

BOBCAT

By John Lampkin

Reports of Bobcats wandering through Sun City Center neighborhoods circulate from time to time and a cell phone photo of one popped up on Facebook a while back. Thus, when one prowled the SCC Nature Trails on November 2, I was thrilled but not astonished. The critter was cautious but not skittish and allowed these shots from 50 yards away in terribly dim light.



Bobcats usually have short bobbed tails. This one, recently seen on the SCC Nature Trails, is going for a longer look.

Bobcats are named for their typically short “bobbed” tail but longer-tailed individuals like this one

are not uncommon. For sure it is a bobcat because salient field marks are present such as the black and white fur behind the ears. They typically weigh between 13-30 pounds, stand 21 inches high and are 30-50 inches long. Bobcats typically hunt smaller mammals but have been known to take down deer, snakes and even sand sharks! This site has a lot of well-written info: <https://sciencing.com/wild-bobcats-florida-8544622.html>

Concisely put, this is a magnificent animal that does us no harm and it is a part of our community ecosystems, deserving of our respect and protection. This is true more so today than ever as rampant development destroys more and more of wild Florida.

The Nature Trails is an ongoing project of the SCC Audubon Club in cooperation with the SCC CA. The trailhead is located opposite North Lake on Del Webb West between Vincennes and Seton Hall. Join us for interpretive walks on the first Tuesday of the month at 9 am.