

A close-up photograph of a lynx's face, showing its distinctive tufted ears, yellow-green eyes, and thick, spotted fur. The lynx is looking directly at the camera with a calm expression.

FIELD MANUAL FOR IDENTIFICATION OF TRACES OF LYNX PRESENCE

AUTHOR OF THE MANUAL

dr. Igor Trbojević

PHOTOGRAPHY

- “Lynx”, page 2, author Tijana Trbojević
- “Lynx trace measures”, page 3, author Paolo Molinari
- “Lynx faeces sample collection”, page 4, author Tomaž Škrbnišek
- “The lynx’s prey-the roe deer”, page 5, author Miha Krofel
- “Camera traps”, page 6, author Aleš Pičulin

It is not advised that this Manual be used by persons under the age of 18 by reason of the photographs accompanying the theme, which are part of this Manual.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIES

The Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) is an inhabitant of dense, forested and usually difficult-to-access hilly and mountainous areas. It can often be found also above the upper forest limit, usually when visiting its territory or searching for prey (chamois).

Its body is relatively short, 92 - 108 cm long (including the head). It measures 46 - 61 cm in height at the withers. Its tail is also short, 16 - 27 cm long, with a black tip. Its weight ranges from 15 to 27 kg.

The colour of its fur varies from yellowish-brown to reddish-grey. The fur is usually spotted, but some individual of the species have no patterning. Freckles are a distinctive identification marker of each individual.

The head is round, often with an outspread hairy skin fold on the face, and black hairy tufts (2,8 - 5,7 cm) on the triangular ears.

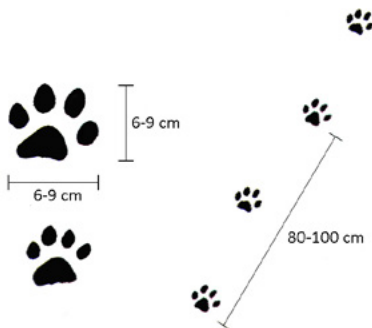
With its long legs, it leans on wide paws ending in sharp claws. When moving, the lynx retract their claws, making them invisible in the tracks left in the snow or mud.

FOOTPRINT-TRACK

A lynx track or footprint is more or less round in shape, 6-9 cm wide and long. The front paws of the lynx are bigger than their hind paws. The footprints can most often be seen in the snow or soft soil during the mating season (January/February-April). Like most cats, the lynx retracts its claws while walking, and generally leaves no claw marks in the footprint.

The best footprint identification is when prints are found in a row. In this case, the distance between the prints is 80-100 cm. Such footprints are arranged in a relatively straight line, while the dog paw prints are usually arranged in a zigzag pattern. The track needs to be measured with a measuring tool (you can use the ruler drawn on the last page of this Manual), and take photos with or without the ruler.

It is mandatory to take the coordinates (the easiest way is to use a mobile application).



HAIR

Lynx hair is hard to notice. The lynx likes to rub against the ground, and for this, it usually chooses the rough bark of a tree, a fence with barbed wire or the corners of the buildings in nature (abandoned or actively used log cabins and stone cottages). Hair samples are collected for genetic identification of an individual. Hairs are photographed as they were found on the building, and when taking samples, they are collected with tweezers and placed in a dry sterile container or a test tube. It is important not to take hair samples with hands or non-sterile objects (a dirty knife or the like), as they would destroy the sample.

It is mandatory to take the coordinates (using a mobile application).

The sample is kept in a dry, cool and dark place until it is collected by the competent person.



FAECES AND URINE

Faeces (scats) and urine are relatively difficult to notice because the lynx usually covers them with leaves, soil or snow. These markers are most often seen in winter, when snow cover is present, on the trails and marking sites used by the lynx.

The lynx marks its territory with faeces and urine, and for this, it chooses prominent features along the trail (rather large solitary stones and/or rocks, a stump, a fallen tree trunk or a rather large branch). Faeces are unpleasant, strong-smelling, and are as thick as a fir cone, in smaller pieces or in one single piece, each measuring 2-3 cm in diameter and 3-5 cm in length. The pieces usually have blunt ends, and in dogs and wolves, they taper to a point at one end. Urine smells like domestic cat urine. If a small amount of urine is found at a site, this is a certain sign of marking the territory.

When photographing faeces and urine, a measuring tool (meter stick) must be placed. A sample (of a pea size) is taken (from the surface of the faeces) using wooden sticks and placed in a sterile container (or a test tube). Samples are stored in a dark and cool place.

It is mandatory
take the
coordinates
(using a mobile
application).



PREY

The prey of the lynx is diverse, ranging from rodents to birds to large herbivores. Most often, these are the roe deer, chamois, foxes, mustelids, squirrels, wild rabbits, dormouse and grouse.

In some European countries, they also attack domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, dogs, cats and rabbits. The lynx use both ambush and pursuit to hunt prey. When chasing its prey, the lynx uses its teeth and claws to grab on to its prey. That is why the prey will have teeth marks on its throat, and puncture wounds in the carcass skin. The lynx consumes the caught prey in a quiet and protected place.

Also, the lynx consumes its prey in a special way. It eats muscle tissue first, usually starting from the upper thigh or



shoulder. It does not consume the intestines, but usually (unless it catches other prey) returns to continue eating for several days until it has eaten all edible parts.

If the prey is large (the roe deer or chamois), and it cannot eat it whole right away, the lynx will hide the remains by burying them with leaves and branches. After the prey has been consumed, its skin is often inverted and intact, because the lynx does not feed on it.

It is necessary to photograph the prey found in this condition and take the coordinates (using the mobile application).

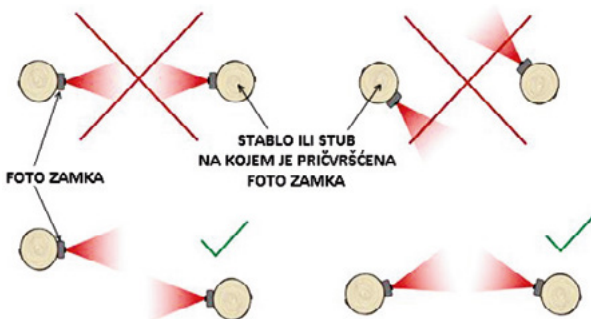


CAMERA TRAP PHOTOGRAPHY

Forest trails, forest roads, logging trails, abandoned and actively used shelters in the mountains are the best places to set up camera traps. In addition, the lynx sometimes visits wildlife feeding sites, ponds, puddles and salt marshes.

At the sites which the lynx uses as marking sites (fences, huts, etc.), it is enough to place one camera trap, while on the trails it is preferable to place several devices. Also, on trails that allow this, it is ideal to place two camera traps, one opposite the other (but not placed in such a way that they take pictures of each other, as shown in the image). The distance between the camera trap and the marking site or trail should ideally be 3-5 meters, but not more than 7 meters.

The camera trap, i.e. its sensor, must be placed at the height of the lynx's body, around 40-50 cm above the ground.





In case you find any traces of lynx presence, please,
contact the expert:

Dr. Igor Trbojević 📞 **+38765646080**

