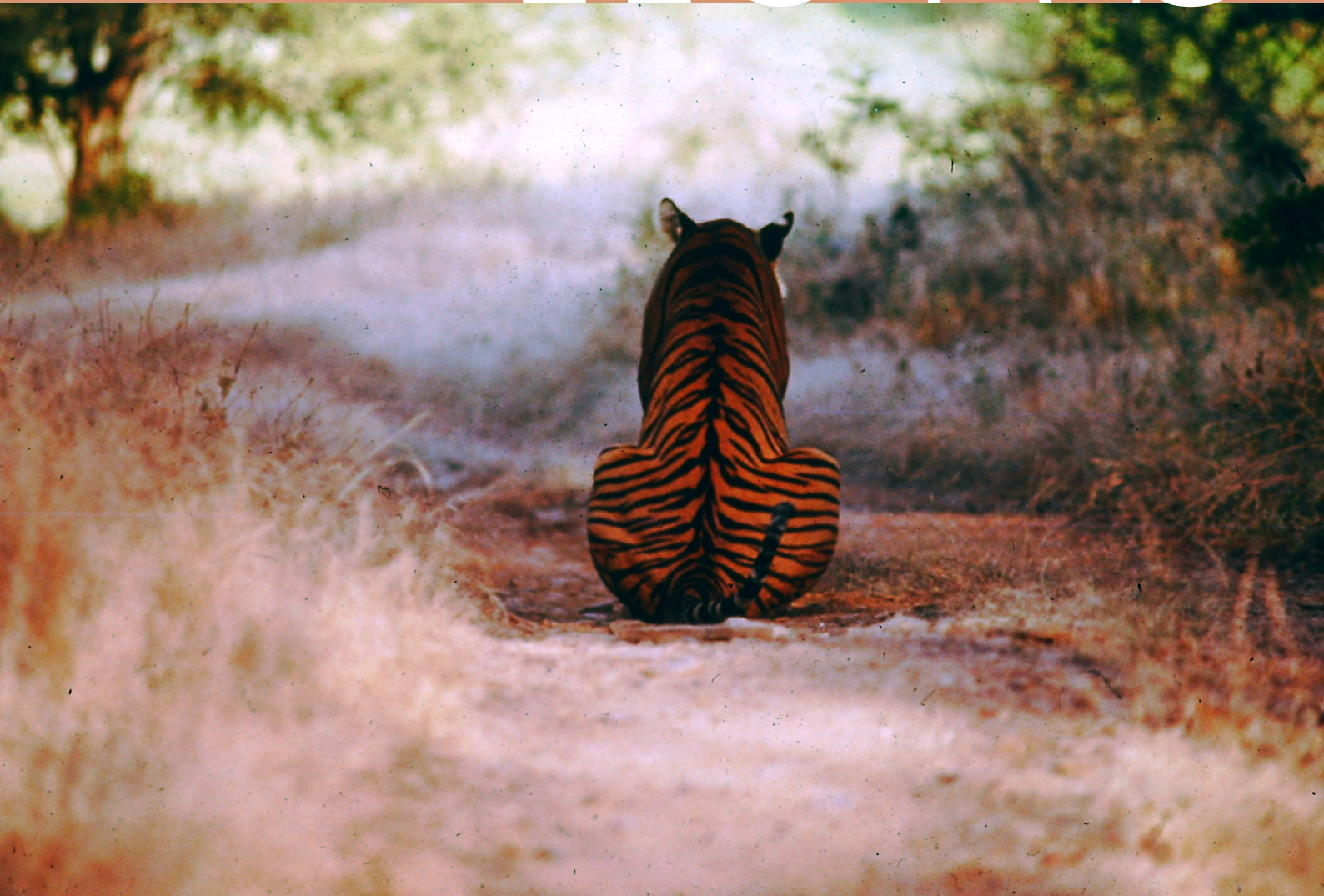


# CAT news

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Original contributions and short notes about wild cats are welcome

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Park, India  
Photo Peter F. R. Jackson

F. RODRIGO GONZÁLEZ<sup>1</sup>, PABLO E. ORTIZ<sup>1,2\*</sup>, SOFÍA D'HIRIART<sup>3,4</sup> AND J. PABLO JAYAT<sup>3,4</sup>

## New record of the Andean cat in the Puna of Jujuy province, north-western Argentina

**In the last decade, there has been a remarkable growth in the knowledge of the habits and behaviour of the Andean Cat *Leopardus jacobita*. This cat is mainly restricted to the Andean highlands. Most of the records from north-western Argentina are based on indirect evidences. We provide a new record from Jujuy province based on photographs and a video of one of two cats seen in this area. We observed the cat moving across rocky outcrops exhibiting a hunting behaviour during daylight hours. This filmic record is a valuable contribution for the promotion of the conservation of this species.**

Until recently one of the least known feline species in South America, there has been an explosion of published information about the Andean cat in the last decade (Sorli et al. 2006, Lucherini & Merino 2008, Martínez et al. 2008, Reppucci et al. 2011, Reppucci 2012, Cuyckens 2013, Tellaeche 2015). The species was largely considered endemic of highland arid environments along the central Andes, but recent sightings allowed extending its distribution to northernmost Patago-

nia (Novaro et al. 2010). Most of the records in north-western Argentina are geographically dispersed and consist mainly of indirect evidences of the species (Scrocchi & Halloy 1986, Perovic et al. 2003, Díaz & Barquez 2007, Lucherini & Merino 2008, Reppucci et al. 2011, Cuyckens 2013). Here, we provide a new record of this elusive felid: the observation of two specimens in Puna environments in Jujuy Province, Argentina. One of the individuals was filmed ([\[org.ar/?p=2816\]\(http://proyungas.org.ar/?p=2816\); \[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHU0v\\\_L8r5U\]\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHU0v\_L8r5U\); Supporting Online Material SOM Video V1\) and photographed \(Fig. 1\) for at least 40 minutes while it showed a hunting behaviour. The new record was obtained on 24 April 2014 between 14:15 h and 14:55 h local time near Guayrazul, a small settlement on the high Andean plateau \(22°56' S / 66°16' W, 4,100 m elevation\). At first, we could observe the two individuals moving across grasslands situated along the banks of a permanent watercourse. Later, one of the individuals immediately walked away, but the second one was calmer, behaving without realising our presence. This specimen could be photographed and filmed from a distance of 15 or 20 m on a rocky hillside in which it easily climbed, showing behaviour of searching and stalking. The specimen did not show any sign of being afraid of our presence, being always focused on its hunting activity, moving easily on a steep rocky slope. At a distance of about 30 m on the same hillside some individuals of the mountain vizcacha \*Lagidium viscacia\*, one of the main preys of the Andean cat \(Walker et al. 2007, Reppucci 2012\), could be observed. The cat explored meticulously every crack or](http://proyungas.</a></p>
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potential hiding place among the rocks, until he was out of sight.

The area of the sighting is characterised by sandy soils and in some places rocky outcrops. Grassy vegetation is restricted alongside the scarce watercourses (Fig. 2).

Most of small felids are difficult to study in their natural environments. Filmic records constitute one of the most useful tools for understanding some aspects of their behaviour and natural history. In this context, we consider our record as a valuable document for the knowledge and the conservation promotion of this species.

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**Fig. 1.** An Andean cat noticing our presence (Photo F. R. González).



**Fig. 2.** Overview of the sighting place. The Andean cat was seen on the rocky outcrop on the right (Photo P. E. Ortiz).

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Supporting Online Material SOM Video V1 is available at [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org).

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