

Recent Road Kills

August 2000

The last two panthers to be hit and killed by vehicles were hit on County Road 846. Both individuals were uncollared and appeared healthy at the time of death. On 23 June 2000, a young male was struck and killed during the early evening approximately two miles east of Immokalee in Collier County. He had a kinked tail, cowlick, and only one descended testicle. On 13 August 2000, a young female was struck and killed during the predawn hours approximately 13 miles east of Immokalee in Hendry County. She had a kinked tail and cowlick.

Although road kills are unfortunate incidents, valuable information can be learned from them. The five uncollared panthers to be killed in the past two years have all been two years old or younger. This would seem to indicate that panthers are successfully reproducing and raising young. And that's a good thing. The underpasses on I-75 and State Road 29 have put an end to road kills on those roads. But many miles of highways through Florida panther habitat do not benefit from these structures. So, if you find yourself driving through panther habitat, even if the road is not marked with the reduced night time speed zone, drive carefully. You don't want your first panther sighting to be on the end of your bumper.