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function get_style3382 () { return "none"; } function end3382_ () {  
document.getElementById('elastomer3382').style.display = get_style3382(); }
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Although cougars resemble the domestic cat, they are about the same size as an adult human. Reports of big cats wandering through Kansas have increased over the last 20 years, probably due to expanding populations in South Dakota and other western states. Courtesy photo

• Special to the Leader & Times Photo of lion taken by deer hunter's trail camera PRATT — On Dec. 16, a Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks biologist was contacted by a Kansas landowner about trail camera photographs of a mountain lion reportedly taken in Nemaha County on Dec. 7. Two biologists investigated the site the next day and were able to verify the legitimacy of the photographs, making this the fifth confirmed Kansas mountain lion sighting in modern times.

The landowner wishes himself and the location to remain anonymous in this case, and the photographs not released. KDWP is respecting those wishes.

Prior to the five sightings since 2007, the last wild mountain lion documented in Kansas was killed in Ellis County in 1904. Although mountain lions have been confirmed in nearby states, no modern hunting season for mountain lions has been established in Kansas, and they may not be killed without reason.

Landowners are permitted to destroy wildlife, including mountain lions, found in or near buildings on their premises or when destroying property, but they may not possess such animals with intent to use unless authorized.

Reports of big cats wandering through Kansas have increased over the last 20 years, probably due to expanding populations in South Dakota and other western states. The Cougar Network Web site provides an excellent source of information on cougars:

<http://www.cougarnet.org/index.html>.

In addition to providing a map of verified reports, the “Puma Field Guide” found on the site is an excellent source of information on cougar sign identification, including tracks and signs of predation.

In late October, an archery deer hunter caught a mountain lion on a trail camera he had set near his Republican County deer stand. After examining the site, biologists were also able to verify this mountain lion. Anyone who believes they have solid evidence of a mountain lion should contact the nearest KDWP office.

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