Every team has to have a mascot and our Scouts Programsâ€™ mascot is the lion.Â The lion is noble and loyal. In fact the word lion refers to people who embody strength and courage. Â Our Scouts embody the attributes of the lion

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The ConstellationÂ

The fifth constellation of the zodiac is Leo.Â It looks like the outline of a lion.Â The story behind the constellation is that Leo represents one of Herculesâ€™s 12 tasks.Â

About the LionÂ

Lions belong to the order of Carnivora, the family Felidae, the genus Panthera, and the species Leo.Â Generally, adult male lions grow to about 4 feet high, 8 to 10 feet long, and about 450 pounds.Â Females are noticeably smaller and generally weigh 300 pounds or less.Â Lions have a smooth, spot-free coat as adults, but cubs are born with spots which gradually fade away.Â

Lions once lived as far north as Europe!Â Today, lions only occur naturally in Africa.Â They are carnivores and must hunt for their prey.Â The female lionesses do the majority of the hunting, but they do sometimes drive prey toward waiting males.Â Â

Lions are the only cats to develop strong family bonds.Â Lions are dedicated to their family or â€œprideâ€ and work hard on their hunts to provide for their families.Â Lions are much more likely to fail than succeed on hunts and therefore they truly earn their meal when they finally catch one.Â

Lion Cubs

A mother lion removes herself from the pride to give birth in a secret hiding place.Â Typically, 3-4 cubs are born at a time.Â The lioness is dedicated to them and rarely leaves but to quickly drink and find food, because without her protection they could fall victim to other hunting cats, such as leopards.Â Cubs are playful and precocious and after a few weeks the lioness spends most of her time chasing them down and bringing them back to safety.Â Cubs run and play, attack bugs and birds, and engage in rough play with each other and Mom.Â After a few months, the cubs follow their mother out on hunting expeditions, where they watch her hunt but do not take part.Â Their play activity helps them develop the skills necessary to hunt as adults.Â

The cubs are typically brought back to the pride and introduced at about two months old.Â Adult lions including other mothers and adult males look over the cubs carefully.Â It is a moment of pride for the mother as she introduces her cubs as â€œpart of the family.â€ Â From then on, the rest of the pride also takes responsibility for the cubs.Â

ConservationÂ

Lions are not currently endangered, but are threatened by poachers and disappearance of their habitat and prey.Â Lions are being pushed further into Africa and may eventually disappear.Â We instill in our Scouts a love of nature and a responsibility for wildlife and especially their mascot, the Lion.Â Now thatâ€™s something to smile about!