



E-Z guide to identify panther tracks

**This guide was developed for
The Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
by Ranchers Supply Inc.
The Livestock Protection Co.
PO Box 899**

Alpine, Texas 79831

©The Livestock Protection Co. 2013

**The photos on the cover and page 15
were taken by FWC.**

**The other photos were taken by Roy
McBride.**



Florida panther tracks are easily distinguishable from other animal tracks.



Three specific characteristics identify a panther track:

- ① Claw imprints in front of the toes are absent when the panther is walking.**
- ② The front edge of the heel pad is squared.**
- ③ The rear edge of the heel pad has three lobes.**

Male Panther Track

Actual Size



① Absence of claw imprints

② Front edge of heel pad squared

③ Three lobes on rear of heel pad



Panthers do not expose their retractable claws while walking, even in wet sand.

A walking panther's claw imprints are not evident in dry sand either, yet the three lobes in the heel pad are clearly visible.

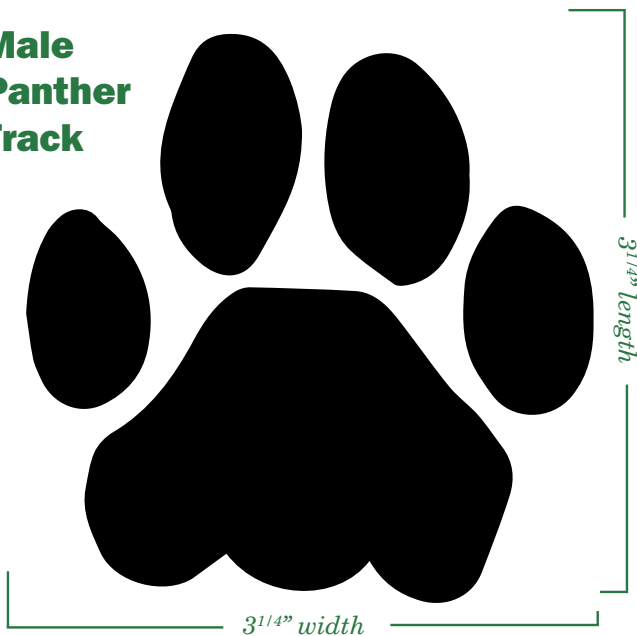


Knife in photo is 4" long

Comparing Bobcat Tracks to Panther Tracks

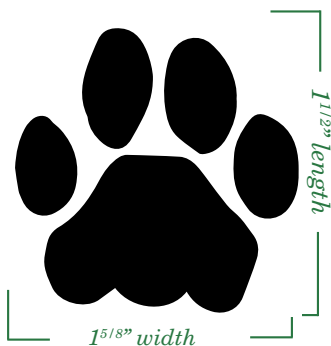
The bobcat is common throughout Florida and its tracks are frequently found on the same trails used by panthers. A bobcat track has identical characteristics to that of a panther track, however it is approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ the size. For comparison, see the opposite page for life-size tracks of a panther and a bobcat. Notice that the bobcat's entire track could fit into the impression of the panther's heel pad.

Male Panther Track



Bobcat Track

A bobcat track is approximately 1/3 the size of a panther track



Comparing Dog Tracks to Panther Tracks

Dog tracks are found in a variety of sizes. Many dog tracks are larger than panther tracks. However, regardless of size, dog tracks display characteristics common to all canines.



Dog



Panther

Three specific characteristics identify a dog track:

- ①** A dog's toenails are not retractable and leave visible imprints in front of its toes.
- ②** The front of a dog's heel pad is gently rounded, whereas the front edge of a panther's heel pad is squared.
- ③** The rear of a dog's heel pad does not display the three characteristic lobes common in all felines.

Dog Track

① Visible toenail marks



② Front of heel pad rounded

③ Rear of heel pad lacks 3 lobes

Panther Track

① No visible claw marks



② Front of heel pad squared

③ Rear of heel pad shows 3 lobes

Track Quiz

Which number is the panther track?

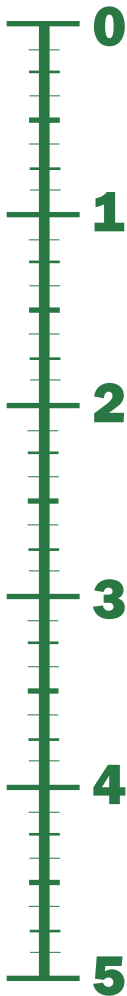


See back cover for answers

Want to help FWC monitor panthers?

**Share your photos of panthers or
their tracks! For directions go to:
MyFWC.com/PantherSightings**





Answers to track quiz:

- ① Turkey
- ② Dog
- ③ Panther
- ④ Deer



Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com