

Rare Cat Nears Extinction

The Iberian Lynx, the rarest cat in the world, may soon go the way of the extinct saber-toothed tiger.

The disappearance of the once-plentiful Lynx has begun to accelerate dramatically. From 1960 to 1990, the lynx lost 80 percent of its range, according to a European Union study.

Two highly inbred colonies totaling barely 150 in the hills and forests of Andalusia, Spain are all that remain.

The Lynx has managed to survive in Spain partly because it has always shared the Iberian Peninsula with another species the rabbit. Rabbits account for 90 percent of the Iberian Lynx's diet.

Although declining rabbit numbers have placed the Lynx under threat, however, it could be humans who cause its final extinction. Of all lynx deaths since 2000, almost 80 percent were caused directly human-inflicted, according to the study.

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