



Marin Wildlife Picture Index Project FAQs

What is the Wildlife Picture Index?

The Wildlife Picture Index Project (WPI) is a method that combines statistical analysis of photos from wildlife cameras with other environmental data to help land managers learn about the presence of wildlife in our parks and open spaces. First developed by the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Zoological Society of London, this technique is now being used in Marin County to better understand how wildlife use the diverse habitats on Mt. Tamalpais.

What is a wildlife camera?

A wildlife camera is a stationary, weatherproof, motion-activated camera that can be left outside for long periods of time. Wildlife cameras do not emit light or use a flash, and therefore are able to gather images without disturbing wildlife. Cameras operate on rechargeable batteries and record photographs onto memory cards.

What is the project's purpose?

The purpose of this project is to acquire statistically-viable wildlife data over a large geographic area on Mt. Tamalpais and adjacent public lands. While public land managers are aware of many of the species (bobcats, coyotes, badgers, etc.) that occupy these lands, much is still unknown regarding their abundance, how they move about, and how they use these lands at different times of the year. Understanding trends and patterns in wildlife use and behavior is essential to taking better care of our public wildlands.

How are the cameras arranged?

The cameras in this project are arranged on a grid, which provides a non-biased sampling method that can yield information about occupancy and frequency of wildlife species in different areas. The cameras are placed at regular intervals within a contiguous area on land owned and managed by Marin County Parks, the Marin Municipal Water District, California State Parks, and the National Park Service.

Will the photographs taken by these cameras be used for enforcement purposes?

No; the project purpose is strictly to assess wildlife activity on public lands in Marin.

How can I learn about the results?

Periodic project updates and wildlife images will be posted online at <http://onetam.org/programs-and-projects/wildlife-camera-project>.

FAQs developed by Marin County Parks and MMWD.

