

MOUNTAIN LION NECROPSY

DEPREDATION CAT

Summary

This sub-adult female mountain lion had attacked a dog in a yard at Yellowpine Bar on the Salmon River the night of November 25, 1997. The lion was shot by the dog owner Mike (Newt) Haigh with a handgun while it had the dog by the head. Newt tagged the carcass, License #104-7-004761, Tag #317-7-004939, and transferred it to Jim Akenson for examination. The dog was treated with antibiotics for punctures and lacerations of the head.

The refrigerated carcass was necropsied on December 3 by Holly Akenson, wildlife biologist and Val Shean, DVM at Taylor Ranch Field Station, HC 83, Cascade, ID 83611, (208)382-4336. This 2 year old lion was suffering from chronic malnutrition when it attacked the dog. No other significant abnormalities were observed.

Necropsy Results

External examination:

- * Estimated age 26-30 months
- * Weight 55 pounds, more than 25% underweight
- * Length 71.5 inches
- * Body emaciated, muscles wasted, no wounds or broken bones noted (other than bullet wounds)
- * No ectoparasites
- * Feet and claws normal
- * Teeth: upper left canine recently broken off 4mm
- * Black dog hairs in mouth
- * Blood in mouth from trachea
- * Left upper eyelid had a small cut
- * 2 bullet holes: 1) spine, lungs, trachea, 2) kidney, intestine, stomach
- * Brain not examined

Abdominal cavity:

- * Digestive system: minimal content
- * Stomach contents: 350 ml (1.5 cups) of hair - light with black tips, probably raccoon, no bones or meat
- * Small intestine: one small meal - 6 raccoon claws, pieces of hide, hair, and small bone fragments, digested material
- * Rectum: small meal - light with black tips hair, small bones, digested material
- * No parasitism noted in intestine
- * No mesenteric fat
- * No enlargement of abdominal lymph nodes
- * Spleen and liver smaller than normal
- * Kidney: normal, no renal fat
- * Adrenal glands morphologically normal
- * Ovaries: anestrus, non gravid uterus

Thoracic cavity:

- * Large blood clot in thoracic cavity, 50 ml (1/4 cup)
- * Heart: no cardiac abnormalities, minimal pericardial fat
- * Lungs: normal, other than bullet hole, no parasites noted
- * Trachea: no parasites observed, diffuse reddening between tracheal rings along entire trachea possibly due to upper respiratory inflammation, or merely postmortem changes