

ZOOLOGY

Wicked Wildcat Reported At Large in Florida

Observer Describes Rare Visitor as Looking Like an "Everlasting Big Tomcat of Sort of Mingly Color"

A DANGEROUS saboteur is reported at large in the woods of northern Florida, that nobody seems to be particularly anxious to track down. Dogs least of all, for the marauder has no respect at all for dogs and would as soon kill them as look at them.

Said saboteur is a tropical American wildcat, known variously as jaguarundi, teyra and makya. It is a moderately frequent animal in Mexico and adjacent parts of Texas, rare in Louisiana, and until its tracks began to be seen recently in northern Florida had been un-

known from this state. It has now been definitely identified by the Florida State Department of Game and Fresh Water Fish as the jaguarundi.

For a cat, the animal is a rather odd looking night prowler. Its legs are short and stout, its tail more than half its total over-all length of five feet when fully grown, its body long, arched and slender. One observer says that at a distance it might be taken for an oversized otter. Another describes it rather vaguely as "an indiscriminate sort of varmint like an everlasting big tomcat with sawed-off legs and a sort of mingly color."

Its color is almost as variable as a domestic fireside mouser. It may be pale, tawny, brownish, mixed gray and black, or wholly black.

Farmers in West Florida are acquainted at least with the depredations of the jaguarundi. They call it the "dog killer". But it kills chickens, goats, pigs and newborn calves as well as dogs. Its everyday fare, however, probably consists of the smaller wild mammals, ground-loving birds, reptiles and insects.

Few have seen the jaguarundi. Its habits are nocturnal. But even in the daytime it manages to conceal its movements pretty successfully. It can at-

tain amazing speed, running with its belly close to the ground. It can slink through the driest brush or crackling dead palmetto leaves as silently as a snake. It can squeeze itself under a fallen tree as flat as a Johnny-cake, or disappear down a hole whose circumference seems hardly greater than that of the tip of its tail.

William F. Jacobs of the Florida Forest and Park Service has received reports of its appearance in the Highland Hammock State Park near Sebring but has never seen one himself.

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INVENTION

British Inventors Patent New "Turtle-Back" Hangar

A "TURTLE-BACK" hangar, that can be set up quickly and as rapidly and easily concealed from enemy air observation, is the product of two English inventors, W. C. Inman of London and G. R. Dawbarn of Woking, and is protected by U. S. patent 2,292,078.

Framework of the hangar consists of a series of wide, arching ribs, coming down flush with the ground at the ends. When covered with any suitable roofing material, this forms a vaulted structure, the main body of the building. For pursuit planes and other small craft, the ribs can be built of trussed wooden members; for larger planes construction would be of metal.

The blending of the sides with the earth eliminates telltale shadows at the sides. Similar shadow elimination is accomplished by closing the ends with gradual slopes of canvas or other material.

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FOR AIR COMMANDOS

Now gliders that steal up on the enemy quietly in the night can make their getaway safely with the aid of a plane which picks them up in full flight. The official photographs of the Army Air Forces shown on this and the facing page, demonstrate the new technique. At left is shown a plane flying over pick-up device at 100 miles per hour. The glider is on the ground in the background. The next picture shows the moment of contact between the airplane's pick-up hook and the rope to the glider. On the facing page, the glider is already in the air. A special device protects airplane and glider against the shock of the sudden pick-up.

