

## [Page 1 - The Canada Lynx](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 2](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1973/1/1

The Canada Lynx Every year the range of the Canada Lynx becomes smaller and smaller, primarily as a result of excessive cutting and fires which destroy its habitat. And although all of Eastern Canada must be included in its range, it is now essentially limited to Cape Breton and Newfoundland. Extensive studies have been made of the Lynx in Newfoundland, but no thorough study has been made of its habits on Cape Breton Island. This article is a composite from the literature. It is primarily a condensation and paraphrasing of Ernest Thompson Seton's 1909 essay, based largely on the reports of hunters and trappers--to which have been inserted more recent findings. We would like to hear from anyone who can contribute further specific information on the life of this mammal.

**Description and Range** On Cape Breton the name generally used is Lynx (often pronounced "link") but the official Latin name is *Lynx canadensis*: *canadensis* means "of Canada," and the genus *Lynx* is made up of large Cats with very short tails, long legs, large feet, usually tufted ears and with the following distribution of teeth: Incisor:3-3 Canine:1-1 Premolars:2-2 Molars:1-1 or a total of 28 teeth. In 3:3 1' 2-2 1' youth there are an additional 2 Premolars above. The length of the body is about 36 inches, the tail about 4 inches, the hind foot 9 1/2 inches. It weighs anywhere from 11 to 35 pounds. In Summer the fur is a grayish brown, much darker on the head and back (where the long hairs are black with occasional white tips), and shaded into dull whitish below; the ears behind are black, with a central whitish spot; a spot at the corner of the mouth, bars on the ruff, a few dusky spots on the inside of each limb, and the whole end of the tail black. The most easily recognized difference between the Bobcat (which is rare but does occur on Cape Breton) and the Lynx is the tail. In the Bobcat the tip is black above and white below, and near the tip are two or three dark bars or rings. The tip of the tail of the Lynx is entirely black above and below, and there is no indication of rings or bars. The Bobcat is a smaller animal, more brownish and more heavily spotted, especially on the legs. It lacks the prominent ear-tufts and the neck ruff is shorter and less conspicuous. Hall and Kelson add that the underfur of the Lynx is cinnamon brown. The underparts are a buffy white with light brown. The eyelids are white. Seton writes that in Winter the color is much paler and grayer; at all times the tuft of hairs on the ears is long and black; the only black marks being those on the ruff, the ear-tufts and tail-tip. The feet of the Lynx are enormous, especially in Winter, because they are enlarged by a vigorous growth of stiff, expanding hair. They develop into broad snowshoes so that even if it weighs 30 or 40 pounds it can walk lightly over soft drifts where most animals would flounder. The Lynx is the deadly foe of the Fox and habitually kills it when there is soft snow and a scarcity of easier prey. The Fox easily runs away at first, but sinks deeply at each bound, its great speed done in 5 or 6 miles. The Lynx (which, like most cats, does not have the lung capacity for long hard runs) keeps on the same steady trot over the surface and finally claims the victim. The forepaws are excellent for holding down a rabbit or bird while it crushes the skull with its teeth. The Lynx is generally believed to be a wide ranger. While the young are



unable to travel, it would be impossible for the mother to go more than 4 or 5 miles from home; but in the autumn and winter there is evidence they will go fully ten times 'as far in search of good hunting. The Lynx is a creature of superb activity.  
Pruitt CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE, NUMBER TWO SKIR DHU, CAPE BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA