

PRESS RELEASE

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Media contact: Gigi Allianic, Alissa Wolken
206.548.2550 | woodlandparkzoo@zoo.org

Editor note: Visit the zoo's [blog](#) for photos.

Calling for community participation: seeking backyard access for cameras ***New study focuses on coexistence of people and carnivores***

SEATTLE—*Is your yard a stomping ground for cougars, coyotes, raccoons, skunks or even bears? Would you like to see what's in your backyard?* It's easy! Just allow a remote camera to be placed on your property to help collect data for a research study: the **Washington Urban–Wildland Carnivore Project**.



A collaboration between Woodland Park Zoo and the University of Washington School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, the Washington Urban–Wildland Carnivore Project is exploring ways to promote coexistence among humans and carnivores in King County. The research explores how carnivores respond to urbanization and human activity by studying where and when they occur, what they eat and what happens to the system when apex carnivores are absent.

Focal species for the study include cougars, black bears, bobcats, coyotes, raccoons, striped skunks, and domestic dogs and cats. The remote cameras are temporarily attached to a tree on the property. "Remote cameras allow us to study these elusive species without capturing them or even interrupting their activity patterns," explained Robert Long, PhD, a senior conservation fellow in Woodland Park Zoo's field conservation department. Long oversees the project for the zoo and UW graduate student Michael Havrda coordinates and conducts research on the ground.

"We're calling on the participation of our community because our study relies on placing wildlife monitoring cameras along the gradient of human development and activity in King County. Not only will local residents help us conduct valuable scientific research, but they'll also get a rare opportunity to see what type of wildlife may be visiting their homes," said Long. Cameras will be removed four to six weeks after installation.

As human development continues to expand, research on species that occur within the urban–wildland gradient helps lay the groundwork for land-use planning, public education, outreach and conservation. "Remote cameras are deployed in forest patches on federal, state, municipal, and private lands along a gradient of human development intensity, from urban to wildland," added Long. The cameras are placed along game or human trails, roads, or other landscape features that maximize the probability of detecting the study species.

The study also includes a diet component that will provide some insight into what these species are eating in both wild and human-dominated systems.

For information on how to participate and have a camera installed on your property, visit the [Washington Urban–Wildland Carnivore Project](#).

Long, a carnivore research ecologist, is known for spearheading innovations in noninvasive wildlife research methods and conducts carnivore research in North America. He also is currently focused on wolverine research and conservation in Washington state, and is helping to expand the zoo's [Living Northwest](#) conservation program.

"The core mission of Woodland Park Zoo is wildlife conservation and education. This carnivore study is another important initiative we are supporting that focuses on wildlife and their wild places right here in our own backyard," said Fred Koontz, PhD, vice president of field conservation at Woodland Park Zoo.

Visit www.zoo.org or call 206.548.2500 for information about Woodland Park Zoo.

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