



Remember

ALL BEARS ARE DANGEROUS.

DO NOT APPROACH OR FEED A BEAR.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF OTHERS.

KEEP CHILDREN NEARBY AND IN SIGHT.

BEARS MAY BE FOUND ANYWHERE, EVEN IN DEVELOPED AREAS. ALWAYS BE ALERT.

LEARN ABOUT BEARS. ANTICIPATE AND AVOID ENCOUNTERS. KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR.

ODORS ATTRACT BEARS. REDUCE SOURCES OF ODOR FROM YOURSELF, YOUR TENT AND YOUR CAMPSITE, THIS INCLUDES FOOD, DISHES, UTENSILS, ETC. AS WELL AS SOAPS, TOILETRIES AND COSMETICS.

THE SMELL OF FISH STRONGLY ATTRACTS BEARS. WHEN PREPARING YOUR CATCH, USE A FISH CLEANING STATION OR DISPOSE OF REMAINS AS RECOMMENDED BY PARK STAFF.

COOLERS ARE NOT BEAR-PROOF! STORE FOOD SO THAT BEARS CANNOT SMELL OR REACH IT - IN THE TRUNK OF YOUR VEHICLE OR IN A BEAR-PROOF FACILITY.

PLACE ALL GARBAGE IN BEAR-PROOF CONTAINERS PROVIDED, OR IF YOU ARE IN THE BACKCOUNTRY, SEAL IT IN PLASTIC BAGS AND PACK IT OUT.

DON'T GET TOO CLOSE WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING BEARS. USE A TELEPHOTO LENS.

IT IS BEST NOT TO TRAVEL WITH DOGS. DOGS CAN ANTAGONIZE BEARS AND CREATE AN INCIDENT WHERE NONE EXISTED. NEVER LEAVE PETS UNATTENDED AND TREAT PET FOOD AS PEOPLE FOOD.

STAY AWAY FROM DEAD ANIMALS. BEARS MAY ATTACK TO DEFEND SUCH FOOD. REPORT ALL CARCASSES TO PARK AUTHORITIES.

Black Bear Characteristics



Threats to Black Bears

Destruction of habitat

Increased development pressures from logging, mining, and agriculture has destroyed habitat, depleting local bear populations. Co-ordinated land-use planning must ensure that bear populations have adequate habitat to remain a viable landscape species.

Overhunting

Increased co-operation between agencies and regulated hunting is required to ensure viable black bear populations.

International Trade

The growing demand for bear parts on the international market has resulted in the destruction of numerous black bears. Clear legislation at federal, provincial and territorial levels and support through law enforcement agencies is required to control illegal trade.

Human Ignorance

Habituation of bears to human foods and garbage has resulted in the destruction of numerous black bears. Proper food storage, garbage containment, collection and land-filling operations will reduce the likelihood of habituation.

Black Bear (*Ursus americanus* Pallas)

Colour: varies from pure black to cinammon or blond. Most are black with a brownish muzzle; often with a white patch below throat or across chest.

Height: about 90 cm (30 in) at the shoulder.

Length: about 1.5 m (3.5 ft) .

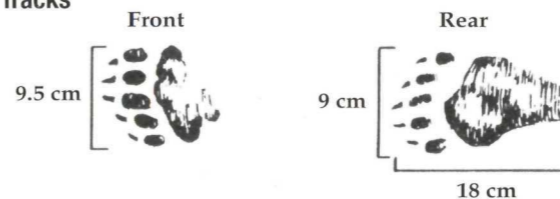
Weight: adults range from 50 kg to more than 270 kg (110 lbs to 590 lbs). Females are generally smaller than males.

Distinguishing characteristics:

Smallest member of the North American bear family. Usually has a straight facial profile and tapered nose with long nostrils. Feet are flat soled with short curved claws.

Black bears prefer forested areas though they adapt readily to areas occupied by humans.

Tracks



Park Information



WARNING

You are in Black Bear Country

Publication également offerte en français.

Bears and People

You are in Black Bear Country

Bears are wild animals that demand your respect. Prevent bear problems and "problem bears" by acting responsibly. Never approach or feed bears, handle your food and garbage properly and stay alert. Behaving responsibly in bear country will help to protect you and the bears.

Bears and People

Bears are an important part of the ecosystem and are worthy of continued protection. For many people, seeing a bear is a highlight of their trip. Our national parks are dedicated to the protection of all wildlife with full regard given to public safety. With your cooperation, bears and people can co-exist. Please read this brochure carefully and follow the recommendations. It could protect both you and the bears. Please report any bear sightings to park staff. For up-to-date information on bear activity please talk to park staff at visitor centres and warden offices.

Warnings/Closures

Bear Warnings

Bear warnings are posted for trails and areas of the park where bear activity is greater than that normally expected. Visitors should travel with additional caution and should contact park staff for more details on the circumstances leading to the warning.

Bears and People

Bears may be attracted to certain areas at different times of the year due to an abundance of natural food such as berries, nuts or spawning fish. These areas may contain high concentrations of bears and are important for the continued survival of the bears. To protect bears and visitors, these areas may be seasonally closed to visitor use.

Area Closures are instituted when a bear or bear activity poses a danger to park visitors. It is illegal to enter a closed area. Obeying an area closure will protect both you and the bears.

PROBLEM BEARS ARE NOT BORN; THEY ARE CREATED

NEVER RUN FROM A BEAR

Tips for Hiking Safety

Hike in a group

and make loud noises, whistle, talk, sing or carry a noise-maker such as bells or a can containing stones. Most bears will leave if they are aware of your presence.

Use extra caution when traveling near rushing water or into the wind. The rushing water may mask your noisemaker and traveling into the wind will prevent the bear from getting your scent and being aware of your presence. Stay in the open as much as possible. Keep children close at hand on trails.

Use caution when near natural bear foods.

Berries, nut crops and fish, etc. are important sources of food to bears. Bears are attracted to areas where berries, nuts or fish are in season. Try to avoid these areas during this time.

Stay away from dead animals.

A dead animal is a concentrated food source and bears will aggressively defend it. You may be able to detect an animal carcass by smell or the sight of ravens or crows circling overhead (just like vultures!). Please report the presence of dead animals to park staff.

BEARS FEEL THREATENED IF SURPRISED

If You Encounter a Bear

Despite taking all the precautions outlined in this brochure, you may still encounter a bear.

Keep calm

The best way to keep calm is to be prepared, know how you will respond if you encounter a bear.

Make a wide detour or retreat from the area

Leaving the area is the safest thing to do, if you cannot make a detour or retreat, wait until the bear moves from your path, always leave the animal an escape route.

Do not run

Bears can run as fast as a racehorse. You cannot outrun a bear and running may trigger an attack. Back slowly away from the bear facing it and talking in a soft voice.

The bear may approach

Bears may approach to get a better look at you or rear up on its hind legs and wave its nose in the air trying to obtain your scent. Continue backing away slowly and talking in a soft voice. Dropping a pack or object may help to distract the bear.

Watch for bear signs

Tracks, fresh diggings and droppings can be an indication that a bear is in the area.

Leave your dog at home

A dog often infuriates a bear and may bring on an attack. Your pet may come running back to you with the bear in pursuit!

Bear Resistant Containers

Research and documented studies have shown that these specially designed containers have reduced the numbers of human/bear incidents. Proper food storage though is still necessary when in bear country.

Chemical Bear Repellents

Chemical Bear Repellents or Bear Spray contains capsaicin, a derivative of cayenne pepper, which when delivered to an animal's face causes immediate irritation of the eyes and upper respiratory tract. However, because of wind and other circumstances of an attack, the spray cannot be considered an absolute guarantee of safety. Despite the limitation, reports have credited the spray with saving lives.

Watch for aggressive behavior

This includes snapping its jaws together, making a "whoofing" sound or keeping its head down with ears laid back. This may lead to an attack.

The majority of attacks come when a bear is surprised, particularly if it is a female with cubs. A bear may also be aggressive if it is protecting a food source.

The bear may bluff its way out of what it perceives as a threatening situation by charging and then veering away at the last second. Back away speaking softly, never run.

If an Attack Occurs

Playing dead is not appropriate with black bears.

Try to escape to a secure place such as a car or building. Climbing a tree may be effective, but remember the bear may climb up the tree after you. If the bear does not break off the charge you should act aggressively by yelling and waving your arms to distract and intimidate the bear. If this fails, try to fight back using any object available. Bear spray may be effective.

Camping

Put away food and garbage

Bears are strongly attracted to food and garbage and their odors. Put food into your vehicle anytime you leave your campsite, not just at night. Put all garbage into the containers provided.

When backcountry camping, cache food away from your tent. Use bear-resistant food storage facilities where provided or suspend food between two trees a minimum of four meters off the ground and one metre from tree trunks. Bear-proof food containers are an option for areas where you cannot cache your food in trees.

Pack out all garbage. Don't bury it. Bears can easily locate it and dig it up becoming a danger to the next group of hikers. If you burn food scraps or garbage be sure to pack out any unburned portions. Dispose of waste water in designated areas or pit toilets where available; where not, dispose in a well drained area down-slope from your campsite and not near lake or stream edges

Avoid smelly foods

Do not cook or eat in or near your tent or tent trailer. The lingering odors of food are an invitation to bears. Don't get food odors on your clothing or sleeping bag. It is best to sleep in different clothing than that worn while cooking. Freeze-dried foods are best. Keep tent pads clean and free of food and garbage.

Use a flashlight at night. Bears may be active at night and the use of a flashlight may warn them away.

Avoid smelly cosmetics. Bears may be attracted to perfumes, hair sprays, soaps, toothpastes, shaving cream and cosmetics.

Select an appropriate campsite

Use designated sites when they are available. In random camping areas, pick a spot away from animal and walking trails and the sounds of rushing water. Camp near large sparsely branched trees that you can climb, should it become necessary.

Watch for bear sign. If you spot fresh bear sign then chose another area to camp in.

COOLERS AND TENTS ARE NOT BEAR-PROOF; STORE FOOD IN YOUR VEHICLE WHEN NOT BEING USED.

DO NOT COOK OR EAT IN OR NEAR YOUR TENT / TRAILER

CACHE FOOD AWAY FROM YOUR TENT