

# Amazing Animals

BY PAMELA S. TURNER

## NINE LIVES

### Cedar, Minnesota

Hope the cougar loves tossing a basketball in the air with her front paws. But not long ago her survival wasn't a slam dunk. Found in a cage on an Iowa farm, the abused animal was starving and had frostbitten ears. Workers at The Wildcat Sanctuary, where the animal was taken, named her "Hope." But the vet didn't think the cougar would survive.

Hope's starved body couldn't digest much food. So every few hours, workers hand-fed Hope raw chicken with powdered vitamins sprinkled on top. Soon the cougar began gaining weight—and showing signs she was a survivor. "We gave her the tools, but she did it on her own," says Tammy Quist of the sanctuary. "Hope chose to live."

The cougar has gained 43 pounds and lots of spunk since her rescue. Besides playing with her basketballs, Hope likes to give other cougars a playful thump on the head. "Everything is fun for her," Quist says. "She's just like a kitten!"



She's healthy today, but when Hope was found, she weighed 40 pounds less than a typical adult female cougar.

A cougar is also called a puma or a mountain lion.