



Smith, Tamara <tamara_smith@fws.gov>

Re: possible hybrid / possible lynx capture on USFS 174 Road today

6 messages

(b) (6) <(b) (6)> Wed, Aug 24, 2016 at 12:46 PM
To: "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, "Barber-meyer, Shannon" <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>, john.erb@state.mn.us, phil_delphey@fws.gov
Cc: tamara_smith@fws.gov

Yes, given the circumstances, I wonder why employees of federal agencies working in Minnesota rather consistently play that "*possible hybrid*" card? (After trappers in Minnesota have taken a lynx, enforcement personnel in MnDNR & USFWS have presented a similar stance; i.e., suggesting the animal could be a F1 hybrid despite available evidence to the contrary.)

If a wild Minnesota felid specimen is in good shape, there is no valid reason to submit potential confusion to a scenario by suggesting the animal in question could be a hybrid; unless, of course, that specimen actually is an F1 hybrid. In this instance, the specimen is clearly NOT an F1 bobcat X lynx hybrid; rather, it is a mature male lynx. Glancing at the pale color of the fur on the underfoot provides all the information that is necessary to make that determination. (Also, the ventral aspect of the tip of the tail provides no hint the specimen is a hybrid.)

(b) (6)

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:FW: possible hybrid / possible lynx capture on USFS 174 Road today

Date:Wed, 24 Aug 2016 13:12:08 +0000

From:Ryan, Daniel C -FS <dcryan@fs.fed.us>

To:Steve Loch <(b) (6)> <(b) (6)>

Thoughts?

From: Barber-meyer, Shannon [<mailto:sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 23, 2016 6:29 PM

To: Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>; Catton, Timothy J -FS <tcatton@fs.fed.us>; Ryan, Daniel C -FS <dcryan@fs.fed.us>

Subject: possible hybrid / possible lynx capture on USFS 174 Road today

Hello,

The USGS wolf trapping crew captured a possible hybrid / possible lynx today on the USFS 174 Road. It was drugged and subsequently released after processing.

Capture location is T 60 N, R 7W, Section 6. UTM is 15 N 0629881 5286102 (WGS 84).

Crew sexed it as a male. It weighed 25 lb. They noted it was in "very good body condition".

Based on staining of teeth they did not think it was a young of the year but the teeth were still "sharp" so they didn't think it was very old.

This particular set was outfitted with one of our 6 trap "transmitter" devices that helps us estimate when an animal was captured - this one appears to have been caught just before 11 pm last night.

We collected a hair sample that I will leave on Sarah's desk in a coin envelope with the date and location written on it.

I will attach pictures that the crew snapped while processing the animal that might help you in visually getting a feel for whether it is a hybrid or not. Looks pretty lynx-ish to me with the tufts and huge feet and black-ink dipped tail all around - but I am reluctant to hazard a guess without genetics to say for sure one way or the other when they're this brown and spotty. Guess it depends too on "how much" of a hybrid if / when back crossing occurs.

I think that's everything that we were requested to try to determine if we every actually catch one (except of course if the animal is lactating because this was sexed as a male).

Thanks,
Shannon

--

Shannon Barber-Meyer, Ph.D.

Wildlife Biologist

USGS Wolf and Deer Project

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4 attachments



DSCF2086.JPG
3782K



DSCF2094.JPG
3686K



DSCF2089.JPG
3764K



DSCF2098.JPG
3659K

Barber-meyer, Shannon <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

Wed, Aug 24, 2016 at 1:31 PM

To: Steve Loch (b) (6) >

Cc: "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, John Erb <john.erb@state.mn.us>, phil_delphey@fws.gov, tamara_smith@fws.gov, "L. David Mech" <mechx002@umn.edu>, "Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS" <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcotton@fs.fed.us>

Thanks for your email, Steve.

I think I might be able to help you regarding your question as to "why employees of federal agencies working in Minnesota rather consistently play that *"possible hybrid"* card". As a scientist, I prefer to explicitly indicate my uncertainty. Knowing that the USFS uses DNA to confirm suspected lynx leads me to believe that it cannot always be based on visual inspection alone when known hybrids are in the area.

In the email I stated "I will attach pictures that the crew snapped while processing the animal that might help you in visually getting a feel for whether it is a hybrid or not. Looks pretty lynx-ish to me with the tufts and huge feet and black-

ink dipped tail all around - but I am reluctant to hazard a guess without genetics to say for sure one way or the other when they're this brown and spotty. Guess it depends too on "how much" of a hybrid if / when back crossing occurs."

I am, of course, familiar with some of the typical signs of a lynx (longer ear tufts, big furry feet, neck ruff, tail tip black all the way around) - but I was under the impression that some of these features also appear in varying degrees in hybrids. Thus, when uncertain, I prefer to report it as I did in this case and let the experts decide.

So hopefully you can see I wasn't trying to "play any card" - but appropriately leaving it up to folks with greater expertise than I to make the determination.

Thanks,
Shannon

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(b) (6) <(b) (6)>

Thu, Aug 25, 2016 at 10:27 AM

To: "Barber-meyer, Shannon" <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

Cc: "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, "Erb, John D (DNR)" <john.erb@state.mn.us>, phil_delphey@fws.gov, tamara_smith@fws.gov, "L. David Mech" <mechx002@umn.edu>, "Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS" <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcatton@fs.fed.us>

Shannon,

Four photographs are attached. Three depict a specimen of an F1 bobcat/lynx hybrid compared to a Canada Lynx (both cats show winter pelage). If it is not apparent, the file name of the photo assists with the identification of the two animals.

Note the color of the plantar surface of the paws of the two cats. As with bobcats, the fur of the underfoot of the hybrid is dark, though not as black as generally occurs on a bobcat. By contrast, lynx paws are pale or light-colored. When there's a question regarding the possibility that a specimen might be a hybrid, the pale color of the fur on the underfoot of a lynx is particularly useful and diagnostic. There are other field characteristics for hybrids, which are helpful in alerting one to the fact they have indeed encountered a hybrid - but none of the other characteristics are so clear as the one I have just described.

Hope this helps,
Steve

Subject:Re: possible hybrid / possible lynx capture on USFS 174 Road today

Date:Wed, 24 Aug 2016 13:31:23 -0500

From:Barber-meyer, Shannon <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

To:Steve Loch <(b) (6)>

CC:Ryan, Daniel <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, John Erb <john.erb@state.mn.us>, phil_delphey@fws.gov, tamara_smith@fws.gov, L. David Mech <mechx002@umn.edu>, Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcatton@fs.fed.us>

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4 attachments



top F1 lynx-bobcat hybrid. bottom Canada Lynx.jpg
593K



left Canada Lynx; right F1 lynx-bobcat hybrid.jpg
501K



front paw -- left F1 lynx-bobcat hybrid, right Canada Lynx.jpg
620K



F1 lynx-bobcat hybrid.jpg
582K

Barber-meyer, Shannon <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

Thu, Aug 25, 2016 at 11:47 AM

To: Steve Loch (b) (6) >

Cc: "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, "Erb, John D (DNR)" <john.erb@state.mn.us>, Phil Delphey <phil_delphey@fws.gov>, Tamara Smith <tamara_smith@fws.gov>, "L. David Mech" <mechx002@umn.edu>, "Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS" <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcotton@fs.fed.us>

Thank you, the images and description are very helpful. Sarah also shared some other intermediate characteristics with me yesterday to help me visually differentiate the two.

Thank you,
Shannon

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Smith, Tamara <tamara_smith@fws.gov>

Thu, Aug 25, 2016 at 2:58 PM

To: "Barber-meyer, Shannon" <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

Cc: Steve Loch (b) (6) >, "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, "Erb, John D (DNR)" <john.erb@state.mn.us>, Phil Delphey <phil_delphey@fws.gov>, "L. David Mech" <mechx002@umn.edu>, "Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS" <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcotton@fs.fed.us>

Hi All - Thank you for forwarding this email string. I've entered this into our incidental take database. I may need a few more pieces of information from you, Shannon. What type of trap was used? What county was this in? Was the date of the capture/release August 23rd? Thank you. -Tam

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Tamara Smith
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Barber-meyer, Shannon <sbarber-meyer@usgs.gov>

Thu, Aug 25, 2016 at 3:08 PM

To: "Smith, Tamara" <tamara_smith@fws.gov>

Cc: Steve Loch (b) (6), "Ryan, Daniel" <dcryan@fs.fed.us>, "Erb, John D (DNR)" <john.erb@state.mn.us>, Phil Delphey <phil_delphey@fws.gov>, "L. David Mech" <mechx002@umn.edu>, "Malick Wahls, Sarah - FS" <smalickwahls@fs.fed.us>, Timothy Catton <tcatton@fs.fed.us>

Hi Tamara,

- 1) trap was EZ Grip #7 foothold trap,
- 2) Lake County,
- 3) based on the trap transmitter device we think capture probably happened around 11 pm on August 22, the lynx was detected and released the following morning (August 23).

Thank you,
Shannon

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