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Altruism in Mountain Lions

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Altruism is selfless behavior that benefits others. In biology, we go one step further and define altruism as behaviors that benefit the recipient while exacting a cost on the provider. Perhaps it’s this stricter definition, but for whatever reason, scientists believe altruism in the animal kingdom is a myth. For example, when an animal appears to be acting altruistically, it may in fact be aiding a close relative, and thus in an obscure way, benefiting itself. Join Dr. Mark Elbroch as he explores altruism in mountain lions. Mountain lions are solitary carnivores that interact rarely for courtship or over territorial disputes—or are they? Mark’s visual presentation will reveal that mountain lions interact with a frequency that challenges old assumptions, as well as share research findings from Panthera’s Teton Cougar Project on a study of food-sharing among mountain lions in Jackson Hole and surrounding mountains. Mark’s presentation promises to be filled with distinctive video clips of wild mountain lions and recent revelations that might surprise you.