



## Bear Encounters in the Community

### *When there is a bear in your backyard or a community playground or park:*

- Do not panic and do not run.
- Gather all members of your group together and move toward the nearest safe place, such as a building or vehicle. Be sure to keep children and dogs close and calm. Don't let anyone leave the group.
- Do not approach the bear, feed the bear or take risks just to get a picture.
- Don't crowd the bear. Make sure it has an escape route.
- Contact the nearest Fish and Wildlife office by calling 310-0000 or, if after regular business hours, call the Report a Poacher line at 1-800-642-3800.
- Once the bear has left the area, remove anything that might have attracted the bear. Talk to your neighbours and community members about following the same preventative measures. If food sources remain in the area, the bear will likely return.

### *Help your children learn to respect wildlife and to make safe decisions. Teach them to:*

- Never approach a bear or irritate it by yelling or throwing things at it.
- Never run away from a bear. Back away slowly and find a safe place to go, such as a building or a vehicle.
- Stay with your group and back away from the bear together.
- As soon as you've reached a safe place, tell an adult that you've seen a bear.
- Stay away from places that may attract a bear, such as garbage bins, berry patches, and along creeks and rivers.
- Bears are more active at dusk, night and dawn. At those times, play close to the house and stay close to friends or adults.

**All bears are individuals, so each bear encounter will be unique. Serious attacks are rare, but you must always be cautious.**

**Bear spray is a proven bear deterrent. Carry a canister of bear spray, as well as a noisemaker, whenever heading into bear territory.**

### *For More Information*

Alberta BearSmart guides focus on:

- residents in bear country
- outdoor recreation
- hunting
- farming and ranching
- industrial worksites in bear country

If a bear persistently returns to your yard or community, or if the presence of a bear is a public safety concern, call the nearest Fish and Wildlife office (310-0000 toll-free), or the 24-hour Report A Poacher line at 1-800-642-3800.

### *Alberta BearSmart Community program*

To learn more about the Alberta BearSmart Community program, contact your local Fish and Wildlife office or visit Alberta Sustainable Resource Development's website at [www.bearsmart.alberta.ca](http://www.bearsmart.alberta.ca)

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## Bears and Residents

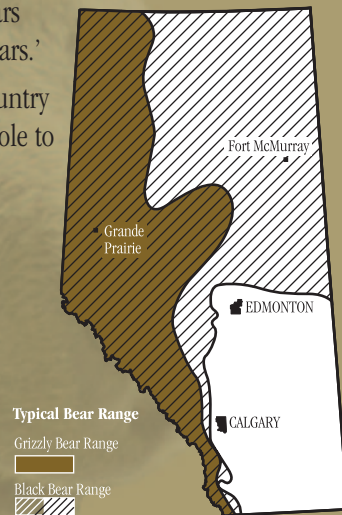


# Bears in Alberta

Alberta is home to approximately 40,000 black bears and 700 grizzly bears. Black bear populations are secure and are managed using public hunting seasons. Grizzly bears were listed as 'Threatened' in 2010 and their management is currently guided by a recovery plan. Recovery efforts are focused on reducing human-bear conflicts and human-caused mortalities of grizzly bears.

Bears need to consume as many as 25,000 calories a day. To do so, they use their intelligence, curiosity and keen sense of smell to search out new food sources. Though 85 to 90 per cent of their diet is vegetation, they will also eat insects and other mammals. When they can, bears will take advantage of carelessly stored human foods, garbage, pet food, bird seed and other unnatural food sources. Once bears learn that human-use places will provide them with easy, high-calorie meals, it's difficult to prevent them from returning. These bears become 'problem bears.'

Residents of bear country have an important role to play in preventing Alberta's bears from becoming 'problem bears.'



Bears may be spotted outside typical range.

## Identifying Alberta Bears



### If a bear is a problem, why not just re-locate it?

In some cases, bears that have learned to find food in human-use places are moved to a different location by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. Re-locating a problem bear may provide residents with enough time to remove the food or other items that had first attracted the bear. This not a long-term solution. Relocation stresses the bear and places a heavy demand on human and financial resources. Once relocated, bears often continue their problem behaviour and sometimes return to the site they were originally removed from.

### What could attract a bear onto my property?

Bears will investigate anything that has an odour to find out if it is a new source of food. Garbage, birdseed, pet food, compost, fruit and berries from ornamental greenery, jerry cans, anti-freeze, barbecues, food odours from open windows, pop cans and empties, grain and livestock feed, vinyl, insect repellents and others have all been known to attract bears.

### Be BearSmart at home

- Never feed wildlife.
- Store your garbage in a bear-resistant container or building. Regularly wash your garbage bins and only put your garbage out on the day of collection.
- Clean your barbecue after each use and keep it in the garage.
- Aerate your compost pile frequently. Cover it with soil or lime to reduce odours. Avoid adding kitchen scraps to your outdoor compost pile.
- Remove your bird feeder between early spring and early winter, when bears are most active. Consider replacing it with a bird bath or nesting boxes.
- Don't store pet food outside and bring in the feeding dishes after your pet has finished eating.
- Consider removing the fruit trees and berry bushes from your property. If that's not possible, remember to pick the fruit or berries as early as you can, and never let them rot on the ground.
- Keep a clean backyard, and remove anything that may attract a bear.
- Talk to your neighbours about taking the same preventative measures.

**The best way to solve a 'bear problem' is to not create one in the first place.**



## Checklist