



LIVING SMART IN BEAR COUNTRY

BLACK BEAR FACTS

The only species of bears in California are black bears. However, they do range in color from blonde to black, with cinnamon brown being the most common color.

Black bears are fairly shy animals. They will try to avoid confrontation when given the chance. Be sure to always give them an escape route.

A typical wild bear diet consists of berries, plants, nuts, roots, honey, honeycomb, insects, larvae, carrion, and small mammals.

Black bears do hibernate for a few months during the winter. In the late fall they extend their hours of foraging up to 20 hours a day in preparation for hibernation. This is an effort to put on enough fat to get them through the winter. If no food or garbage is available they will hibernate.

Bears that visit human occupied areas are usually in search of food. You will be less likely to have encounters with bears if you and your neighbors take precautions so that bears do not associate humans with a source for food. Once they do, they become habituated to humans. Relocating big habituated bears relocates the problem, it does not solve it.

Remember, a fed bear is a dead bear!

BLACK BEAR ENCOUNTERS

- **In your yard:** Do not run. Be aggressive and assert your dominance by standing tall and making noise that will scare the bear away. Banging pots and pans together and shouting loudly works well.
- **In the woods:** This is the bear's territory, respect that and do not run. Make eye contact but don't stare, pick up small children make yourself appear as large as possible, stay calm and quiet, back away and enjoy the experience from a safe distance.
- **Anywhere:** If the bear attempts to get away, DO NOT block the bear's escape route. Bears will often climb a tree if frightened and usually won't come down if humans or dogs are present.
- Never get between a mom and her cubs.
- Slowly walk away and make a loud noise.
- Though attacks are very rare, if you are attacked, fight back aggressively.

BEARS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- **WAIT TO PUT TRASH OUT UNTIL COLLECTION DAY.**
- Bears are attracted by: garbage, sweet smells, pet food, baby diapers, bird feeders, food odors, lotions, toothpaste and garden compost. Inspect your property and remove anything that might attract bears.
- Do not feed pets outside. Keep pet food in airtight containers, in a room closed to the outdoors.
- Do not leave food and baked goods sitting out near open windows and doors.
- Keep garbage cans clean and deodorize them with bleach or ammonia.
- Encourage your neighbors to be bear aware.

It is illegal in California to feed bears, and many communities have ordinances penalizing those who feed wild animals. For more info call (530) 926-7510.

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