



New Hampshire's Black Bear



The American black bear (*Ursus americanus*), which has made a remarkable recovery from record low numbers in the mid-1800s, is now common throughout New Hampshire. The statewide bear population is estimated at 5,600 and regional densities range between 0.1–1.0 bears/mi² and average 0.6 bears/mi².

Although black bears are generally shy and usually avoid humans, they are opportunistic and will seek out human-related foods particularly when natural foods are limited. Minimizing conflicts between bears and people is critically important and a high priority for wildlife managers. Maintaining a strong and sustainable bear population into the future will depend on a public that is motivated to be responsible and proactive in securing food attractants.

Bears are part of our native heritage and for many, serve as a symbol of wildness and an indicator of quality, diverse habitat. Bears are highly intelligent, resourceful, and very effective at locating high-quality food resources. They are a prized big game animal and valued for both their meat and hide. A black bear sighting typically leaves wildlife watchers and tourists fascinated, particularly when they come from areas where bears are less common. From an ecological standpoint, bears serve important roles. As an opportunistic feeder, they help clean up carcasses of animals that die due to various causes. As an animal that feeds on a tremendous diversity of tree and shrub species, they serve as a significant seed disperser. Bears fill an essential niche and they are an important component of our landscape.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR

In Your Backyard:



- From a comfortable distance, make loud noises by shouting, banging pots and pans or using an air horn to deter the bear from the area.
- When the bear leaves, remove potential attractants such as garbage, bird seed, or pet food.
- Ask neighbors to remove attractants.

At a Close Distance or in a Confined Area:



- Begin repeating “hey bear” in a calm voice, maintain eye contact, and slowly back away. Do not run or climb trees.
- Give the bear a clear escape route (do not corner it).

Remember, bear conflicts are a community issue. It is important to work together to remove bear attractants.



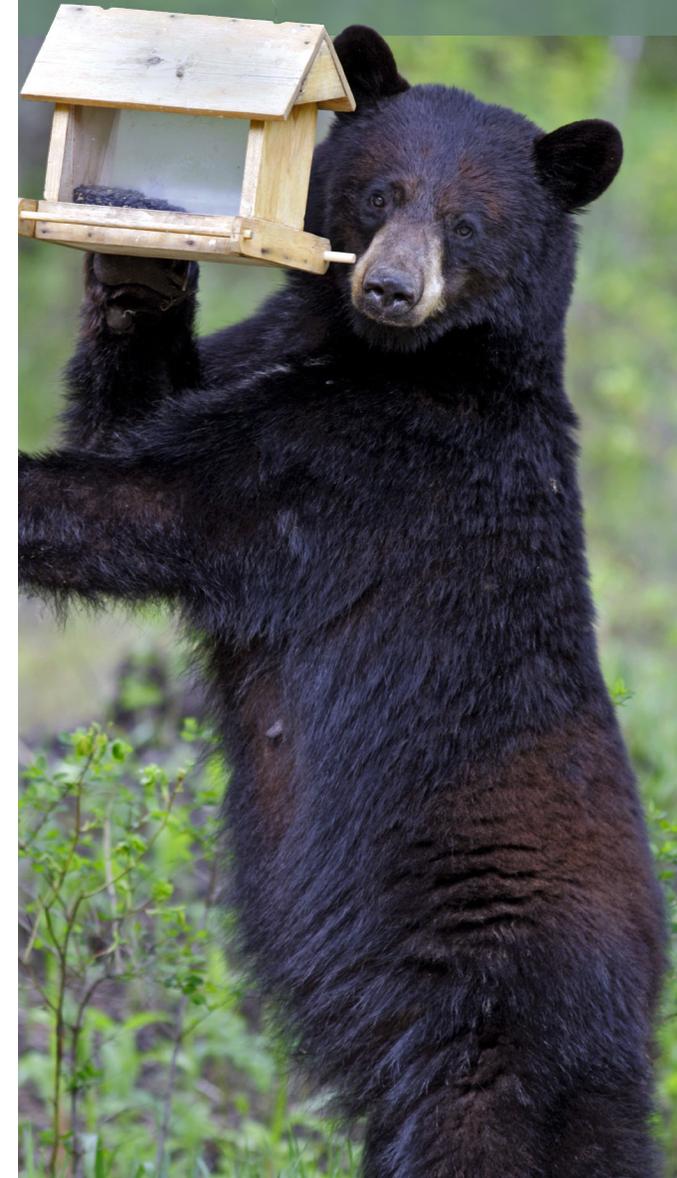
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AVOIDING BLACK BEAR

CONFLICTS

AND PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY FROM DAMAGE



While hundreds of bear conflicts are reported each year, most can be prevented by simply removing or securing common bear attractants.



BIRD SEED

1 REMOVE & STORE

- Only feed birds between December 1 and April 1
- Dispose of unused seed
- Store feeders indoors

2 SECURE & CLEAN

- Clean up bird seed from the ground



GARBAGE

- Store garbage cans in a building or enclosed by electric fence
- Take garbage to curb on morning of pickup

- Keep outbuildings and garage doors closed at all times
- Use bear-resistant dumpsters or garbage cans
- Dumpster lids/doors should be kept closed and latched
- Use airtight garbage cans and ammonia to control odor when storing in an outbuilding



GRILLS

- Store grill inside when not in use

- Burn off food residue
- Keep grease trap clean



POULTRY & LIVESTOCK

- Do not allow animals to range free

- Protect poultry and livestock with an electric fence



PET & LIVESTOCK FOOD

- Store livestock and pet food inside
- Feed pets inside

- If you feed your pets or livestock outside:
- Clean dishes daily
 - Remove leftover food daily

For more information on black bears in New Hampshire, please visit us online at wildnh.com

