

Cougar Hunting in Alberta

COUGARS





Cougar populations in Alberta are managed with hunting seasons to help maintain healthy populations, reduce conflicts with people, manage predation on wild ungulates and to provide recreational opportunities. Information about Alberta's cougar hunting regulations follows below.

Licences

Licence Type	Cougar Season	Fee
Resident cougar licence	September 1 to August 25 December 1 to the last day of February	\$20.31
Non-resident (Canadian) cougar licence	December 1 to the last day of February	\$135.31
Non-resident (Canadian) cougar special licence ¹	December 1 to the last day of February	\$135.31
Non-resident alien cougar special licence ¹	December 1 to the last day of February	\$254.97

¹Licences that must be purchased through an outfitter-guide.

Cougar harvested during the fall season (August 25 to December 31) and those harvested as authorized by owners and occupants of private land do not count towards the quotas established for cougars that are harvested in each Cougar Management Area.

It is unlawful to hunt a cougar kitten with spotted fur or a female cougar accompanied by a cougar kitten with spotted fur. Before shooting, hunters should carefully evaluate whether a cougar has spots or whether it is accompanied by another cougar that has spots.

Fall Season

Cougars may be hunted by holders of a Resident Cougar Licence from:

- September 1 to December 31 in the following Wildlife Management Units: 100-166, 200-260, 357-360, 410, 500-504, 506, 508, 514, and 518-544.
- August 25 to November 30 in Wildlife Management Units: 412-446.

The use of dogs is prohibited during this season, and hunters may harvest one cougar of either sex. No quotas exist for this season.

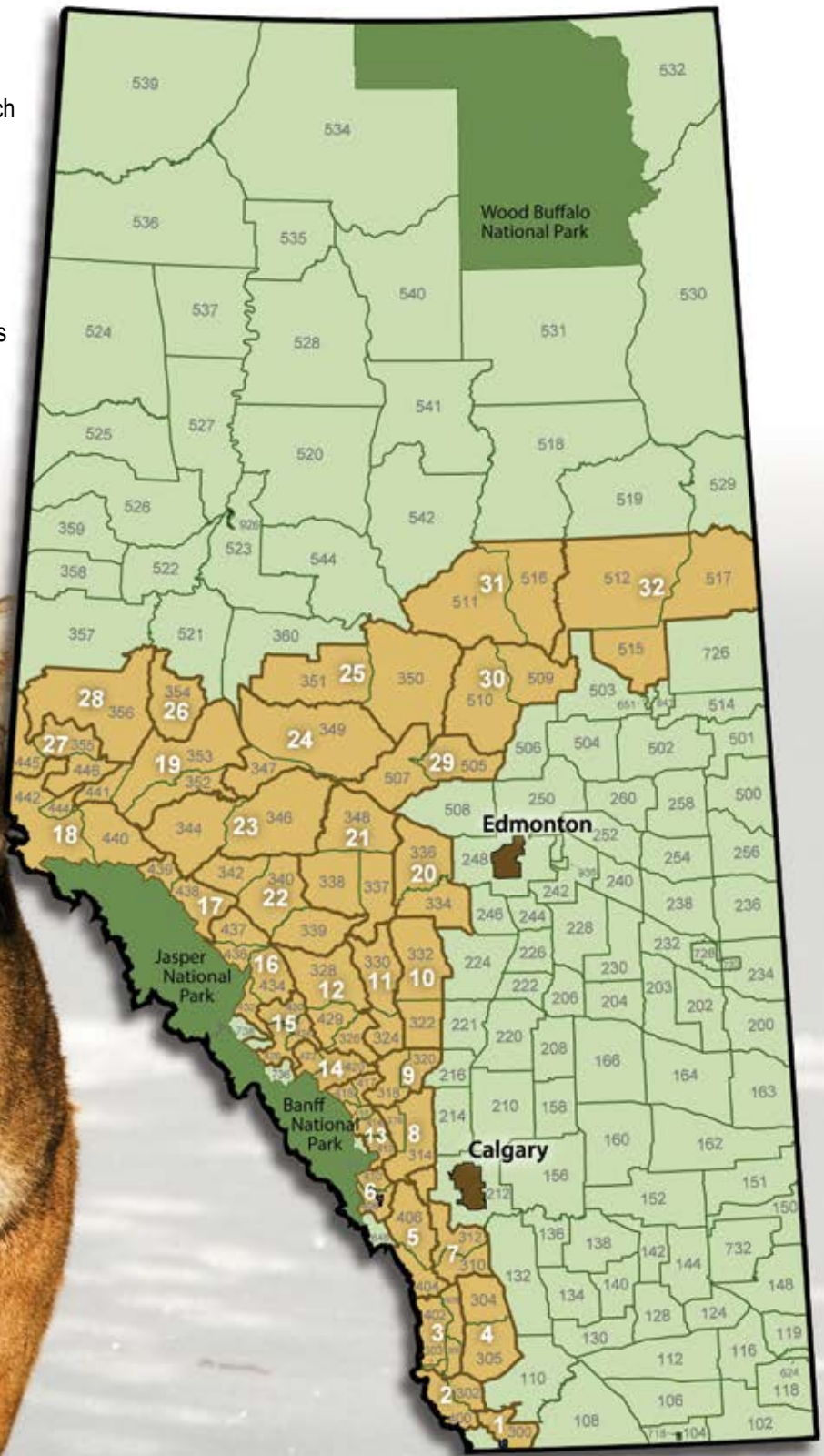
Winter Season

From December 1 to the last day of February, cougars may be hunted by holders of a resident cougar licence, non-resident cougar licence or cougar special licence in the following Cougar Management Areas:

CMA	WMUs	CMA	WMUs
1	300	17	438, 439
2	302, 400	18	440, 442, 444
3	303, 306, 308, 402	19	352, 353, 441
4	304, 305	20	334, 336
5	404, 406	21	337, 338, 348
6	408, 410	22	339, 340, 342
7	310, 312	23	344, 346
8	314, 316	24	347, 349
9	318, 320	25	350, 351
10	322, 332	26	354
11	324, 330	27	355, 445, 446
12	326, 328, 429	28	356
13	412, 414, 416, 417, 418	29	505, 507
14	420, 422	30	509, 510
15	426, 428, 430	31	511, 516
16	432, 434, 436, 437	32	512, 515, 517

Cougars

Each Cougar Management Area is comprised of one or more Wildlife Management Units. There is a separate quota for male and female cougars in each Cougar Management Area. The season in each area closes independently for each sex when the quota has been filled. Hunters must call the cougar hotline at 1-800-661-3729 (toll-free) each day prior to hunting to determine which Cougar Management Areas are open. For holders of a cougar special licence (outfitted non-resident or non-resident alien hunters), quotas do not apply, and the season remains open for either sex until the last day of February.



- 12** Cougar Management Area
- 210** Wildlife Management Unit

Cougar hunting privileges on private land

Any person who is the owner or occupant of privately owned land may, at any time of the year, hunt (but not trap) cougar on such lands without a licence. Under this authority, registration is required within one week of the kill, and the owner or occupant may keep the cougar.

Use of Dogs

Dogs may be used to hunt cougars by holders of a resident, non-resident, or special cougar licence from December 1 to the last day of February in a Wildlife Management Unit where the season remains open. The use of dogs is prohibited during the fall season (November 1 to November 30), in Wildland Parks and by persons harvesting cougars under the landowner/occupant authority on private land.

Use of Predator Calls and Bait

Cougars may be hunted using mouth or hand operated calls. The use of electronic calls and bait are prohibited for hunting cougars.

Tagging

Immediately after harvesting a cougar under the authority of a hunting licence, the appropriate tag must be affixed and securely locked to the skin. The tag must remain affixed until the skin is processed.





Registration and Evidence of Sex

All harvested cougars must be registered at a Fish and Wildlife office. Cougars taken by resident or hunter-hosted non-resident hunters must be registered within one business day following the kill. Cougars harvested under the authority of an Outfitter-Guide allocation must be registered within 5 business days following the kill. Cougars taken by owners or occupants of privately owned land must be registered within one week of the kill. The skin and skull must be submitted, complete with the evidence of sex attached and visible. Evidence of sex consists of the scrotum for males and a teat or a portion of a mammary gland for females.

During registration, Fish and Wildlife staff will remove a premolar tooth for aging. This allows the department to determine the age structure of the cougar harvest, which is used in setting quotas. If possible, cougars should be brought in for registration in an unfrozen condition so the tooth can be removed. It is also helpful to prop the jaw open with a stick before rigor sets in. The registration will not be considered complete until the tooth has been collected. Ages of cougars will be available at www.mywildalberta.ca, listed by registration number, within 18 months of the date of registration.

Exporting a Cougar from Alberta

Anyone exporting a cougar to points outside Alberta must obtain a provincial export permit. Anyone exporting a cougar to points outside Canada must also obtain a federal export permit issued in accordance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).

To find the Fish and Wildlife office nearest you, call 310-0000.

To contact Environment Canada for information about CITES permits, call 1-800-668-6767.

Consuming Cougar Meat

To prevent possible exposure to trichinosis, a parasitic infection, cougar meat should be thoroughly cooked before it is consumed by humans or pets. Hunters are not required to salvage or consume cougar meat.

Except for a cougar taken under the landowner/occupant authority, it is illegal to allow the skin of any cougar to be wasted, destroyed, spoiled or abandoned. There is no legal requirement to salvage the meat of cougar taken under the authority of a licence or taken under the landowner/occupant authority.

Identifying Males and Females

From December 1 to the last day of February, the season for either male or female cougars may be closed in a Wildlife Management Unit while the season for the other sex remains open. In these cases, hunters must be able to identify the sex of a cougar prior to harvest. Adult male cougars have a conspicuous black spot approximately four-to-five inches (10-to-14 cm) below the anus. Female cougars have a much smaller, conspicuous black spot approximately one inch (two-to-three cm) below the anus. The black spot on female cougars is often hidden by the base of the tail. Hunters are encouraged to use binoculars to look for the location of the black spot. It may be necessary to make the cougar shift position in order to get a good look. Banging a branch against the tree will often make the cougar move.



In this photo of a female cougar, the black spot is hidden by the base of the tail.

The black spot on this tranquilized male cougar is clearly visible about 4 inches below the anus.



For further information about cougars visit aep.alberta.ca.

