

When wild animals roamed in county

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game. Before Mr. Amsden could arrive the dogs attacked the cat, which, when cornered, fought furiously. Only a shot from Mr. Amsden's rifle saved the other dogs."

Continuing his account, the Indianapolis hunter said that he believed there were several families of wildcats in the south-central part of the state. He boasted that the male he had killed in Monroe County was "the largest he had ever seen."

Equally interested in the bobcats, Amsden claimed to have caught four in four weeks. He added, "It is altogether likely that it is these cats which have been giving farmers in Washington and Marion townships so much trouble lately."

"I have found little traces of foxes here. But I have found indications that there are a few wolves. I believe, however, that most of the pigs were carried away by the cats."

In case Monroe Countians couldn't tell one cat from another, Amsden left behind a little enlightenment on the subject as he was preparing to go back to Indianapolis.

He explained, "Many people do not know the difference between

bobcats and wildcats. The bobcat is so-called because its tail is shorter than that of a wildcat. The bobcat is also much smaller than the wildcat."

He didn't advise any amateur hunter to get within striking distance of either. "Both are dangerous," he concluded.

The encroachment of civilization and the demand for animal furs had greatly diminished the plentiful supply of wildlife by the 1860s, Amsden implied, farmers tracked and killed the ones that were a threat to livestock.

Another factor that affected the number of wild animals was the departure of Indians from Indiana. Carmony and Barnhart indicate that soon discovered the pelts could be traded for such diverse goods as ropes, blankets, cloth, tin cups, hoes, tomahawks, scalping knives and many other useful or decorative items. Perhaps the most unfortunate commodity traded to the Indians for fur was whiskey.

Occasional sightings of the larger wild animals appeared in local newspapers during the time that the article about Amsden appeared in the *Evening World*. But it is likely that Monroe County was ever again visited by the professional hunter from Indianapolis.