howler monkey can be killed by oncoming traffic while trying to cross roads.
- ⇒ Animals can be displaced through destruction of their habitats by human activities such as mining, slash and burn agriculture.




GUYANA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



Dealing with Wildcat Conflict

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WHO ARE WE?

The Guyana Wildlife Management Authority became the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission (GWCMC) on June 1, 2017 with the commencement of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2016.

This Act mandates the Commission to provide for the protection, conservation, management and sustainable use, internal and external trade of Guyana's Wildlife.

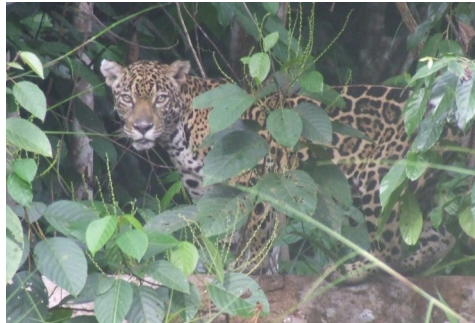
Human/Wildcat Conflict

Human/Wildcat Interactions can occur due to a number of reasons including:

- ⇒ The expansion of human populations into the natural habitat of wild animals;
- ⇒ Abandoned/overgrown land;
- ⇒ Older animals looking for and having access to easy prey;
- ⇒ Overhunting of prey species of wild cats;
- ⇒ Carelessness in caring for domesticated animals; and
- ⇒ Misconceptions about dangers posed by wildlife.



WILD CATS IN GUYANA



- ⇒ There are six (6) wildcat species in Guyana: jaguar, puma, margay, oncilla, ocelot, and jaguarondi.
- ⇒ According to Regulation 4 (7) of the Wildlife Conservation, Management and Sustainable Use Regulations (2019) all wildcats are protected throughout Guyana and it is an offence to collect, hold in captivity, kill, hunt, or otherwise molest a protected species.
- ⇒ The big cats like the jaguar and puma are important because they are the top predators in their habitat. This means they have no natural predators and they **control the population** of prey species further down the food chain.

WHY IS POPULATION CONTROL IMPORTANT?

- ⇒ It prevents overgrazing of ecosystems by herbivores, which would result in less food being available for other species in the ecosystem, leading to their death.
- ⇒ It decreases the likelihood of the outbreak of diseases to prey population.
- ⇒ It aids in maintaining healthy ecosystems which includes a clean water supply, pure air, diversity of plants and animals.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

To ensure the mutual co-existence of humans and wildcats, the GWCMC advises the following:

- ⇒ In areas or communities where there is evidence of jaguars or large cats posing a threat to human life and domestic animals, residents are asked not to trap or kill the animal.
- ⇒ Avoid having children walking alone.
- ⇒ Secure yards and houses, especially at nights.
- ⇒ Pets and livestock should be secured in appropriate enclosures (pens, corrals) to reduce the likelihood of the animals being taken.
- ⇒ Install flashing lights on pens/corrals
- ⇒ Keep your surroundings clean, avoid having overgrown bushes.
- ⇒ Reduce hunting especially for animal species that are the prey of big cats, e.g., peccary, labba, tapir, deer, etc.
- ⇒ Where cubs are seemingly left abandoned, monitoring should be done for a short period (a few days), as big cats usually leave their cubs to hunt for food. Cubs should not be removed or killed unless it is certain that they have been abandoned and are in distress. *N.B. A mother with cubs can be very protective and extra care needs to be taken to reduce harm in these situations.*
- ⇒ During direct confrontation with big cats, do not turn your back or run. Look the cat in the face and make as much noise as you can. If you have anything on your person that would make you appear bigger/taller be sure to use.
- ⇒ In cases of conflict with wild cats, we urge all residents to contact the GWCMC promptly.
- ⇒ Regulation 20 (1) of the Wildlife Conservation, Management and Sustainable Use Regulations (2019) states that 'it shall not be unlawful for any person to kill or wound any wild animal in defence of himself, herself or any other person, if immediately and absolutely necessary.' In such a case, a report should be made to the nearest police station or to the Commission as soon as possible.