# Mutilated deer carcass in Wyre Forest intensifies big cat fears among Bewdley residents



Residents of Bewdley, a tranquil town in Worcestershire, are gripped by unease following the discovery of a mutilated deer carcass in the nearby Wyre Forest. The gruesome find, described as a half-eaten corpse with its insides visibly removed, has sparked fears that a big cat could be stalking the area. Jessica Lodge, a local who stumbled upon the carcass, noted the unusual nature of the discovery, remarking, "I haven't seen anything like this before in this area," emphasising that no deer was present the day before the finding.

Lodge expressed her belief that the deer had not perished naturally, citing the specific circumstances of its location—partially hidden in bushes and surrounded by barbed wire fencing—as evidence that the animal was moved there to be consumed. Her conviction is echoed by other Bewdley residents, with one commenting online that the presence of puncture wounds on the neck aligns with behaviours characteristic of big cats. Others hint at a growing trend of sightings in the area, with one local even planning to install trail cameras to capture evidence of what many suspect could be a prowling predator.

The presence of big cats in the British countryside is not merely speculation. Over the years, various reports have suggested that a number of these creatures, potentially including melanistic leopards—commonly referred to as black panthers—may roam the wilds of the UK. Wildlife expert Bob Lawrence, citing a similar incident involving a deer carcass discovered in Earl's Croome, pointed out that such predation is uncommon for smaller predators like foxes, reinforcing concerns about larger predators in Worcestershire.

Rick Minter, an authority on British wildlife and author of "Big Cats: Facing Britain's Wild Predators," has further contributed to the discussion. He noted that the precise and fresh consumption patterns of carcasses indicate the involvement of big cats rather than foxes, underscoring the likelihood of their existence in the region. His claims align with previous reports of sightings, including a notable sighting of a puma-like creature in 2019 and another of a black panther in 2016.

Recent advancements in scientific investigation have provided additional evidence supporting the idea that big cats could be present in the UK. In 2022, DNA samples collected from a sheep carcass in Cumbria confirmed the presence of big cats in some regions, with earlier findings of leopard DNA in Gloucestershire lending credence to this theory. These developments have prompted the creation of an interactive map documenting numerous big cat sightings across Worcestershire, suggesting that these elusive predators may be more common than authorities have acknowledged.

Despite the weight of anecdotal evidence and emerging DNA findings, not all experts are convinced of the big cat narrative. Some studies, such as those conducted by scientists at the University of Warwick, have attributed certain deer carcasses to fox predation, asserting that no compelling evidence of big cats was found in those cases. Nevertheless, many local residents remain undeterred in their belief in a lurking menace, fueling speculation and caution in the peaceful town of Bewdley.

As the investigation unfolds and as reports of big cat sightings continue to emerge, the community remains on high alert, eager for any signs that might provide clarity amid the apprehension surrounding this perplexing phenomenon.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/fears-big-cat-prowling-sleepy-35355833> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/14404322.black-panther-latest-is-mauled-deer-carcass-evidence-of-big-cat-attack/> - In Worcestershire, a photograph of a mangled deer carcass with a broken neck was taken near Defford Mill, Earl's Croome. Gareth Price, who discovered the carcass, believes it indicates a big cat's presence in the area. Wildlife expert Bob Lawrence identified the deer as a male roe deer and noted that such kills are uncommon for foxes, suggesting the involvement of a larger predator. Previous sightings of large cats in the region have been reported, adding to the growing concern about big cats in Worcestershire.
3. <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/14415709.worcestershires-black-panther-could-be-real-says-big-cat-expert/> - Rick Minter, author of 'Big Cats: Facing Britain's Wild Predators', suggests that a melanistic (dark-coloured) leopard, commonly known as a 'black panther', could be responsible for recent deer carcass findings in Worcestershire. Minter points out specific signs in the carcasses, such as fresh and precise consumption patterns, which differ from typical fox behavior. He also mentions widespread reports of big cat sightings in the area, indicating a possible presence of such animals in the wild.
4. <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/23725694.big-cat-panther-sightings-across-worcestershire/> - Over the years, multiple big cat sightings have been reported across Worcestershire. In 2019, a puma-like creature was spotted in Powick, with a video capturing the large cat in the churchyard. In 2016, near Earl's Croome, a 'black panther' was seen, followed by reports of mangled deer carcasses, leading experts to consider the presence of such big cats in the area. Other sightings include a black panther in Bromsgrove in 2017 and a panther-like creature in Hallow in 2001.
5. <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/24627966.big-cat-sightings-worcestershire-map-panther-legend-grows/> - An interactive map has been created to document the numerous big cat sightings across Worcestershire, suggesting that these predators may be more prevalent than previously thought. DNA evidence, such as leopard hair found in Gloucestershire, supports the presence of big cats in the UK. Sightings have been reported in areas like Harvington, Gorse Hill, Aldington, and near Kidderminster. Despite these reports, experts note that conclusive proof, such as pawprints or photographs, is still lacking.
6. <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/24738499.big-cat-sightings-worcestershire-dna-can-tell-us/> - Recent DNA evidence has been found supporting the presence of big cats in Worcestershire. In 2022, strands of black animal hair matching the leopard species 'Panthera Pardus' were found on a barbed wire fence in Gloucestershire following a sheep attack. Additionally, in October 2023, DNA samples from a sheep carcass in Cumbria confirmed the presence of big cats in the area. These findings add weight to the growing body of evidence suggesting that big cats are living wild in parts of Britain.
7. <https://www.fwi.co.uk/farm-life/deer-killed-by-foxes-not-big-cats-say-experts> - Scientists at the University of Warwick conducted DNA tests on two deer carcasses found near Woodchester Park, Gloucestershire, and found no evidence of big cats being responsible for the deaths. Instead, the tests revealed that foxes had mauled the deer. Despite these findings, some experts believe that big cats could still be present in the UK, as there have been reports of sightings and unexplained animal deaths attributed to such creatures.