

BIG GAME HUNTING IN THE WILD WEST.

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VI.

FELINE ANIMALS.



THE largest examples of the feline genus found within the scope of our domain are the jaguar or Texas leopard (*Felis Onca*), and the puma or panther (*Felis Concolor*).

The first in size, strength and beauty is the jaguar, called by the Mexicans "Tigrè," which is of a brilliant yellow or fawn color with clusters of rose-like black spots along the back and sides. The vast area of its range extends from Southern Texas through Mexico to Patagonia.

It is a more powerful and rapacious quadruped than the panther, being occasionally nine feet in length with other corresponding proportions, and by crawling up and leaping upon the backs of their victims and striking tremendous blows with their huge paws they are capable of killing well grown cofts and young cattle. I have been told by Mexican hunters that with their long incisive claws and powerful fore-arms, they, like the Eastern tigers, will often seize their victims by the throat, and penetrate to and sever the jugular veins.

They will, when they find deer or antelope grazing

in places where they can reach cover without detection, secrete themselves therein and watch for hours to get an opportunity of springing out upon their victims.

During the winter of 1845-6, while with General Taylor's little army at Corpus Christi, Texas, I indulged in hunting occasionally and sometimes extended my excursions from ten to fifty miles into the interior, where wild horses, cattle, deer and other game was more abundant than in any other locality I ever visited. The horses and cattle were owned by no one, and a large bull or cow was often killed to furnish a meal for a hungry Texan.

It was not an unusual thing to see herds of deer containing from fifty to two hundred individuals, and upon one occasion, as I traveled up the Newcees Valley for about eighty miles, I was very seldom out of sight of one or more of those large herds that grazed in apparent fearlessness upon the adjacent prairies.

General Garland, Colonel McCall, Captain Scott and the writer, all of the army, bagged during two days' stalking in that section twenty-seven deer, seventy-three wild turkeys and four tiger cats, besides wild geese and ducks that were not counted, all of which were consumed in the camp at Corpus Christi. During this same excursion we saw thousands of mustangs that our fleetest horses could easily outrun whenever put to their mettle and carrying the additional weight of their riders. These horses were lassoed by Mexicans, brought into our camp by the hundred and sold for from one to five dollars a head. But they were of little value.

As I was hunting at another time in the Newcees Valley I observed quite a large herd of deer grazing probably half a mile from any cover excepting a small clump of chaparral bushes about four hundred yards from the nearest one of the herd.

This involved the necessity of a wide detour to reach a point where I could leave my horse and get to the chaparral without being detected, and after tying my horse, out of sight, by dint of close crawling I arrived at the bush cover, which

did not exceed ten feet in diameter and so dense that the keenest eye could not penetrate to an object within it. I was then too far off from the deer to make a certain shot, and the only method that occurred to me by which I could get any nearer was, as the grass was very short in the direction of the deer, to cut some twigs from the chaparral and fasten them around under my hat band, so that when I crawled out from the cover of the chaparral with a bush which I proposed to carry in front of my body, and the twigs around my hat, I hoped to present to the wary deer a tolerable imitation of a slow moving automatic cluster of brush.

Accordingly, I laid my rifle upon the ground, and commenced arranging my hat for the arboreal metamorphosis, and I had only fastened a few sprigs, when to my utter consternation, directly in front of me, and not over four feet off, a tremendous angry growl issued from the brush, manifestly intended for me, at all events I so understood it, and seizing my rifle, if my memory serves me correctly, I for a few seconds made about the fastest running I ever performed, while the growls continued until I was fifty yards from where I started; but fortunately for me, perhaps, the leopard (for I was afterwards assured it was one) did not pursue me.

That was the closest approximation I ever had toward encountering a jaguar, although I often endeavored to hunt them afterwards, but like all other species of the cat tribe, they do not often show themselves in the day-time.

The jaguar is doubtless the most ferocious of all American mammals, and unquestionably the most to be feared on account of his pre-eminent strength, activity and courage. It may be said, however, that the grizzly bear, although his equal in strength and rapacity, and probably as ready to attack his prey, yet in activity and stealthy cunning is inferior to the jaguar, which is regarded by some as equal in ferocity to the Eastern tiger.

D'Azara states "that the jaguars destroy cows and bulls of four years old, but horses seem to be their favorite prey. They kill large animals by leaping upon their backs, and by placing one paw on the head and another on the muzzle, they contrive to break the necks of their victims in a moment. Having deprived them of life they drag them with their teeth to their lairs." He gives an instance when a jaguar had attacked a horse close to where

he was, and on running to the spot he found the horse had been killed and partly eaten, but the jaguar had fled. Whereupon he had the carcass dragged within musket shot of a tree, where he intended to pass the night, anticipating that the jaguar would return during the night, but while he was absent preparing for the nocturnal adventure the animal came back from the opposite side of a large river, seized the horse with his teeth, drew it for sixty yards to the water, swam across with his prey and then dragged it into the woods.

In "Kingsley's Natural History of Mammals" it is stated that "the jaguar is the largest and strongest of the American Felidæ, and is certainly the third most powerful of the entire tribe. It is the tiger of the *New World*, with ferocity surpassing that borne by its more widely distributed companion, the puma."

The forest clad borders of streams are favorite haunts of the jaguar, and they are found most abundant and audacious within the valleys of the Amazon and its tributaries. Here his power is supreme, and his despotism as absolute over his quadrupedal subjects, as that of any bipedal tyrant that ever existed.

Peccaries or Mexican wild-hogs are said to be a choice *bonne bouche* for these epicurean mammals, but as the pigs go in herds and fight boldly, the jaguar often resorts to astuteness by springing upon and killing one, then leaping upon trees out of reach of the peccaries.



"I PLACED MY HAND TO MY MOUTH AND GAVE SEVERAL LOUD SHOUTS."



I HAD ONLY FASTENED A FEW SPRIGS WHEN A TREMENDOUS ANGRY GROWL ISSUED FROM THE BRUSH.

While I remained in Southern Texas in 1846, there were, as before stated, great numbers of wild horses and cattle, as well as thousands of deer, antelope, and other smaller game, throughout that unpopulated section, so that the feline carnivora, were never at loss for subsistence. They were veritably the imperial potentates of that rich animal kingdom, until their sovereignty was usurped by the advent of their more powerful carnivorous bipedal adversaries. At one time during the existence of the Lone-star Republic a detachment of Rangers happened along near a watering place, when they espied a jaguar feasting upon a mustang he had killed, while at the same time he was surrounded by a pack of hungry wolves, which kept at a respectful distance while their master was feeding, and they did not appear to have much fear of the Rangers, who were always ready for a chase, and at once took after the jaguar at full speed without paying any attention to the wolves, but to their astonishment the entire pack soon joined behind them in the frolic, until the jaguar was killed, when they deliberately returned to the mustang carcass and partook of the second table banquet.

The Texas leopard (jaguar) has been known to follow the tracks of persons for a long time.

Col. Jack Hays while out on a scout in Western Texas without companions was at one time followed for several miles by one which he discovered upon his track in rear, but after a while he concluded the animal had abandoned him, until in passing through a thicket he heard a stick crack and turned around expecting to encounter an Indian, but instead of this he saw the leopard crawling along and looking him directly in the eye as if making ready for a spring. Whereupon he raised his rifle and shot the beast in his tracks.

An officer of the army while encamped with a detachment of troops upon the Rio Grande one night, after having slaughtered a beef and hung it upon a tree near his camp fire, and the men after eating their supper, and picketing their horses, quietly laid down and went to sleep, but during the night the officer was suddenly aroused by the soldier nearest him whispering in his ear, "May I shoot him, Captain?" and on raising up he beheld a large leopard standing between himself and the fire, that was very intently looking toward the beef and seemed to be trying to devise

some way of reaching it, but the voice of the officer ordering the soldier not to fire upon him for fear of hitting some one on the opposite side of the fire, caused the animal to turn toward him for an instant, then he stealthily walked away.

It was stated by Humboldt and other writers that the South American jaguars were formerly more conspicuous for their ferocity than subsequently. In the memoirs of the Wernerian Natural Historical Society of Edinburgh it is said that the jaguar, like the royal tiger of Asia, does not flee from men when coming in contact with them unless they are alarmed by a large number of assailants.

Humboldt relates one instance where a jaguar had seized a full-grown horse in the Province of Cumana, and dragged it some considerable distance, when the cries of the horse awoke the slaves on the plantation, who armed themselves, went out and killed the animal after a desperate resistance.

In Griffith's "Cuvier," Vol. II., p. 457, I find it stated in a quotation from "D'Azara" that the jaguar is reported to stand in the water out of the current of a stream and drop its saliva, which floating on the surface draws the fish after it within reach, when it seizes them with the paw and throws them ashore for food.

"D'Azara," Vol. I., p. 116, says: "The jaguar can easily drag away a horse or an ox. It is said that if he finds a party of sleeping travelers at night he advances into their midst and first kills the dog, next the negro and then the Indian, only attacking the Spaniard after he has made the selection. But generally he seizes the dog and meat first, even if the latter is on the fire broiling." He adds: "Since I have been living here in Paraguay the yagouarèts (jaguars) have eaten six men; two of them were seized whilst warming themselves at a fire."

General Sam. Houston, while encamped one night upon the San Marco River, in Texas, heard a snorting among his horses, that were hobbled, and went out to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, but finding nothing unusual returned to his campfire and slept soundly until morning, when, to his astonishment, on looking for his horses, he found one of them had been killed and nearly devoured by the jaguars during the night.

Although these animals are so rapacious and savage generally, yet the following occurrence related in Humboldt's

"Travels, Researches," etc., Edinburgh, 1833, p. 245, exhibits them on some occasions as disposed to be quite frolicsome:

It appeared that two Indian children, a boy and a girl, about eight or nine years old, were one day sitting in the grass near the village of Atures, when a jaguar issued from a neighboring forest and circled playfully around the children for some time, now crouching down and hiding in the tall grass, then leaping forward again, with his back humped and head lowered like the domestic cat. This sport continued until at length the brute playfully hit the boy with his paw, but it hurt him so much that he screamed with pain and fright, whereupon the little girl seized a stick and gave the beast a smart blow, which caused him to cease his antics and scamper for the woods.

The Indians use a small instrument like the first joint of a clarionet to imitate the bleat of the fawn, with which they lure the does within range of their rifles.

The young fawn gives out no scent upon its track until it is large enough to make rapid running, and instinct teaches the mother that this wise dispensation for the preservation of the helpless little quadruped from the ravages of carnivorous beasts will be defeated if she remains with it, as her tracks cannot be concealed. She therefore hides her young one in the grass or brush, goes to a neighboring covert within call and makes, her bed alone, and only revisits her fawn when it requires food.

It is a very remarkable zoological fact that the scent left upon the track of an adult deer is so pungent and lasting that it can be followed by a dog for hours after it has been made, even at two or three hundred yards from it, whereas the track of the fawn cannot be followed at all by a dog of the keenest nose.

The Indian pot-hunter sounds his bleat near where he thinks the fawn is lying, and the unsuspecting doe believing her offspring in distress rushes with impetuosity toward the sound, and often goes within a few steps of the hunter to receive her death wound. This cruel and unsportsmanlike manner of hunting deer can only be justified when provisions are scarce, which is often the case in the Indian's larder.

This practice of calling deer is not attended with danger in a country where there are no bears, panthers or wolves, but in a wild section where those rapa-

cious mammals resort the use of the bleat may occasionally bring up an unwelcome visitor, as the following incident, in which I participated, will show.

Having some Delaware hunters with me upon my Red River exploration I was curious to try the effect of this novel instrument upon the antelope, and for that purpose borrowed a bleat from one of the Indians. Having a companion with me one day, and seeing a herd of antelope upon a hill in the prairie, I gave my horse to him to hold while I went forward into a mesquite grove, and hiding myself in the tall grass commenced exercising my powers in imitating the cry of a young fawn, and soon succeeded in attracting the attention of the antelope, and in a short time decoyed one of them within range of my rifle, which I raised to my shoulder and was about firing, when my attention was suddenly and unexpectedly drawn aside by a rustling which I heard in the grass to my left. Casting my eyes in that direction to my great astonishment I beheld a huge panther not more than twenty steps off, bounding with gigantic strides directly toward me. As may be imagined I immediately abandoned the antelope, and turning my rifle was about making a snapshot at the monster, when the thought flashed upon me that if my shot should not prove fatal I might be made game of myself, and as I was not ready to be bagged just then, I took more deliberate aim and sent a bullet through the rascal's chest, which stretched him out upon the grass about ten steps from where I took my calling position.

Impressed with the belief that I had accomplished a feat of more than ordinary consequence in the sporting line I placed my hand to my mouth (*à la sauvage*) and gave several as loud shouts of exultation as my lungs would permit, partly for the purpose of giving vent to my feelings of triumph upon the occasion, and also to call my companion whom I had left back with the horses.

The panther had doubtless heard the bleat, and was approaching it with the pleasant anticipation of making his breakfast from a tender fawn, but fortunately for me, perhaps, he was disappointed.

This was a large specimen of the puma measuring eight feet from the tip of his nose to the end of the tail.

It occurred to me, subsequently that it might not always comport with one's

safety to use the murderous bleat in a wild region unless we were Certain we would have our wits about us in the event of a panther or grizzly bear giving credence to the counterfeit. With a cool head and steady nerve, however, I believe this would prove a very successful method of hunting those animals.

At another time during our Red River expedition, after we had made a wearisome day's march, and had gone into camp and arranged everything comfortably for the night, one of our Delaware hunters came in and informed us that a panther had but a few minutes before crossed the creek just above the camp, and was coming toward us. This startling intelligence, as may be supposed, created no little excitement in our midst.

Everybody was up in an instant, seizing muskets, rifles or any other weapon that came to hand, and followed by all the dogs in camp, a very general rush was made toward the spot indicated by the Indian.

On reaching the place we found where the animal in stepping from the creek had left water upon his track which was not dry, showing that he had passed within a short time. We pointed out the track to several of the bravest dogs and endeavored by every method our ingenuity could devise to inspire them with some small degree of that enthusiasm which animated us. We coaxed, we cheered and we scolded, directed their noses into the track, clapped our hands, hissed and made use of divers other canine arguments to convince them there was something of importance at stake, but it was all of no avail. They did not seem to enter into the spirit of the affair in the slightest, or to regard the occasion as one in which there was much glory to be attained from following in the footsteps of their illustrious predecessor.

On the contrary, the zeal they manifested on starting out from camp suddenly abated as soon as their olfactories came in contact with the atmosphere pervading the track, which caused a sudden declination of their caudal appendages, and it was with difficulty that we could prevent their running back to camp.

At this moment, however, an old bear hound that had been presented to me by a friend in Arkansas came up, and no sooner had he caught a sniff of the scented air than he came to a sudden stop, and raising his head, he sent forth one prolonged note and started off in full cry upon

the track. He led off boldly into the woods, followed by the other dogs that had now recovered confidence, and with the men at their heels cheering them on, and all (men and dogs) giving tongue most vociferously, away they went, every one anxious to catch the first glimpse of the formidable beast.

They soon roused him from his lair, and after making a few circuits around the grove he took to a tree, which I was so fortunate as to reach a little in advance of any other one of the party, and found the panther standing upright on one of the highest branches of the tree with his great round visage turned down and his eyes intently directed at me. Whereupon I gave him a shot which struck him in the right spot, and he came tumbling to the ground. The dogs then closed in with him, and others of the party coming up, all anxious to participate in killing the huge beast, fired several surplus cartridges into his defunct carcass, so that he was very much killed.

He was an uncommonly large specimen of the North American cougar, measuring eight feet six inches from the end of his nose to the extremity of his tail.

One day as I was riding along, on our return from the sources of Red River, with one of my assistants (Capt. Geo. B. McClellan), over a very arid section, where we had not met with a drop of palatable water for several days, we came near a pond which presented a peculiar freak of nature. It was about one hundred yards in diameter, quite circular, with water clear and sweet, and about thirty feet deep, but the surface of the water was something like twenty feet below the crest of the banks, which were nearly vertical. As this pool seemed to be supplied by springs with no visible outlet, a occurred to me there might be a subterranean communication that carried off the surplus water and the earth from the deep depression of the basin.

As the Captain and I rode up within two or three hundred yards of this pond we saw a large panther coming out from the water and walking slowly away in an opposite direction. As the wind was in our favor I whispered to my companion to draw his revolver and ride cautiously around upon the other side of the pond, while I would remain where I was until he gained the desired position, when we would charge together and kill the animal with our revolvers.

He started on, but before he had gone far, the panther came so near me that I jumped from my horse and gave him a rifle shot that caused him to leap several feet into the air, and run rapidly into a narrow ravine where there was a strip of bushes extending about five hundred yards. We immediately followed upon each side of this ravine, prepared to encounter him if he should come out, but we rode to the end of it, and seeing nothing of him I concluded he must have secreted himself somewhere in the brush we had passed, and as we went back we made a more thorough search, until we arrived at the place where he entered. There we found him dead—shot through the heart.

This made three panthers I had killed while upon the Red River exploration, and these were the only ones, with one exception, I have ever encountered in all my hunting career.

The exceptional instance occurred while I was traveling in Wisconsin in 1839. As I was passing through the then extensive forest section about twenty miles west of Milwaukee, at a period when there were but few settlers there, I met two small boys in the road, who informed me that their dog had treed some very large animal a short distance off in the woods and they desired me to go with them and kill it.

Leaving my horses in charge of my wife, I accompanied them to where the dog was barking furiously, and on looking up into the highest branches of a very tall tree, I saw a panther standing upright upon a limb, and with his eyes intently gazing upon his adversary below, while at the same time the brave dog kept up a furious barking directly under him.

The boys, who were brothers, about ten and twelve years of age, had brought from the house a rusty old rifle which they said their father had loaded some time before, and as he was absent from home at that time, they had gone into the woods when they heard the dog, and expected to find a coon or other small animal, but when they saw the huge panther the oldest boy was somewhat intimidated and was not disposed to fire at him, but the other was anxious to take a shot, and was only prevented by the more prudent decision of the elder. As the charge in the rifle was the only one attainable without sending two miles to the nearest neighbor's for more, I resolved to take the chances of making a successful shot with

the lone charge, at the same time recognizing the fact that this was a formidable animal. I cut a stout club for defense in case I should not kill the beast, then taking the rifle from the boys, who ran away, and with a good rest against a tree, I secured an accurate aim upon the fellow and pulled trigger, but he did not drop as I anticipated.

There he stood in precisely the same attitude as before I fired. He did not move an inch, and I doubt if he even winked an eye, and in the absence of more ammunition, there, much to my regret, I was obliged to leave him.

I, however, subsequently learned that the animal was killed and proved to be quite a large specimen.

Panthers are occasionally, but not often, met with in the northern ranges of the Rocky Mountain Sierras, and the only time our party has seen them during fourteen hunting seasons was in 1885, when one of my companions with the guide "Little Bar," while hunting quite late one evening in the Casper Mountains, suddenly encountered a female panther with a young one engaged in taking supper from the remains of an elk carcass, and shot them both; but the old one was much smaller than the southern species.

The following incident, which is said to have occurred at a plantation in Mississippi, exhibits the panther in some cases as wanting in courage.

It appeared that one evening while the family were taking supper they were suddenly startled by a violent disturbance among the dogs outside, and the planter started out to quiet them, but they were so much alarmed that when he opened the door they rushed past him into the house; whereupon he seized a whip and drove them all out excepting one that took refuge under a table and would not come out. Thinking this was cowardice on the part of the dog, he took a candle, and holding it down under the table was not a little alarmed to discover, instead of a refractory dog, a large panther that savagely sprang at him, but he ward off the blow with the candlestick, when the beast turned upon him again with his fore paws aimed at his face, and his hind feet at his body, which the man by desperate struggles succeeded in fending off, and thus the combat continued for some moments until the planter became nearly exhausted, but at the last round he fortunately staggered back against the fire

place, and as the panther made another dash toward him, he dodged, and the animal nearly fell into the fire, which frightened him so much that he darted through the door into the midst of the dogs, and they having recovered a little from their previous stampede, unitedly tackled him, and after a severe contest finished him.

Although the panther is short-winded and cannot run very far without tiring, yet the length of his single leaps are sometimes extraordinary.

Dr. Merriam, in his work on the mammals of the Adirondack, asserts that the panther can readily jump twenty feet on level ground, and one instance is cited where this animal made the astonishing leap of forty feet in the snow where it could be accurately determined.

Although they possess the strength and agility to make such wonderful vaulting, their speed is not great or enduring. In fleetness or bottom they do not compare with the deer, antelope or many other quadrupeds that often fall easy victims to their astute ambushes.

They soon become exhausted in running, and are obliged to take to trees when pursued by the hunter and his dogs, unless they are disposed to stop and fight, which is very seldom, unless they are caught in the prairies where they can reach no trees.

It has been asserted that if the hunter can catch the eyes of the panther he is secure, as they will not attack a person looking them directly in the eye. This may be true, but as I have never, except in the cases already mentioned, tried the experiment at very close quarters, I cannot vouch for it. There may be some mesmeric influence exerted in this manner that enables the hunter to control the quadruped through the medium of the visual organs.

I once saw a savage bull-dog that would allow no one but his owner to come near him, when placed upon watch, that was perfectly subdued by a stranger merely by looking him in the eye.

Some years since I was so fortunate as to secure a rare specimen of the feline type near the head of the Missouri River, in Montana, which I never before met with in all my ramblings throughout our wildest and most sequestered forest regions.

I have searched all the works on natural history, especially those devoted to

American mammals, that were within my reach, but have found no description of this quadruped or any other closely resembling it, and therefore am of opinion that it may prove to be a nondescript. But as I may be mistaken in this view, I will for the benefit of naturalists give as correct a description as I am able from accurate measurements and observation of the pelt, which I gave to my friend, Professor Henry Draper, shortly after I obtained it.

The measurements were as follows:

Length of the body,	4 feet	1 inch.
" tail,	3	6
" " held,	0	7 1/2 "
" " neck,	0	11 1/2 "
Spine, to claws on hind leg	3	1 "
Spine to claws on fore leg,	2	4 "

The color of the body and the exterior of the legs is a uniform tawny-brown, but a shade lighter on the belly, and the hair on the under part of the legs is fine and soft and at least four inches long.

The head is dark brown and nearly spherical.

One of the most peculiar and anomalous features of this animal is that, from the end of the nose over the head and neck and down the back to the end of the tail, there runs a distinct stripe about two inches wide of dark brown hair, which is most conspicuous upon the tail, the under side of which is a lighter brown.

This specimen is about the equal in size and proportions with the puma or panther, and its habits are probably similar, but in several respects they differ so essentially that I doubt if they can properly be classed under the same species, as has been suggested by a naturalist at the Smithsonian Institution whose attention has been called to it. My reasons for this are the following: First, the color of the two animals is entirely different, as well as the texture, length and weight of their coating, that of the puma being much lighter, and uniform throughout without any stripe along the back or tail. The head of the puma is considerably longer than the other. But the most marked differences in the two animals is in the neck, that of the puma being something like seven inches in length, while that of the other, as will be observed from the foregoing measurement, is only one and a half inches—that is, the head joins closely onto the shoulders of the latter, and his heavier covering makes better provision for the rigors of a cold climate than does the thin hair of the

puma, which flourishes best in a warm climate.

As I can find no description of the animal called by far western hunters "California" or "Mountain" lion, in the zoological works I have seen, it has occurred to me that the animal whose characteristics I have attempted to describe above, may belong to that variety of the feline genus. In a foot note on page 291, Vol. II., of Dodman's Natural History, I find the following rather amusing commentary upon the absurdity of conferring a royal designation upon the cougar:

"*This Lordly Lion* conceals himself near where deer and antelope come to drink, and springs upon them from his ambush like the veriest tom-cat. Having feeble sight and being unfit for the chase, he follows wolves and dogs which are able to run down buffaloes, antelopes, etc., and when they have been successful, drives them away and gorges to repletion, but as he relinquishes the carcass when satisfied he is called *generous*; as he does not attack and devour men when not hungry he is considered *magnanimous*. He retires slowly facing his enemies, being unable to make rapid speed, and thus becomes celebrated for his *noble spirit*, and as he does not kill wild dogs and other small animals, because it is not in his power to catch them, he is called *clement*, while in virtue of his giant strength, dreadful claws, horrid teeth and awful roar he is considered altogether *Royal*. Yet this king of quadrupeds has not half the moral ex-

cellence of a poodle dog, nor a thousandth part of the dignity of character possessed by the elephant. He is moreover no match for the great tiger of Asia, which in ferocity, savage daring, audacious destructiveness, unconquerable and unappeasable hatred for mankind, is infinitely more *royal* and a more consistent emblem of a great number of human kings who have aided in various ages and countries to retard the progress of improvement and the march of mind."

TIGER-CAT (*Felis pardalis*.)

This carnivorous mammal of the feline race is about the size of the American wild-cat, is of a bright yellow color striped with a series of transverse bands similar to those on the Bengal tiger.

It is found throughout Southern Texas and Mexico, and is a rapacious little beast, nocturnal in habits, and preys upon smaller quadrupeds. They are so fleet that it takes a fast dog to overtake them. They resort to the wooded borders of streams, making their beds in hollow trees and logs, seldom venturing into the open prairies. Our dogs treed four of these ferocious miniature tigers while we were hunting on the Newcees River, all of which we shot, but they fought the dogs desperately even after they were seriously wounded.

The tiger-cat, like its kindred feline brother, the wild cat, is more ferocious and combative and makes a better fight in proportion to its size than any other variety of the cat tribe that I am acquainted with.

