

# Kodkod

Kodkod <sup>[1]</sup>	
	
Conservation status	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Extinct ↓ <b>EX</b></div> <div style="text-align: center;">EW</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Threatened ┌───┬───┐ <b>CR</b> <b>EN</b> <b>VU</b></div> <div style="text-align: center;">NT</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Least Concern ↓ <b>LC</b></div> </div> <p>Vulnerable (IUCN 3.1)<sup>[2]</sup></p>	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Mammalia
Order:	Carnivora
Family:	Felidae
Genus:	<i>Leopardus</i>
Species:	<i>L. guigna</i>
Binomial name	
<p><i>Leopardus guigna</i> (Molina, 1782)</p>	
	
Kodkod range map	
Synonyms	

- *Oncifelis guigna*, the former classification

The **Kodkod** (*Leopardus guigna*), also called **Guiña**, is the smallest cat in the Americas and also has the smallest distribution, being found primarily in central and southern Chile and marginally in adjoining areas of Argentina. In 2002, the IUCN classified the kodkod as *Vulnerable* as the total effective population size may be fewer than 10,000 mature individuals, with a declining trend due to habitat and prey base loss and persecution, and no subpopulation having an effective population size larger than 1,000 mature breeding individuals.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Characteristics

The Kodkod has a small head, large feet, and a thick tail. An adult weighs 2 to 2.5 kilograms (4.4 to 5.5 lb),<sup>[3]</sup> with a typical length of 37 to 51 centimetres (15 to 20 in), a short 20 to 25 centimetres (7.9 to 9.8 in) tail, and a shoulder height of about 25 centimetres (9.8 in).<sup>[4]</sup>

The coat has a base color ranging from brownish-yellow to grey-brown. The body is decorated with dark spots, with a pale underside and a ringed tail. The ears are black with a white spot, while the dark spots on the shoulders and neck almost merge to form a series of dotted streaks. Melanistic kodkods with spotted black coats are quite common.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Distribution and habitat

Kodkods are strongly associated with mixed temperate rainforests of the southern Andean and coastal ranges, particularly the Valdivian and Araucaria forests of Chile, which is characterized by the presence of bamboo in the understory. They prefer evergreen temperate rainforest habitats to deciduous temperate moist forests, sclerophyllous scrub and coniferous forests. They are tolerant of altered habitats, being found in secondary forest and shrub as well as primary forest, and on the fringes of settled and cultivated areas.<sup>[3]</sup>

They range up to the treeline at approximately 1900 m (6200 ft).<sup>[5]</sup> In Argentina, they have been recorded from moist montane forest, which has Valdivian characteristics, including a multi-layered structure with bamboo, and numerous lianas and epiphytes.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Ecology and behavior

Kodkods are equally active during the day as during the night, although they only venture into open terrain under the cover of darkness. During the day, they rest in dense vegetation in ravines, along streams with heavy cover, and in piles of dead gorse. They are excellent climbers, and easily able to climb trees more than a meter in diameter. They are terrestrial predators of birds, lizards and rodents in the ravines and forested areas, feeding on Southern lapwing, Austral Thrush, Chucao Tapaculo, Huet-huet, domestic geese and chicken.<sup>[4]</sup>

Male kodkods maintain exclusive territories 1.1 to 2.5 square kilometres (0.42 to 0.97 sq mi) in size, while females occupy smaller ranges of just 0.5 to 0.7 square kilometre (0.19 to 0.27 sq mi).<sup>[4]</sup>

## Reproduction

The gestation period lasts about 72–78 days. The average litter size is one to three kittens. This species may live to be about 11 years old.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Threats

The major threat to the kodkod is logging of its temperate moist forest habitat, and the spread of pine forest plantations and agriculture, particularly in central Chile.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1997 to 1998, two out of five radio-collared kodkods were killed on Chiloe Island while raiding chicken coops.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Taxonomy

There are two known subspecies of this cat:<sup>[1]</sup>

- *Leopardus guigna guigna* - Southern Chile and Argentina
- *Leopardus guigna tigrillo* - Central Chile

The Kodkod was formerly considered a member of the genus *Oncifelis*, which consisted of three small feline species native to South America. All of these species have been moved into the genus *Leopardus*. Along with the Kodkod, the former members of *Oncifelis* were the Colocolo and Geoffroy's Cat.

## References

- [1] Wozencraft, W. Christopher (16 November 2005). "Order Carnivora (pp. 532-628)" (<http://www.bucknell.edu/msw3>). In Wilson, Don E., and Reeder, DeeAnn M., eds. *Mammal Species of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Reference* (<http://google.com/books?id=IgAMbNSt8ikC&pg=PA538>) (3rd ed.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2 vols. (2142 pp.). pp. 538. ISBN 978-0-8018-8221-0. OCLC 62265494. .
  - [2] Acosta, G., Lucherini, M. (2008). "Leopardus guigna" (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/apps/redlist/details/15311>). *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2011.1*. International Union for Conservation of Nature. .
  - [3] Nowell, K., Jackson, P. (1996) *Kodkod* (<http://lynx.uio.no/lynx/catsgportal/cat-website/catfolk/guigna01.htm>) In: Wild Cats: status survey and conservation action plan. IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, Gland, Switzerland.
  - [4] Sunquist, Mel; Sunquist, Fiona (2002). *Wild cats of the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 211–214. ISBN 0-226-77999-8.
  - [5] Miller, S.D., Rottmann, J. (1976) *Guía para el reconocimiento de mamíferos chilenos*. [Guide to the recognition of Chilean mammals.] Editora Nacional Gabriela Mistral, Santiago (in Spanish).
  - [6] Dimitri, M. (1972) [*The Andean-Patagonian forest region: general synopsis*.] Colección científica del Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria 10 (in Spanish).
  - [7] Sanderson, J. G., Sunquist, M. E., Iriarte, A. W. (2002) *Natural history and landscape-use of guignas (Oncifelis guigna) on Isla Grande de Chiloé, Chile*. *Journal of Mammalogy* 83 (2): 608–613.
- "Kodkod, Chilean cat" (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/factfiles/47.shtml>). BBC. Retrieved 2008-02-17.

## External links

- The World Conservation Union Cat Specialist Group - Kodkod (<http://lynx.uio.no/lynx/catsgportal/cat-website/catfolk/guigna01.htm>)
- The Kodkod at Big Cats Online (<http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/agarman/kodkod.htm>)
- *The Spatial Ecology of the Güiña in Southern Chile* (<http://www2.unil.ch/biomapper/Download/Freer-PhD-2004.pdf>)

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