

BEAR/HUMAN CONFLICTS ...

Use Common Sense in Bear Country

Nevada's black bear population is estimated at 200-300 animals. As human presence increases in black bear habitat, confrontations become more frequent. When bears become accustomed to people, bolder behavior results. These bears are referred to as garbage-habituated or human-conditioned bears. At this stage, bears may enter residences seeking human food. When people feed bears, either intentionally or accidentally, the ultimate result is the death of the bear. Bear sightings in residential areas may be a result of several possible situations:

🐾 Things such as garbage, compost piles, bird feeders, fish ponds, pet food, camp food, fruit trees, barbeque grills or bee hives may attract bears. **These are by far the most common reasons for bear/human conflicts.**

🐾 As juvenile bears are dispersed by the mother bear, they cover large distances in search of their own territory. It is during these wanderings that they get into trouble, usually by getting into garbage or being hit by cars.

🐾 Drought conditions or other climatic occurrences may limit the quantity and quality of natural food sources.

Living in bear country requires that residents take extra precautions and be BEAR AWARE. The Nevada Division of Wildlife recognizes that bears rummaging through garbage cans or foraging on fruit trees constitute a nuisance, and may frighten residents.

It is the residents' responsibility to remove or make the attractant inaccessible before further steps

are taken by the Division of Wildlife. In most cases this will help keep the bears from returning. However, once a bear becomes habituated to human food, it becomes very difficult to keep them away. Relocation, which usually fails, is not an option. "Bear Education" using traps and aversion conditioning will sometimes work if the original attractant has been removed. This technique uses non-lethal deterrents, such as rubber bullets and pepper spray, to "educate the bear" before releasing it in the area it was captured. Persistent or extremely bold bears may have to be euthanized.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR

Although black bears rarely attack, they are very powerful animals and are capable of injuring or killing humans.

Never attempt to feed or approach a bear!

Give it plenty of room to pass by and it usually will. No fatal bear attacks have been reported in Nevada, however predatory black bear attacks seem to be increasing within their North American range.

If a bear approaches you - Don't run! Remain facing the bear, and make yourself look bigger by waving your arms and yelling. You should back away slowly, keeping the bear in sight. Make noise and show the bear it is unwelcome. If you have children in the area, pick them up or put them on your shoulders. Remember, you can't outrun a black bear! They are extremely fast running uphill, downhill or any other direction they decide to go.

Warning signs of an attack include: a steady glare; ears laid back; smacking of the jaws and stomping of the front feet. If the bear attacks, fight back with anything available. Throwing rocks or hitting a bear with large sticks has been effective in some cases. **Carry bear pepper spray and know how to use it.**

LIVING IN BEAR HABITAT...

🐾 Wait until the morning of pick-up before placing garbage out. Use bear-proof garbage containers available through commercial dealers. Dumpsters with lockable metal lids work well, as do fencing enclosures made of chain link fencing or 2 x 4 framing.

🐾 Spray or pour ammonia in and around garbage cans, and avoid placing aromatic food wastes, such as bacon grease or spoiled foods, in garbage cans.

🐾 Feed pets indoors.

🐾 Clean barbeque grills after use.

🐾 Use electrical fencing combined with a tall, metal or wooden fence to protect orchards, fish ponds, beehives, compost piles, and livestock. Constant harassment with scare devices, loud noises or dogs will sometimes work.

The feeding of any wildlife, including birds, may inadvertently attract bears.

RECREATING IN BEAR HABITAT...

🐾 While hiking in bear habitat, make plenty of noise to avoid a surprise encounter. ***Carry bear pepper spray and know how to use it.***

🐾 Keep a close watch on children while they are outdoors, and teach them what to do if they encounter a bear (see above).

🐾 When camping, be sure to use bear-proof food containers, cook away from camp, and never store food in your tent, even if you are camping in your back yard.

🐾 Clean out fire pits after use.

Keep a Clean Camp!

HABITAT REQUIREMENTS ...

Black bears prefer forested habitats mixed with riparian zones and open meadows. Within these areas, thick brush and berry patches are favorite hangouts. Bears will often travel several miles to reach a food source.

BEAR TRACKS ...



Broad footprints with five toes on all feet. Front paws are nearly as wide as they are long. Rear paws resemble a human footprint. The claw marks are usually visible.

Commercial dealers of bear-proof garbage containers and bear deterrent spray include :

1-800 695-3394
www.counterassault.com
COUNTER ASSAULT.
GRIZZLY TOUGH.
PEPPER SPRAY

 **McClintock Metal**
Quality Custom Manufacturing
1-800-350-3588 or
www.mcclintockmetal.com

NEVADA BLACK BEARS

THE BEAR FACTS

American Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) is the only bear species occurring naturally in Nevada. Studies show that black bears are extremely mobile, with home ranges extending over 100 square miles, which is one reason that relocation of bears is seldom successful.

Black bears come in a variety of colors, ranging from blonde to black, with brown or cinnamon being the most common in Nevada.

Adult males average 300-400 pounds with a few extra large individuals, weighing 500 pounds or more. Adult females average 150-300 pounds. A bear's weight depends on many factors including sex, genetics, season of year, quality and quantity of food, and overall health. Adults will measure 24-36 inches high at the shoulder.

A bear's sense of smell is thought to be one of the finest in the animal kingdom. They rely on it for everything, including finding a mate, protection, and finding food. Black bears can smell smelly foods from several miles away.

A black bear's eyesight is considered fair to near-sighted. They will often stand on their hind legs or approach an object to get a better view. This is not necessarily an indication of aggression.

Sows (female bears) become sexually mature at four to six years of age. An average of two cubs is produced at a time, born during hibernation in late January. Cubs will stay with the mother through hibernation of their second year. For this reason, adult female bears will normally breed only every other year.

Bears typically are active from March to December in northern Nevada. Activity levels are highest in early spring and late fall. Black bears are omnivorous, meaning they will eat both plant and animal matter. In their natural habitat, forage consists of grasses, forbes, berries, insects, nuts (pinenuts in Nevada), and carrion (dead animals). They are opportunistic feeders and will eat anything that is available. This includes human garbage, and occasionally, livestock. Although rare, predatory black bear attacks on humans have been documented.

Remember, even if you do everything right, if you live in black bear habitat, you will have encounters with bears. Our goal is to help you minimize these conflicts.

“A PINE NEEDLE FELL IN THE FOREST...THE EAGLE SAW IT FALL, THE DEER HEARD IT, AND THE BEAR SMELLED IT!”

....AN OLD INDIAN SAYING

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LIVING IN BEAR COUNTRY?

Live with the Responsibility



“I’M BEAR AWARE”

For more information, contact:

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Or access our web site at:
www.state.nv.us/cnr/nvwildlife