

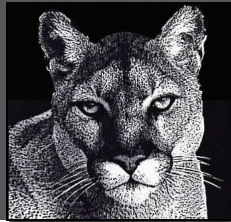
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The Nature of Wildworks

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The Nature of Wildworks, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) wildlife care and education center, is a celebration of all the remarkable diverse creatures with whom we are privileged to share this life on earth.

Caring for the individual wild animals at our center ~and sharing them with you~ allows all of us to realize & appreciate that every creature roaming freely in the wild is its own distinct personality & is deserving of its own fair chance at life.



Dedicated to the lifetime care of non-releaseable wild animals



BOBCAT (*Felis rufus*)

The bobcat is a medium-sized carnivore living in California and varied habitats throughout North America. These beautiful members of the small cat family weigh 15 to 35 pounds and wear a spotted coat, bobbed tail and pointed ears with black tufts at the tips. They meow and purr like domestic cats.

Experts at hunting, bobcats use stealth in stalking their quarry and often wait hours alongside trails for rodents to wander within 10 feet of their spring range. Their scent-marked territories are traveled daily. Despite the fact that bobcats are valuable to farmers because they consume numerous rodents, they have been hunted and trapped for their pelts since the 1700's. Due to their elusive nature and cautious behavior around humans, bobcats are rarely seen.

www.NatureOfWildworks.org

A Letter from Bobby



Dear Friends of Wildworks,

What's happening? Where am I? Where are we going? We're driving somewhere and I like to ride in the car because my family takes me everywhere. Sometimes even to the beach! But these people aren't my family. Who are these people, anyway?

I'm a bobcat and I'm scared but I don't show it. Don't tell on me, but I'm bluffing. Wild animals aren't willing to show their weaknesses. We have to act tough to scare off bigger predators, like mountain lions! So now I've pushed the tufts of fur on the side of my face forward to make my face look bigger. If I want to, I can make all the fur all over my body stand on end. Neat trick, eh? This helps me look big and scary. But I'm the one who's scared. I'm growling... but I never bite.

Just a short time ago, I was home, lying on my bed, playing with my toys. Home with my family. Where are they? Then there was a knock on the door and some strangers in uniforms started asking questions. My family got the leash out and I got all excited because I thought they were taking me for a walk. Better yet, they led me over to the car. We were going for a ride! But it was the wrong car, and it smelled funny.

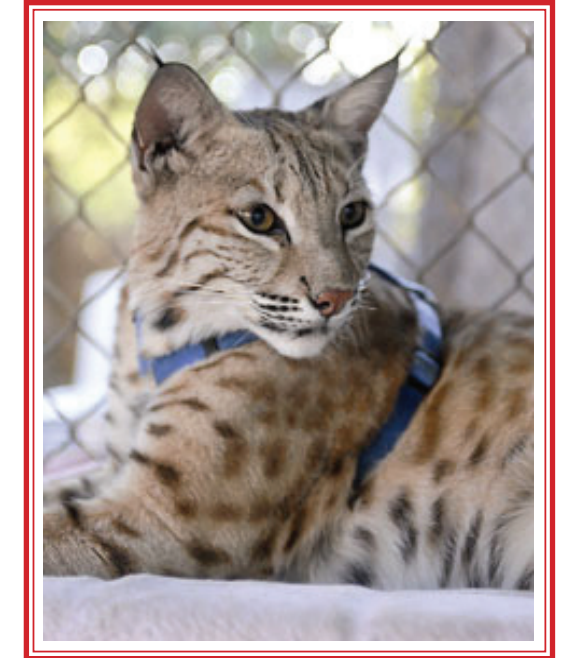
It smells funny here, too, and although there are plenty of other animals to keep me company, we're all separated and everybody seems nervous. There's a lot of barking and scratching. At home I had a Chihuahua for a friend so I tried to say hi to the little dog next to me. She snapped and growled and moved back into a corner. Nobody wants to be my friend.

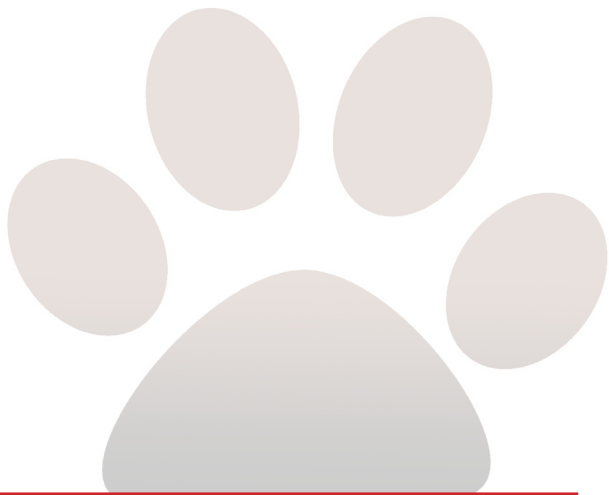
I think I must be the only bobcat here. Usually animal shelters house dogs and cats and rabbits who have lost their home, too. There's even a pot-bellied pig next door. He doesn't like me either.

Being a bobcat you'd think I'd get the royal treatment. Well, the humans in uniforms do pay more attention to me than the others. But they scare me. They push rakes toward me and stare and never bend down to pet me even though I love to be petted. I think they're trying to make themselves look bigger, too! After all, we bobcats don't have a great reputation. We're actually shy and secretive by nature, but people are often afraid of wild cats simply because they don't see us very often. And just like me, humans are afraid of what they don't understand.

The animal control officers are bringing someone over to my cage. "He's in here, Mollie." She seems friendly, and brave too. She's coming into my cage without a rake, even though I'm growling and hiding in the corner. Now she's sitting next to me and her hand is reaching over to scratch my chin. Oh, that feels so good! Purrrr. Mollie says "This is a really nice bobcat" and she'll take me home to The Nature of Wildworks care center. So I jump in her car and away we go. I wonder if my family will be there too.

I want my family. I've lived with them since I was a tiny kitten and I'm imprinted, which means that I'll always love them the most. But as it turns out it's illegal in California to have a bobcat as a pet. You need a special license and my family can't get one. It's a good law because usually **bobcats don't make good pets**. But if you had to have one, I would be the one to pick because I tried really hard to be a good pet. I used my giant litter box and I was successful at getting along with all the dogs and cats and people in the house. In fact, the neighbors loved to come see me and I made lots of human friends and I only smacked the housecats once in awhile. Just as a warning, you understand. After all, they were in my territory!





I had the run of the house and the back yard, and one day someone saw me and reported my family to the authorities. When animal control officers came to get me they brought the whole police force! Geez, you'd think somebody had been murdered! I know now that they were just doing their job, but they didn't need to scare us. Unfortunately, they did have to take me away from my family and my home.

I miss my family. They really knew how to be nice to me. Well, except for one thing. They didn't know that I needed my claws. My claws were removed when I was a tiny kitten and boy did that hurt! I was really growling when I came home from the vet. Even my animal friends were afraid to come near me. My family had nice furniture and they wanted to be able to share it with me. They knew that bobcats liked to mark their territory by leaving claw marks on trees. They were afraid I would use the sofa instead.

My family didn't know that it would hurt me or that the surgery would cause permanent pain to my feet because they hadn't learned what declawing really is. They didn't know that when veterinarians declaw cats they don't just remove the claws--they cut off the toes! OUCH! I needed my toes, and my claws as well. How would they feel if I cut off their toes? I've been scared of the vet ever since.

Now, two years later it's hard for me to jump or walk very far. In fact, the other day my new friend, Mollie, took me for a walk and my feet hurt so bad that I stopped, looked up at her and then leaped into her arms! I licked her face to say thank you and she carried me even though I weigh 30 pounds. Mollie is the most important person in my life now. The animal shelter called her because she runs a non-profit wildlife center called The Nature of Wildworks where she takes care of animals for their whole lives. This makes me purr. My new house has a nice soft floor with blankets, toys and a ramp up to my shelf to help my sore feet. My family is allowed to visit because Mollie wants me to be happy. I meow loudly and jump on them when I see them.

I can never get my claws back (or my toes for that matter) but, thank goodness, there is one veterinarian who can help me. Her name is Jennifer Conrad and she invented something called **declaw repair surgery**. If I have this surgery she says that I will be able to jump down off my shelf without hurting my paws (now I can only use my ramp) and walk a long way without needing to lie down. I couldn't stop purring when I heard the good news.

But there's one problem. Declaw repair surgery is expensive, and bobcats don't have any money of their own. Luckily, I have Mollie now, and she's promised to help me. Even though I'll never love her as much as I loved my family, I trust Mollie because the other animals at Wildworks have told me that she always keeps her promises.

The cost of my surgery is \$2,000 per paw. I think that adds up to \$8,000. Mollie has taught me that there are some really nice humans in the world, and she said she would send my letter to all of the people she knows who like to help bobcats.

Thank you for helping me.

Yours truly,

Bobby



The Nature of Wildworks is a 501(c)(3) organization founded to provide lifetime quality care for non-releasable wild animals and to engender public respect and concern for wildlife and habitat through the presentation of outreach programs and publications

To contribute to Bobby's surgery please send a check using the enclosed envelope or to donate online, go to www.NatureofWildworks.org and click on the 'Help Bobby' link.