

BLACK BEAR FACT SHEET

Manitobans are reminded they need to be bear-smart in bear country.

One of the most common causes of bear-human conflict is the presence of bird feeders. Bird seed can attract bears as well as birds, and with other food sources plentiful for birds in the summer months, people are asked to put feeders away until later in the fall.

Once a bear is attracted to an area, it can associate that area with food, and may return multiple times, which can be dangerous for people, but also for the bear. If a bear is identified as a problem animal, the province may have to take steps to trap and relocate it or possibly use lethal force.

To enjoy birdwatching, Manitobans are encouraged to use birdhouses, birdbaths, or grow a variety of bird-friendly plant species in their yards. **Bird feeders should be removed April to November.** For winter bird-feeding, the feeders should be hung at least two metres off the ground and spilled seed should be cleaned up regularly.

Additional Wildlife Smart tips to reduce the risk of conflicts with black bears and other wildlife include:

- never approach or feed a bear or any other wild animal;
- restrain (leash) your dog when walking outside to reduce the potential of it harassing a bear or of being attacked by one. Unrestrained dogs can lead a bear back to the dog's owner;
- store garbage in a secure building or bear resistant container; spray bleach on container to mask odors as residue still will attract the bears, skunks, etc. Bleach is offensive to the bear's nose;
- secure compost piles, or compost food items indoors;
- remove ripened or fallen fruit daily in the morning and before dusk, don't allow it to rot on the ground;
- allow barbecue grills to burn for about two minutes after cooking to burn off grease and to eliminate odors; bleach soaked rags on cool barbeque will mask odors;
- clean grills and grease cup after each use;
- clean up after picnics in the yard or on a deck, don't allow food odors to linger, cleanse area with bleach;
- feed pets indoors; and
- fully enclose backyard beehives and chicken coops, electric fencing is an effective bear deterrent.

These measures also apply to other wildlife species that can be a problem, such as the coyote, fox, raccoon, and skunk.

Bears are wild animals and must be respected. When in bear country, it's best to assume bears are in the vicinity even if no recent conflict or encounters have been reported. Carry bear deterrent spray and know how to use it. Be aware of your surroundings, walk or jog in groups, make noise, and make sure your hearing is not blocked by things like listening to music with ear phones.

More information on how to be Wildlife Smart is available at www.manitoba.ca/human-wildlife.