

Habitat types preferred by lynx are variable, ranging from old-growth coniferous forests to coniferous or mixed forests that are regenerating after fire or logging. Forests that are growing back after fire or logging often provide excellent food and cover for hares, and therefore attract lynx. It is extremely rare for lynx to be found in deserts, prairies, or farmland habitats.

Bobcats are widely distributed across the United States. They are rare along portions of the mid-Atlantic coast with dense human populations. Bobcat densities are usually greater in southern states. Their northern distribution may be limited by snow depth.

Bobcats seem to prefer areas with high prey abundance and dense understory vegetation. Forest edges and rocky ledges and outcrops are also important terrain features. Bobcats thrive in a variety of habitats including dense old-growth forests, hardwood and hardwood-mixed forests, brushy habitats, deserts, prairies, swamps, and farmland habitats.

Both lynx and bobcats seem to use the convenience of logging roads in forests to aid travel.

Trapping Methods to Help Avoid Catching Lynx

To avoid lynx while trapping bobcats, trap sets should be made where bobcats are known to exist. Making

trap sets near existing bobcat tracks is often successful because bobcats often reuse the same travel patterns within their territories. Bobcats also tend to use areas where cottontail rabbits are abundant. Trap set locations that tend to avoid lynx include open meadows, pastures, and crop lands. Lynx rarely use agricultural lands and generally prefer to hunt and travel in forested or brushy areas.



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Leaning poles for marten and fisher should be less than 6 inches in diameter.

Whenever a lynx track is identified, trap and snare sets should not be made in the vicinity.

Trap sets that are effective for bobcats also appeal to lynx. Lures and baits that appeal to one species appeal to the other as well. Visible baits of rabbits, hares, or parts of rabbits or hares should not be used

if lynx may frequent the area. Flags or other suspended sight-attractants (such as bird wings, feathers, pieces of fur, etc.) also should not be used near the traps if lynx may be present.

Incidental captures of lynx can be reduced by using a proper-sized foothold trap. Number 2 coilspring or number 1.75 coilspring traps help discriminate against lynx captures due to a relatively small trap-jaw spread. However, these sized traps maintain excellent efficiency for bobcats (as well as foxes and coyotes). Another appropriate foothold trap to consider where lynx may be present is the padded number 3 coilspring trap.

All types of foothold traps should be staked solidly to prevent a trapped lynx (or bobcat) from harming itself by entangling around trees or brush. Trap attachment chains should be no longer than 18 inches between the trap and trap stake, be attached at the center of the trap frame, and should include at least two swivels.

Lynx often avoid traps set for foxes and coyotes when the traps are placed in open fields. The use of tainted rather than fresh meat baits also tends not to attract lynx while still providing significant attraction to coyotes and foxes.

Marten and fisher often use the same habitat as lynx. To avoid lynx in marten or fisher sets, baits and traps should be placed on leaning poles at least 3 to 4 feet above the ground or snow level. Leaning poles should

be no larger than 6 inches in diameter as this size is adequate for marten or fisher, yet discourages lynx from climbing to investigate the elevated trap set.

The typical walking behavior of a lynx frequently enables it to notice and avoid snares that are 5/64 inch thick or thicker. Snare loops for coyotes and foxes should measure at least 8 inches from side to side. Attention to these two details by trappers will usually enable a lynx to avoid or remove the snare before it closes.

Bobcat Hunting Methods to Help Avoid Taking Lynx

Tracks should be closely examined and measured before any trailing dogs are released. (See “Sign” section). Any treed bobcat should carefully be identified and confirmed as not being a lynx before it is harvested. A treed lynx should be abandoned immediately with harnessed dogs in tow.

If predator calls are used in areas lynx may frequent, it is essential to identify and confirm any responding animals to assure a lynx is not shot. Since it may be difficult or impossible to positively identify a moving or partially hidden animal as a lynx or bobcat, it is best not to shoot at all whenever positive identity is unknown.