

Lynx sightings

Canada Lynx sightings in Minnesota (March 2000 - November 14, 2006)

This summary includes all reports of Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) observations in Minnesota reported to the DNR since the species received federal threatened status in March 2000. We are grateful for the cooperation of the U.S. Forest Service, Superior National Forest in providing us with many of the sightings included in this summary.



INTERPRETATION OF REPORTS

1. All reports are entered into a master spreadsheet, even if positive identification is questionable. Because of the possibility of misidentification (e.g., overlap in the ranges of Canada lynx and bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) within Minnesota), the following criteria were used to "classify" a sighting:

A sighting is "VERIFIED" if:

- a photo showing distinguishing characteristics was provided by a highly reliable source; or
- DNA analysis of tissue or scat sample has confirmed the identification; or
- the report consists of location data from a telemetry-collared animal (see the [Natural Resources Research Institute lynx research website](#) [EXT](#) for additional information on lynx research in Minnesota); or
- the observer is a known expert or otherwise has considerable experience with lynx;

A sighting is "PROBABLE" if:

- a photo showing distinguishing characteristics was provided by an otherwise unfamiliar source; and/or
- conclusive behavioral observations were provided (e.g., lynx demonstrate curiosity and little fear of humans while bobcats are very secretive & elusive); and/or
- a detailed description of physical characteristics (e.g. very big feet, long hind legs, flat face, black tip of tail, etc.) was provided.

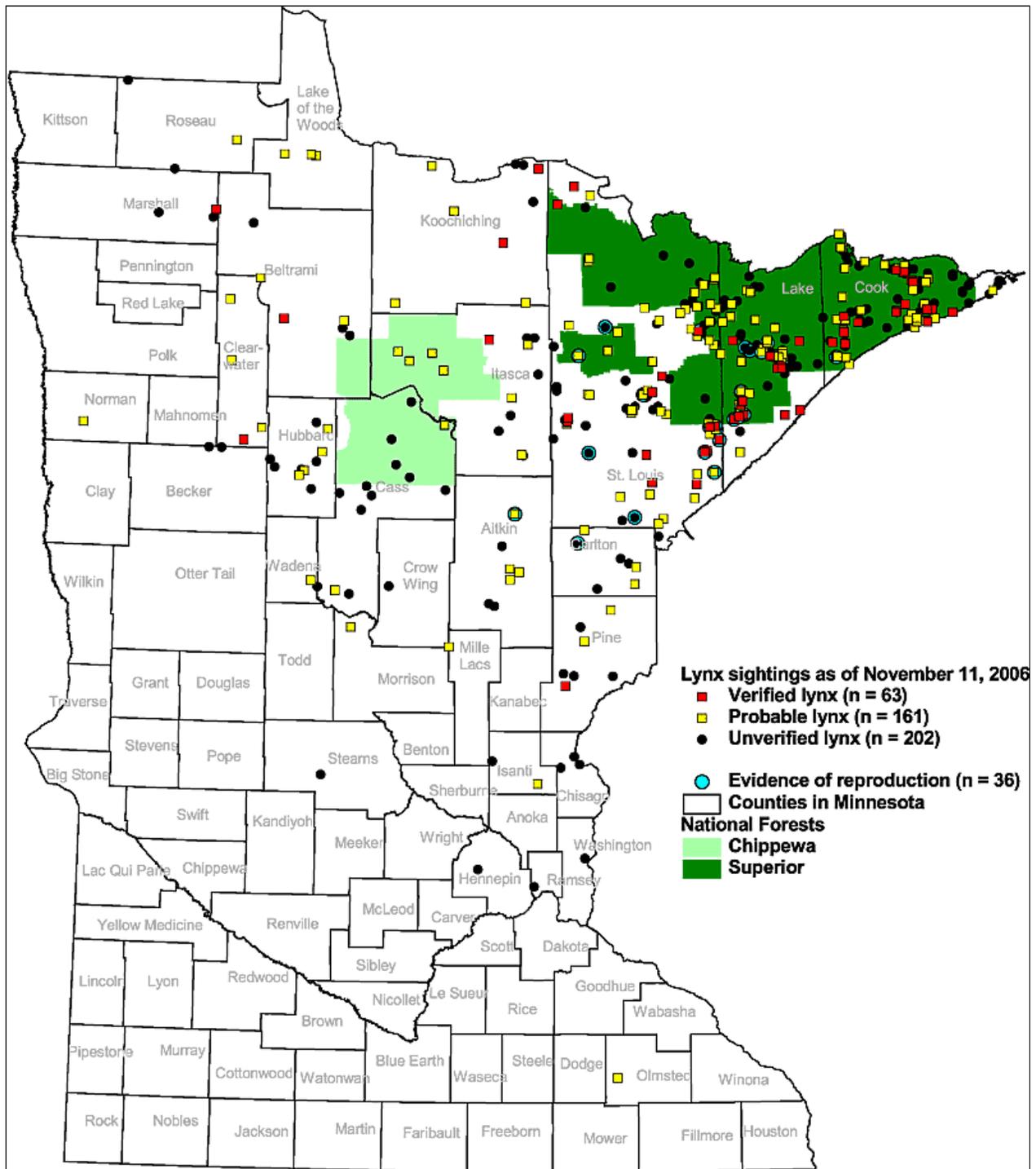
Sightings that do not meet any of the above criteria are considered "UNVERIFIED."

2. Reports of single animals are assumed to be sightings of adults.
3. Reports of an adult with a kitten are considered evidence of reproduction. We do not require further verification for reports of kittens, although several of these reports include photos.
4. Although geographic coordinates are provided with each report, some may be rough estimates of the actual location, and may include some error. However, due to the large home range of the species, the geographic coordinates associated with each sighting are assumed to represent the general area in which the lynx occurred.
5. Few, if any, observations are the result of a systematic effort to find lynx in Minnesota. The vast majority are the product of incidental encounters, and as such, reports tend to cluster along roads and other places frequented by observant and interested people. Thus, these reports tell us something (however incomplete) about where lynx are, but absolutely nothing about where lynx aren't. Similarly, we cannot know the relationship between the number of reports and the number of lynx in Minnesota at the time of the reports.

SUMMARY as of November 14, 2006

- 426 reports with location information have been received to date
- 63 (15%) reports have been verified as lynx
- 35 (8%) reports are assumed to provide evidence of reproduction

- Reports are distributed among 28 counties as follows:
 - St. Louis - 113
 - Cook - 109
 - Lake - 101
 - Itasca - 15
 - Cass - 12
 - Hubbard - 10
 - Koochiching - 8
 - Aitkin - 7
 - Carlton - 7
 - Pine - 7
 - Beltrami - 5
 - Clearwater - 5
 - Chisago - 3
 - Lake of the Woods - 3
 - Marshall - 3
 - Roseau - 3
 - Becker - 2
 - Isanti - 2
 - Wadena - 2
 - Crow Wing - 1
 - Hennepin - 1
 - Mille Lacs - 1
 - Morrison - 1
 - Norman - 1
 - Olmsted - 1
 - Ramsey - 1
 - Stearns - 1
 - Washington - 1



If you have a lynx sighting to report to us, please email: richard.baker@state.mn.us with the following information:

- Date of observation
- Time of observation
- Location information, including legal description and/or coordinates of sighting if possible
- Description of animal: physical appearance and behavior
- Observer's full name
- Observer's contact information (i.e., phone, email, mailing address)
- Photo of animal if available

Thank you!