

Wildlife and Suburban Conflicts with Bobcats and Chickens in West Reno

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Bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) live in suburban environments and seem to be generally successful at avoiding conflict. While their diets generally consist of small mammals and birds, one source of conflict can come from bobcats hunting and eating “non-natural prey” such as chickens from suburban environments. We believe part of their success in a suburban environment comes from the potential easy prey, which causes them to linger in these areas for more of these hunting opportunities. We have found through camera trapping and homeowner testimonials that bobcats, along with other wildlife such as raccoons and coyotes, are found to be attracted to chicken coops and will take the opportunity to prey upon chickens. This causes conflicts with humans who want to protect their animals and can create issues for bobcats. We found evidence of this in March 2023 when one of our previously collared bobcats was illegally cage trapped due to her trying to gain access to the homeowner’s chicken coop. This conflict can be greatly reduced when homeowners take the initiative and reinforce their chicken coops. We found that after reinforcing the chicken coops bobcats were less likely to attempt to break into the coops. Proper care of chicken coops reduces conflict with bobcats and allows them to coexist with humans in the suburban environments.