



Camping Prevention

Campers, remember that you're sharing the woods with wildlife. Follow these suggestions if you don't want bears as camping partners:

- Maintain a clean campsite.
- Put food scraps and fat drippings in closed containers, not in the campfire.
- Do not cook or eat in your tent.
- Never leave food of any kind (including condiments) out in the open. Always store your food securely. Use an airtight bear-proof container. Backpacks and coolers are inadequate.
- Keep food and cooking gear away from your sleeping area.
- Keep food in a closed-up vehicle or hang food at least 10 feet off the ground and 16 feet from any vertical surface, including tree limbs.
- Camp at campgrounds that use bear-proof dumpsters.
- Never feed bears intentionally.

Research Continues to Improve Bear Management

Research on the nuisance activity of translocated bears, the ecology and success of rehabilitated bears and the effectiveness of wildlife ordinances as a management tool for reducing human-generated food attractants has increased our understanding of bear/human interactions, and is helping to create options for resolving bear/human conflicts. Bear research initiatives are funded in part by the sale of bear hunting permits.



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If You Encounter a Black Bear

- Normal trail noise should alert a bear to your presence and prompt it to move without being noticed. However, if you see a bear, keep your distance. **Make it aware of your presence by clapping, talking or making other sounds.**
- If a bear does not immediately leave after seeing you, the presence or aroma of food may be encouraging it to stay. **Remove any sight or smell of foods** by securing them inside a closed vehicle or building. Occupy a vehicle or building until the bear wanders away.
- Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" when cornered, threatened or attempting to steal food—this is normal bear behavior. **Don't run from a bluff charging bear;** speak to it in a calm voice and slowly back away.
- **Keep your distance from bears and all wild animals.** Black bears do not typically exhibit aggressive behavior, even when confronted. Their first response is to flee. Black bears rarely attack or defend themselves against humans. The last time a person was killed by a wild bear in N.H. was in 1784. But people have been injured by seemingly friendly bears, so keep your distance.



The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program

It's a user-pay, user-benefit program that works to conserve wildlife in New Hampshire.



New Hampshire
Fish and Game Department
11 Hazen Drive, Concord NH 03301
email: wildlife@wildlife.nh.gov
website: WildNH.com



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Learn to Live with Bears

wildnh.com

For more information on how to avoid unbearable conflicts with New Hampshire's wild bears:

Call **888-SHY-BEAR** (888-749-2327)

Visit wildnh.com

New Hampshire's Black Bears

The black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is one of New Hampshire's largest and most majestic mammals. The sight of the state's only bear species in the wild often remains a treasured memory. The value of this memory is depreciated when a bear is seen rummaging through trash bins or damaging backyard bird feeders in search of easy food.

The black bear's presence in modern New Hampshire is also a wildlife restoration success story. In the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, black bears were reviled here as a varmint, a nuisance to farmers and to "civilized" life. Bounties, aggressive land-clearing and the absence of hunting regulations depleted their numbers to 500 by 1900.

As the forests came back, so too did the number of black bears in the state. In 1955, the state bounty was lifted, and by 1985 the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department assumed management of the state's bear population. The combination of science-based management, research and carefully regulated hunting allowed the estimated bear population to grow to nearly 5,000 animals during the past decade. Black bears inhabit all of the state, but densities are greatest in northern parts of New Hampshire. In managing bears, the Department strives to establish and maintain ecologically viable bear populations at levels consistent with diverse public interests for the benefit of present and future generations.

Size: Females weigh 125-150 pounds; males average 200-250 pounds.

Food: As omnivores, black bears change their diets seasonally. In spring, they rely on hard mast from the previous fall, grasses, leaves and newly emerged succulent plants. In summer, bears focus on berries, fruits, roots and insects. In fall, bears consume large quantities of fatty nuts, such as beechnuts and acorns, as well as apples, cherries and mountain ash berries.

Special skills: Bears are intelligent, have a very good memory and a keen sense of smell. Bears can detect food from great distances and will travel many miles to take advantage of food sources. Once aware of a food source – including bird feeders or trash bins – bears are likely to visit again.



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Don't Feed the Habit

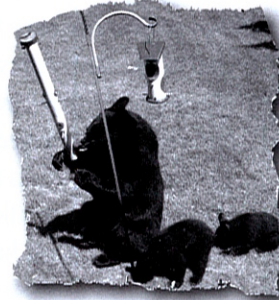
As snow disappears in the early spring, hungry bears leave their winter dens. Spring offers few foods for bears until leaves emerge, grasses grow, bulbs sprout and flowers bloom. Hungry bears take advantage of all food resources. Although bears are generally shy and usually avoid humans, their need for food often draws them to bird feeders and trash containers.

It is important that residents and visitors be proactive and avoid attracting bears to food sources. This activity causes habituation and teaches bears to associate human occupied areas with easy food sources which quickly destroy the wild nature of bears.

Prevent Your Bird Feeder from Becoming a Bear Feeder

Bear damage to bird feeders is a common and growing spring and summer complaint. Here are some suggestions to prevent your bird feeder from attracting bears:

- Only feed birds when bears are in their dens. You can start feeding birds December 1, but you should complete your bird feeding activities by April 1 (the birds will do just fine with natural food sources). Clean up spilled seeds and shells.
- Bears are intelligent. This, coupled with their strength and agility, makes it very difficult to establish bear-proof bird feeders.
- Encourage your bird-feeding friends and neighbors to adhere to these guidelines.
- Use alternatives to bird seed to help wild birds. Contact the Fish and Game Department, UNH Cooperative Extension or N.H. Audubon for specific recommendations.



JOHN SCHOLL PHOTO

Residential Prevention

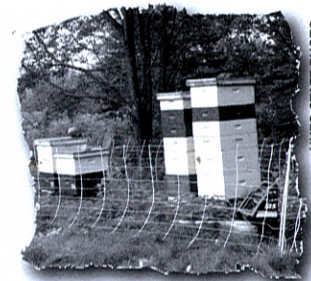
Each year, bears visit many trash cans and dumpsters, often making a big mess. Here are some suggestions to prevent your trash from becoming dinner for bears or other wildlife.

- Keep garbage in airtight containers inside your garage or storage area. Double bagging and the use of ammonia will reduce odors that attract bears.
- Garbage for pickup should be put outside the morning of collection, not the night before.
- Use a bear-proof dumpster. Insist on a bear-proof dumpster of proper size for your solid waste pickup service.
- Keep dumpsters and trash containers secured at all times. Lock and bolt both tops and sliding doors if necessary.
- Do not place meat or sweet food scraps in your compost pile.
- Do not leave pet food or dishes outdoors at night.
- Clean up and/or store outdoor grills after use.
- Never intentionally feed bears to attract them to your yard for viewing. This activity is illegal in New Hampshire.



Agricultural Prevention

- Use sturdy construction and electric fencing when designing pens for poultry and livestock.
- Three or four electric fence strands spaced 8 to 10 inches apart can protect livestock and beehives.



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Purposeful or inadvertent feeding can result in the bears getting accustomed to humans. This "habituation" of bears may cause a variety of conflicts with humans. The end result may be the removal (often with lethal consequences) of the offending bear. **Feeding bears – whether intentional or unintentional – is illegal in New Hampshire if it results in creating a public nuisance. Avoid a heavy fine and the possible death of a bear: DON'T FEED BEARS.**