

What Are Bobcats Like?

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Bobcats look a lot like plain old house cats, just quite a bit bigger. Their coats can be gray, brown, or reddish brown. They may have black streaks. All bobcats are spotted, but some have spots only on their chests, while others are spotted on their backs too.

The bobcat got his name from his tail which looks like a small stub, not like the long tail that house cats have. A bobcat's tail looks as if someone had "bobbed" it or cut it off. The tail is black on the top and white on the bottom. Bobcat noses are a reddish pink.

Bobcats populate the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Even though bobcats have to share their habitats with humans, they are not becoming extinct. Today, there are more than 700,000 bobcats living in the wild.

Bobcats eat only meat and hunt many animals and insects for food. They hunt rabbits, rodents, muskrats, fish, geese, and even small deer. Bobcats who live near humans will eat chicken and lamb when they can get it. While bobcats are too small to hunt humans, they could kill a cat or small dog left outside.

In the hours just before sunset, bobcats like to come out to roam and hunt until about midnight. They can run as fast as 30 miles per hour, so they can out-chase many animals. Bobcats climb well, just like house cats. Like other cats, they do not like the water even though they can swim.

When they are not hunting, bobcats rest and sleep in their dens. A bobcat will have a main den, but other small dens too. This way, after a bobcat hunts in all his best spots, he can make a quick sprint to a nearby den for a nap.