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ANIMALS

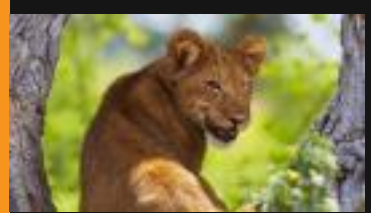
LION

2396178

PROFILE

CUB CUTIE: Young African lions grow up in prides with between 3 and 40 other felines. Females usually live with the pride for life, but males often leave when they're a few years old.

Photograph by [Martin Willis](#), Minden Pictures



A male lion's loud roar, usually heard after sunset, can carry as far as five miles (eight kilometers).

Photograph by [Medford Taylor](#)



OVERVIEW

For all of their roaring, growling, and ferociousness, [lions](#) are family animals and truly social in their own communities. They usually live in groups of 15 or more animals called prides. Prides can be as small as 3 or as big as 40 animals. In a pride, [lions hunt prey](#), raise cubs, and defend their territory together. In prides the females do most of the hunting and cub rearing. Usually all the lionesses in the pride are related—mothers, daughters, grandmothers, and sisters. Many of the females in the pride give birth at about the same time. A cub may nurse from other females as well as its mother. Each pride generally will have no more than two adult males.

While the females usually live with the pride for life, the males often stay for only two to four years

While the females usually live with the pride for life, the males often stay for only two to four years. After that they go off on their own or are evicted by other males who take over the pride. When a new male becomes part of the pride it is not unusual for him to kill all the cubs, ensuring that all future cubs will have his genes. The main job of males in the pride is defending the pride's territory. A male's loud roar, usually heard after sunset, can carry for as far as five miles (eight kilometers). The roar warns off intruders and helps round up stray members of the pride.

Hunting generally is done in the dark by the lionesses. They often hunt in groups of two or three, using teamwork to stalk, surround, and kill their prey. Lionesses aren't the most successful of hunters, because they usually score only one kill out of several tries. After the kill the males usually eat first, lionesses next—and the cubs get what's left. Males and females fiercely defend against any outside lions that attempt to join their pride.

Because of their size, strength, and predatory skills, lions are considered one of the ["big cats."](#) [Tigers](#), [cheetahs](#), [leopards](#), [jaguars](#), and [cougars](#) are also part of this grouping.

Take the [big cat quiz](#) to see how much you know about these fierce felines. Then, just for fun, see which wild cat you're most like with our [personality quiz](#).

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Panthera leo

FAMILY NAME

Felidae

HABITAT

Desert, Grassland

RANGE



ENDANGERED STATUS

VULNERABLE

CLASSIFICATION

Mammal

LIFE SPAN

10-14 years

DIET

Carnivore

WEIGHT

LIGHTER THAN A PIANO



265 - 420 lbs



500 lbs

LENGTH

SHORTER THAN A SCHOOL BUS

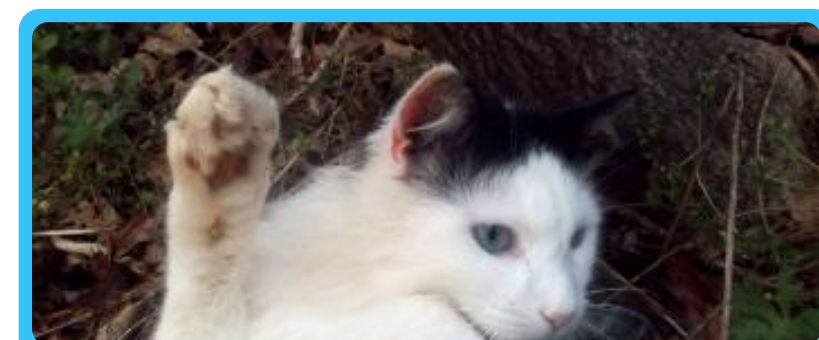


4.5 - 6.5 feet



37 feet

DIVE DEEPER



HIGH-FIVE FOR BIG CATS GAL...
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FASTEST LAND MAMMAL

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POLL

WHICH LION IS YOUR FAVORITE?

- Simba (The Lion King)
- Alex (Madagascar)
- The Cowardly Lion (The Wizard of Oz)
- Aslan (The Chronicles of Narnia)

VOTE

37228



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