

Deep within the tangled grasses and winding waterways of the Florida Everglades lives a secretive predator known as the Florida panther. This endangered big cat is a close relative of the more common mountain lion of the western part of North America. There are thought to be 230 Florida panthers left in the wild.

Florida panthers are slightly smaller than their western counterparts. The average Florida panther weighs about 100 pounds, but the largest males can grow to 160 pounds. They hunt prey as small as mice and prey as large as deer, pigs, cats, storks, herons, and even alligators. In turn, they are sometimes preyed upon by large alligators. Humans, however, are by far the biggest threat to Florida panthers. Habitat destruction and collisions with vehicles have taken a major toll on the population.

**1. Which of the following is accurate?**

- A. The mountain lion and Florida panther are both common in their habitats
- B. The mountain lion less is much less common than the Florida panther
- C. The Florida panther is somewhat less common than the mountain lion
- D. The Florida panther is far less common than the mountain lion

**2. Which of the following would be the worst threat to the Florida panther population?**

- A. A new housing developing with roads
- B. An increase in alligators
- C. An increase in the number of deer in the area
- D. Hikers

**3. Which is not true?**

- A. Florida panthers are usually found in the wetlands of Florida
- B. Florida panthers can be both predators and prey of alligators
- C. A normal Florida panther weighs about 160 pounds
- D. Mountain lions are usually larger than Florida panthers

**4. Which of the following would be unlikely?**

- A. Watching a Florida panther hunting an alligator
- B. Watching a Florida panther eat leaves from a tree
- C. Seeing a Florida panther along a highway in the Florida Everglades
- D. Seeing a Florida panther that weighs 105 pounds