

Florida Panther Field Note October- November 2004

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) panther capture season began on November 15th this year. In addition to replacing radio-collars (which last about 3 years) the FWC capture team will be concentrating on areas where feline leukemia virus (FeLV) has been a problem. The goal is to vaccinate as many panthers as possible in order to halt the spread of this virus throughout the population. Feline leukemia first appeared in 2003. Of the six panthers that have tested positive to date, four have died as a direct result of the virus.

Capture Activities

- Male Florida Panther (FP) 119 was recaptured on November 17th on the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge (FPNWR). A "break-away" device was inserted into FP 119's original collar because of his young age at initial capture. His collar had come off last year. FP119 is now 2-years-old and weighs 93 pounds. He was healing from some battle wounds but otherwise was healthy.



FP119 just moments after being darted in the tree

- A 4 to 5 year-old male, FP133, was captured on November 18th. The dogs trailed his scent through one of the panther underpasses on State Road (SR) 29 from FPNWR east to the Bear Island Unit of Big Cypress National Preserve. This is the first time this panther had been handled. He weighed 129 pounds.



Photo caption = FP133 "poses for his mug shot" or reference photo

Mortalities

- A 2-year-old, female, uncollared Florida panther (UCFP69) was struck and killed by a vehicle on SR29 2.5 miles north of County Road 858 on October 25th.
- FP 59 was killed by another panther on November 22nd just west of FPNWR. This type of death is classified as intraspecific aggression. FP59 was first handled as a 2-week-old kitten at the den in June 1995. He was 9.4 years old.