

**OCELOT, JAGUAR AND JAGUARUNDI  
SIGHTING REPORTS:  
Arizona and Sonora, Mexico**

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The following document summarizes all ocelot (*Felis pardalis*), jaguar (*Felis onca arizonensis*) and jaguarundi (*Felis yagouaroundi*) observation reports known to the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) from Arizona and Sonora. Reports were gathered from published documents, letters and through personal communication.

Reports were evaluated using the class criteria developed by Tewes and Everett (1986) for evaluating ocelot and jaguarundi sightings in southern Texas (Table 1). These criteria provide systematic assessment for validating or discounting cat sighting reports. This scoring system was used by AGFD to evaluate the sightings listed in this document. Class I reports are considered credible observations and require the recorder or observer to have the animal in hand, therefore, they are confirmed reports. Class II reports represent reliable sightings without supporting evidence, therefore, a Class II score does not necessarily validate the cat sighting, but does place a greater weight on the possibility than Class III scores. Class III reports are considered unreliable as account details are vague, observer reliability is questionable and/or the animal described is something other than an ocelot, jaguar or jaguarundi.

The ocelot, jaguar and jaguarundi reports were compiled separately in table format (Tables 2, 3, & 4), then plotted on distribution maps (Figs. 1, 2 & 3). Only those sighting reports scored in Class I or Class II were used to plot potential cat ranges. Class III reports were included within the tables, but were not plotted on distribution maps.

Reported cat observations were further detailed in Table 5 which summarizes the number of ocelot, jaguar and jaguarundi reports by Arizona County and total report numbers from Sonora. Only Class I and II reports were included in Table 5.

## HISTORIC DISTRIBUTIONS

### Ocelot

Ocelots are known to range from the extreme southern United States south to Paraguay and northern Argentina. They are considered rare to abundant in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay (Tewes and Everett 1986). United States and Argentina habitat ranges are limited and poorly understood (Koford 1976; Culbertson and Schmidly 1974).

Confirmed ocelot reports from Arizona are scarce. The earliest Arizona ocelot report came from Fort Verde in 1887. Edgar Mearns collected the skin which was later given to the U.S. National Museum in Washington, D.C. However, whether the ocelot was killed in the Camp Verde area or merely obtained there is unknown (Hoffmeister 1986).

The current distribution of ocelots in Sonora is unknown (Brown 1992). Burt (1938) studied the mammals of Sonora finding only five ocelots in scientific collections, all from extreme southern Sonora in the Alamos region. Other reports indicate ocelot presence in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Occidental through Sonora, and probably into northern Sinaloa (Burt 1938). The ocelot was recently reported as rare in Arizona and southern Texas (Hall 1981).

AGFD has ocelot observation reports from 11 locations in Arizona, six in Sonora and one from an unknown location from 1887 to March 1994. Of the 18 reports, 10 were evaluated as credible accounts and five were confirmed. Confirmed ocelot reports were from Pima, Yavapai and Cochise counties in Arizona, and near the villages of Camoa and Guirocoba in Sonora. The last confirmed account of an ocelot in Arizona was in 1964.

### Jaguar

There are 16 jaguar subspecies ranging from southern regions of the United States through Central and South America. The jaguar subspecies *F. o. arizonensis* occupies the mountainous regions of eastern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico and northeastern Sonora (Lange 1960). While Goldman (1932) considered jaguars rare in Arizona, the most appreciable number of jaguar reports for this century occurred in this state (Gustafson 1963).

A note should be made of possible misrepresentation for some of the more recent jaguars killed in Arizona. Three of the 1958 and 1959 kills may have been jaguars captured in Sonora then released in Arizona by a hunt guide (Gustafson 1963) who was later convicted of conducting fraudulent hunts. However, these kills were used in mapping potential jaguar range.

AGFD has 81 jaguar reports from Arizona and one in Sonora from 1848 to March 1994. Twenty-six of the total observations were evaluated as credible accounts, but only 17 (this includes the three questionable specimens in 1958 and 1959) were confirmed reports. Confirmed jaguar reports were from Pima, Cochise, Navajo, Santa Cruz, Apache and possibly Gila counties in Arizona, and one from an unknown location in Sonora. The last confirmed report of a jaguar in Arizona was in 1987.

### Jaguarundi

The distribution of jaguarundis within known Central and South America ranges is poorly understood (USFWS 1980) and few confirmed jaguarundi reports are known from the United States. Jaguarundis inhabit extreme southern regions of Texas (Hall 1981; Davis 1974) and possibly extreme southern Arizona as well (Little 1938). The Arizona record was from an observation in 1938, but was never confirmed.

AGFD has 35 jaguarundi reports from Arizona and one possible account in southern Sonora from March 1938 to March 1994. Of these 36 reports, 19 were evaluated as credible sightings and none represent confirmed observations.

The following criteria were selected by Tewes and Everett (1986) for evaluating ocelot and jaguarundi sightings in southern Texas. This system is used by the Arizona Game and Fish Department to evaluate ocelot, jaguar and jaguarundi sightings in Arizona and Sonora. Class I reports are considered credible, Class II reports represent reliable sightings without supporting evidence and Class III reports are considered unreliable and are therefore not used to determine potential cat range.

Table 1. Criteria (Tewes and Everett 1986) used by the Arizona Game and Fish Department to evaluate ocelot, jaguar and jaguarundi sightings.		
CLASS	RATING	CONDITIONS
I	10	Cat in possession of recorder or is seen by recorder.
	9	Cat in possession of observer (via trapping, hunting, treeing by hounds, or a roadkill) and seen by second observer, or evidence seen by recorder (i.e. photograph, pelage, skull).
	8	Cat in possession of observer and observer seems reliable or cat observed by two or more reliable individuals.
II	7	Detailed description of event provided and the observer seems reliable.
	6	Observer is "experienced in the outdoors" or is accustomed to looking for details (i.e. biologist, trapper, bird watcher, game warden, hunter).
	5	Observer is not "experienced in the outdoors".
III	4	Details of observer are vague and not specific or account is inconsistent.
	3	Observer seems to have questionable credibility and exaggerates other events.
	2	Observer describes an animal other than an ocelot, jaguar or jaguarundi.
	1	Observation is of no value.

The following table summarizes ocelot sightings known to AGFD from Arizona and Sonora from 1887 to March 1994.

**Table 2. Summary of reported ocelot observations in Arizona and Sonora from 1887 to March 1994.**

MAP NO. <sup>1</sup>	LOCATION (Arizona County or Sonoran location)	TYPE OF OBSERVATION	YEAR	CLASS
1	Pima County, AZ	Skull (From archeological dig find in early 1960's)	~ 1600 (Pre- Spanish in SW)	I
2	OBTAINED: Yavapai County, AZ PLACE KILLED: Unknown	Skin (U S. National Museum, D C.)	1887	I
3	Camoá, Rio Mayo, Sonora	Killed (1) Type specimen: <i>F.p. sonoriensis</i>	1925	I
4	Rio Mayo, Sonora	Killed (4) (U S. National Museum, D C.)	Prior to World War II	I
5	Yavapai County, AZ	Killed (1)	1931-1932	II
*	Cochise County, AZ	Sighting (1)	1960	III
6	Graham County, AZ	Sighting (1)	1963	II
7	Cochise County, AZ	Killed (1)	1964	I
8	Sierra Azul Mts., Sonora	Killed (1)	1966	II
9	Arizpe, Sonora	Killed (1)	1970	II
10	Rio Yaqui, Central Sonora	Killed (1)	> 1970	II
*	Sierra Azul Mts., Sonora	Killed (1)	1974	III
*	Pinal; Navajo or Apache; Pima Counties, AZ	Killed (> = 4)	1980-1986	III
*	Cochise County, AZ	Sighting (1)	1986	III
*	Cochise County, AZ	Sighting (1) and Scat	1991	III
*	Unknown (possibly AZ or Mexico)	Killed (1) (Remains sold illegally in NM)	1991-1993	III
*	Maricopa County, AZ	Sighting (1)	1993	III
*	Yavapai County, AZ	Sighting (1)	1993	III

<sup>1</sup> Only Class I and Class II observation reports were mapped.

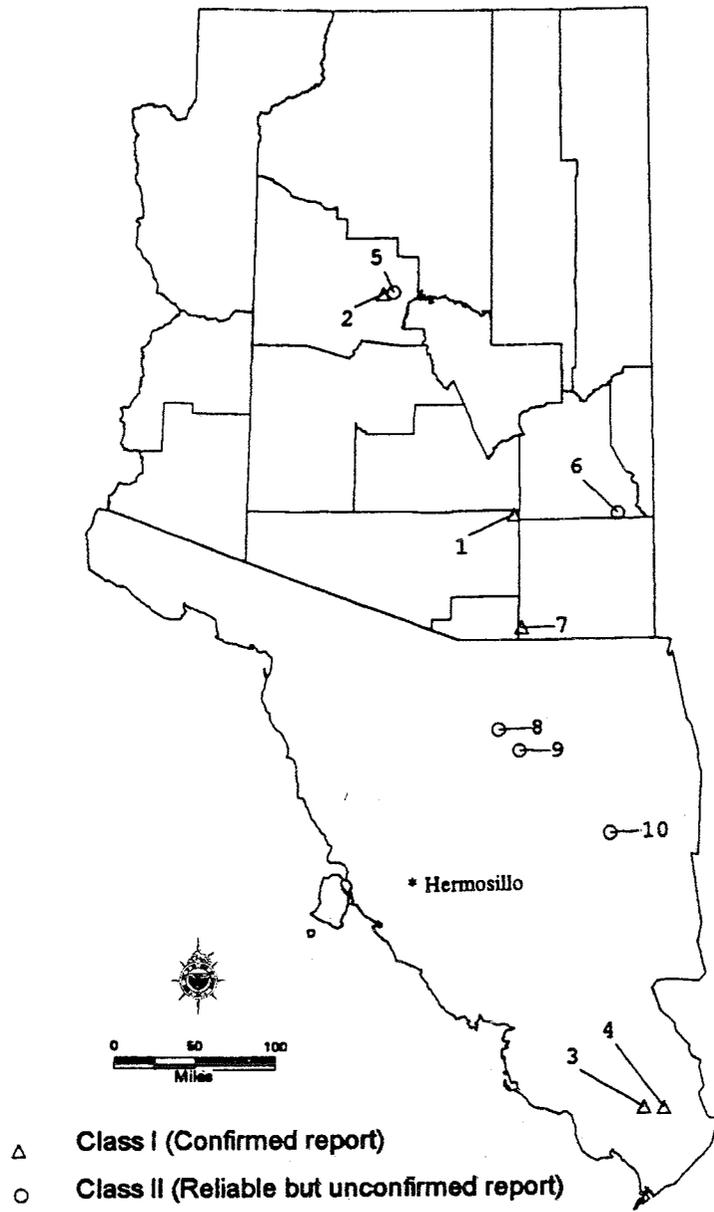


Figure 1. Ocelot sightings in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, 1887-1994.

The following table summarizes jaguar sightings known to AGFD from Arizona and one from an unknown location in Sonora from 1848 to March 1994.

Table 3. Summary of jaguar observations reported in Arizona and Sonora from 1848 to March 1994.				
MAP NO. <sup>1</sup>	LOCATION (Arizona County)	TYPE OF OBSERVATION	YEAR	CLASS
*	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1848	III
*	Pima	Killed (1)	1858	III
*	Coconino or Mohave	Killed (3)	1885-1890	III
*	Pima	Killed (1)	~ 1900	III
*	Cochise	Killed (1)	~ 1900	III
*	Gila	Killed (1)	~ 1900	III
*	Pima	Killed (3 to 4)	~ 1900	III
*	Cochise	Killed (1)	1901	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1902	III
1	Pima	Killed (1) (U.S. National Museum, D.C.)	1902	I
*	Pinal or Pima	Killed (1)	1902	III
2	Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1903	II
*	Yavapai	Killed (1)	~ 1904	III
*	Santa Cruz	Killed (2)	1904-1907	III
*	Coconino	Killed (1)	~ 1907	III
*	Navajo	Killed (1)	~ 1907	III
*	Coconino	Killed (1)	1909-1918	III
*	Coconino	Killed (2)	1910	III
*	Cochise	Killed (1)	1910	III
3	Cochise	Killed (1) (University of AZ Collection)	1912	I
*	Coconino	Killed (2)	1912	III
*	Yavapai	Killed (1)	1912	III
*	Pima	Killed (1)	1912	III
*	Pima	Killed (1)	~ 1912	III
4	Pinal	Killed (1)	1913	II
5	Pima	Killed (1) (U.S. National Museum, D.C.)	1917	I
*	Cochise	Sign	1917-1919	III

Table 3. Jaguar reports continued . . .

MAP NO. <sup>1</sup>	LOCATION (Arizona County)	TYPE OF OBSERVATION	YEAR	CLASS
*	Pima	Sign	1917-1919	III
*	Pima	Sighting (Several)	1918	III
*	Pima	Sighting (Several)	1918	III
*	Pima	Sighting (Several)	1918	III
*	Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1918	III
6	Pima	Killed (1) (U.S. National Museum, D.C.)	1919	I
7	Pima	Killed (1)	1920	II
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1920	III
*	Pima or Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1920	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1923	III
8	Navajo	Killed (1) (U.S. National Museum, D.C.)	1924	I
9	Santa Cruz	Killed (2) (U.S. National Museum, D.C.)	1926	I
*	Yavapai	Killed (1)	1926	III
*	Cochise	Killed (1)	1926-1930	III
*	Maricopa	Killed (1)	1928-1929	III
*	Coconino	Killed (1)	1932	III
*	Maricopa	Killed (1)	1933	III
10	Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1933	II
*	Cochise	Observed/Trailed (1) (Escaped)	~ 1933	III
*	Pima	Killed (1)	1934	III
*	Yavapai	Killed (1)	1939	III
*	Cochise	Trapped (1) (Escaped)	1939	III
11	Pima or Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1941	II
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1945	III
*	Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1947	III
*	Santa Cruz	Killed (1)	1948	III
12	Pima	Killed (1)	1949	I

Table 3. Jaguar reports continued . . .

MAP NO. <sup>1</sup>	LOCATION (Arizona County)	TYPE OF OBSERVATION	YEAR	CLASS
13	Santa Cruz (Possibly released)	Killed (1) (University of AZ Collection)	1958	I
*	Gila (Probably)	Sighting (1)	1958	III
14	Santa Cruz (Possibly released)	Killed (1)	1959	I
15	Santa Cruz (Possibly released)	Killed (1)	1959	I
16	Cochise	Killed (1)	1961	I
17	Apache	Killed (1)	1963	I
18	Navajo or Gila	Killed (1) (U S National Museum, D.C.)	1964	I
19	Santa Cruz	Killed (1) (Skull at UofAZ)	1965	I
20	Santa Cruz	Killed (1) (Skull at UofAZ)	1971	I
*	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1) and Tracks	1978	III
*	Pima	Sighting (Several)	1985	III
21	Cochise	Killed (1)	1986	I
22	Pima	Sighting (1) and Tracks	1988	II
23	Pima	Sighting (1)	1988	II
*	Pima	Sign (Cattle Kill)	1988	III
24	Cochise Co., AZ (1); Sonora (1)	Killed(2) (Illegally sold in NM)	1991-1993	I
*	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1991	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1992	III
*	Pima	Sighting (Several)	1992	III
*	Graham	Sighting (1)	1992	III
*	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1) and Tracks	1993	III
*	Santa Cruz	Tracks	1993	III
*	Santa Cruz	Tracks	1993	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1993	III
25	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1993	II
26	Pima	Sighting (1) and Deer Kill	1993	II
*	Pima	Tracks	1993	III
*	Cochise	Killed (1)	Unknown	III

<sup>1</sup> Only Class I and Class II observation reports were mapped.

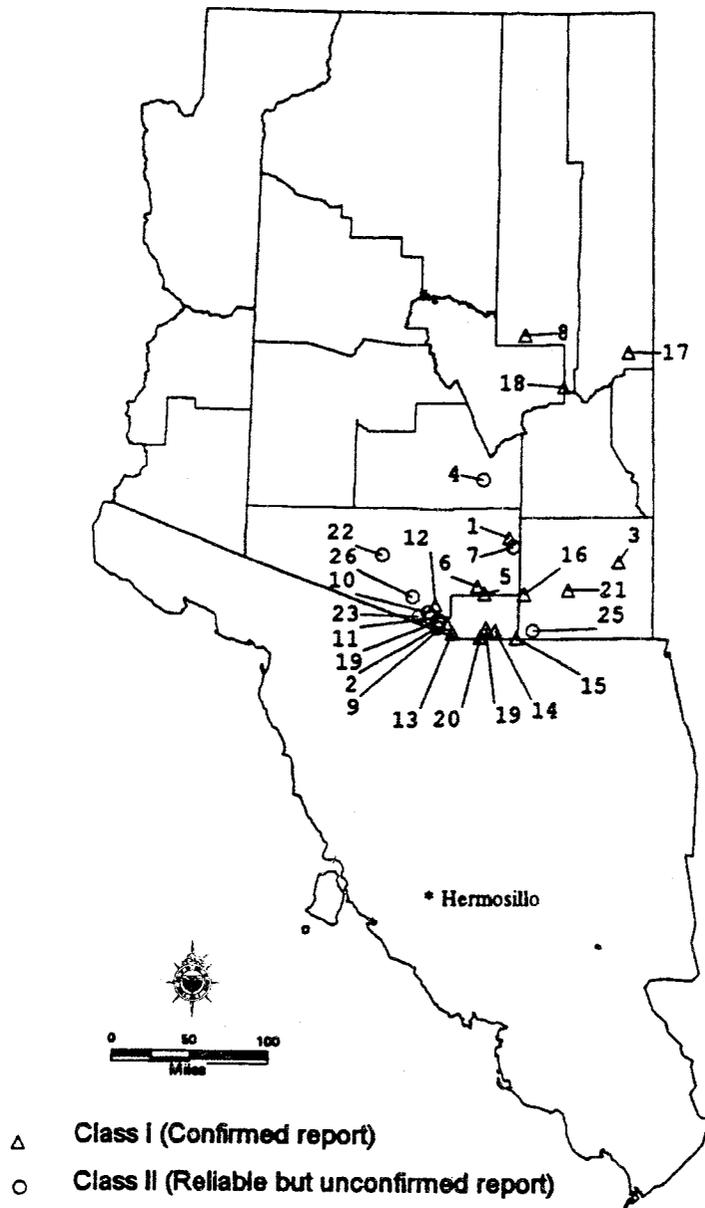


Figure 2. Jaguar sightings in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, 1848-1994. Note: Location number 24 includes two jaguars taken from unknown locations in Cochise County, Arizona and Sonora. These reports were not plotted on the distribution map.

The following table summarizes jaguarundi sightings known to AGFD in Arizona and Sonora from March 1938 to March 1994. There is only one known sighting from Sonora.

<b>Table 4. Summary of reported jaguarundi observations in Arizona from March 1938 to March 1994, with one reported sighting from Sonora in 1982.</b>				
<b>MAP NO.<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>LOCATION (Arizona County)</b>	<b>TYPE OF OBSERVATION</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>CLASS</b>
1	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1)	1938	II
2	Pima	Sighting (1)	1955	II
*	Cochise	Sighting (Several)	1958-1962	III
*	Cochise	Sighting (1)	~1960	III
*	HELD IN: Maricopa County, AZ; POINT OF CAPTURE: Reportedly Northern Sonora, Mexico	Captive jaguarundi kits (3)	Early 1960's	III
*	Pima	Sightings (> 6)	1960-1981	III
*	Pima	Sighting (2)	1960-1981	III
3	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1)	1975	II
4	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1)	1975	II
*	Cochise	Sighting (2)	1980's	III
5	Pima	Roadkill (1)	1981	II
6	Pima	Sighting (1)	1982	II
7	Cochise	Sighting (2)	1982	II
8	Alamos, Sonora, Mexico	Sighting (1)	1982	II
*	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1)	1982	III
9	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1982-1983	II
10	Pima	Tracks	1983	II
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1984	III
*	Santa Cruz	Sighting (1)	1985	III
11	Maricopa	Sighting (1)	1985-1986	II
*	Cochise	Sighting (Several)	1986	III
12	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1987-1988	II
13	Pima	Sighting (1)	1988	II
*	Maricopa	Sighting (1)	1988	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1989	III
14	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1990	II

Table 4. Jaguarundi reports continued . . .

MAP NO. <sup>1</sup>	LOCATION (Arizona County)	TYPE OF OBSERVATION	YEAR	CLASS
15	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1990	II
16	Cochise	Sighting (5-6 lone; 1 pair)	1991	II
17	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1991	II
18	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1991	II
*	Cochise	Sighting (1) and Scat	1991	III
*	Cochise	Sighting (3)	1991	III
*	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1991	III
19	Pima	Sighting (1)	1992	II
*	Cochise	Sighting (1)	1993	III
*	Pima	Sighting (1)	1994	III

<sup>1</sup> Only Class I and Class II observation reports were mapped.

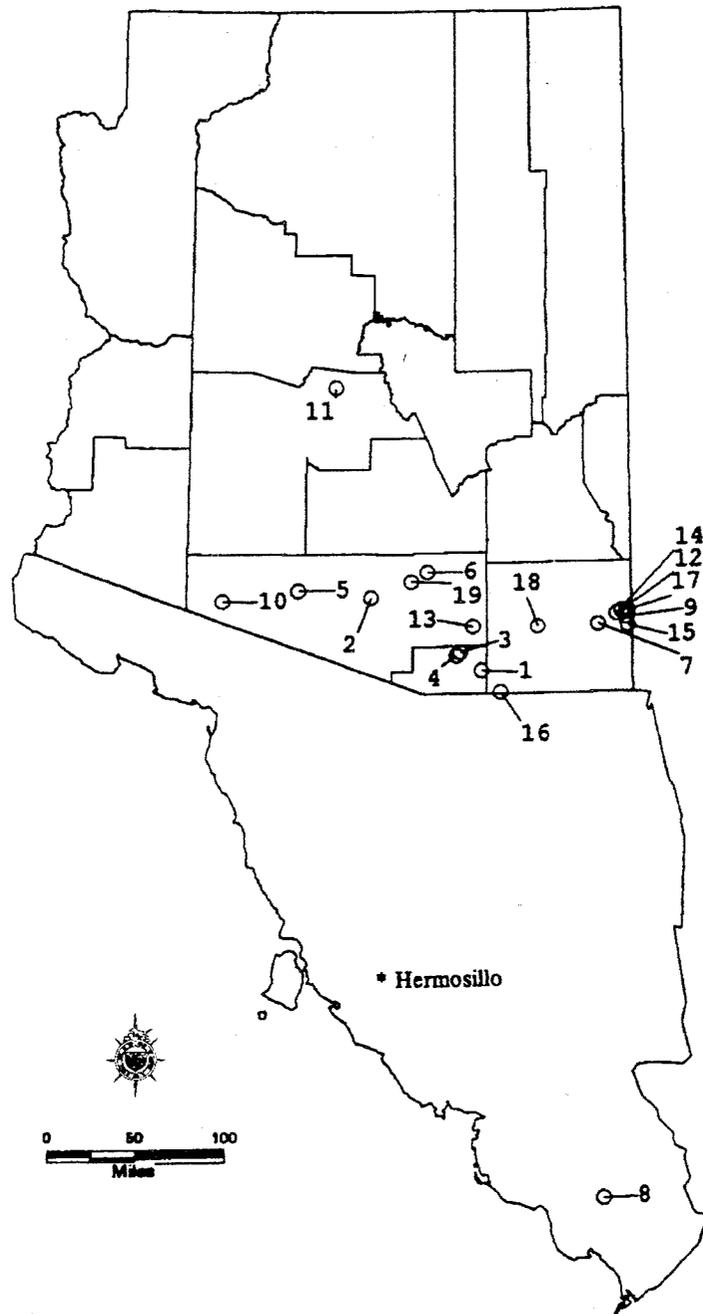


Figure 3. Jaguarundi sightings in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, 1938-1994.

The following information identifies ocelot, jaguar and/or jaguarundi observation reports by Arizona county and from Sonora. Only those reports scored in Class I or II (Tewes and Everett 1986) were considered reliable. Class III observations were not included in Table 5. One jaguar report represents two animals taken from Cochise County, Arizona and from an unknown location in Sonora. This produces a discrepancy in total reports (numbers add up to 27, but there were only 26 Class I and II observations). There were no Class I jaguarundi sightings, therefore, numbers solely represent Class II sighting reports.

Table 5. Class I and II ocelot, jaguar and jaguarundi reports known to the Arizona Game and Fish Department from 1848 to March 1994 shown by Arizona County and from Sonora.			
Locations	Species		
	Ocelot	Jaguar	Jaguarundi
<u>Arizona County</u>			
Apache	0	1	0
Cochise	1	5 (1=part double report)	8
Graham	1	0	0
Maricopa	0	0	1
Navajo	0	1	0
Pima	1	8	6
Pinal	0	1	0
Santa Cruz	0	7 (3=questionable)	3
Yavapai	2	0	0
Miscellaneous	0	Navajo/Gila (1) Pima/Santa Cruz (1) Santa Cruz/Cochise (1)	0
<u>Mexico</u>			
Sonora	5	1 (part of double report)	1
Total Class I and II Observations	10	26 (one is part of a double report)	19

### CONCLUSIONS

Of the 18 ocelot sightings known to AGFD from 1887 to March 1994, 10 were evaluated as credible. Of these 10 observations, three were confirmed reports from Arizona (Pima, Cochise and Yavapai counties) and two were confirmed from Sonora near the villages of Camoa and Guirocoba.

There were 82 jaguar reports collected from 1848 to March 1994 in Arizona and one from Sonora. Only 26 reports were evaluated as credible accounts, of which 17 were confirmed (this includes the three jaguars killed in southern Arizona that were possibly captured in Sonora then released in Arizona). Confirmed Arizona locations include Pima, Cochise, Navajo, Santa Cruz and Apache counties, with one confirmed take from an unknown location in Sonora.

There are no confirmed jaguarundi reports from Arizona or Sonora from March 1938 to March 1994. A total of 36 reports were collected including only one from Sonora. Nineteen were evaluated as credible Class II accounts from Santa Cruz, Pima, Cochise and Maricopa counties in Arizona plus the single taken from an unknown location in Sonora.

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