

Be Bear Smart

A Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre Information Sheet

*Humans
and bears
can live
together!*

*It's your
personal
responsibility
to be
bear smart.*

BC Bears

British Columbia is home to about one quarter of all black bears in Canada and half of all grizzly bears. Black bears live in almost all areas of BC, but they prefer low-lying forests. This often brings them in contact with people. Grizzlies prefer higher mountain areas, but they also fish for salmon along rivers and in coastal regions.

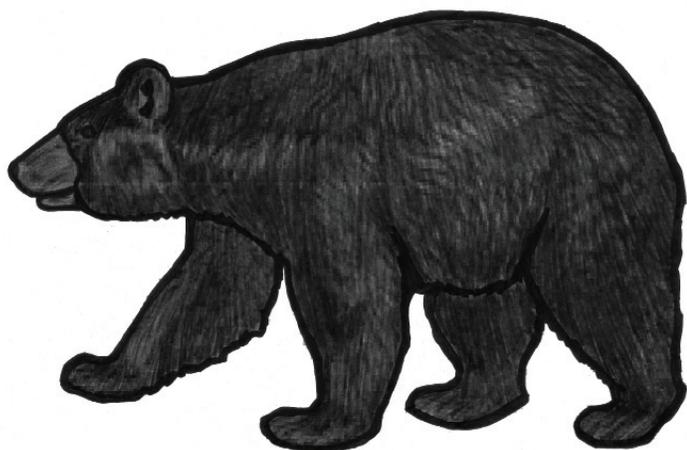
Black Bear or Grizzly Bear

Black bears and grizzly bears are hard to distinguish by colour. Black bears can be black, blue-black, brown, cinnamon and even white. Grizzlies range in colour from black to blond. Black bears have straight-nosed facial profiles, large ears and no shoulder hump. Grizzlies have dish shaped facial profiles, a pronounced shoulder hump, and much larger claws than black bears.

When in Bear Country

Every bear encounter is unique. Be aware that any bear could be a potential threat. How do you avoid a negative bear encounter?

- Be prepared! Learn as much as you can about bears before venturing into bear country.
- Stay alert! Watch ahead for bears and bear signs. Claw marks on trees, tracks, trampled vegetation, or droppings are all signs that bears may be nearby.
- Make your presence known by talking loudly, clapping, singing, or occasionally calling out. Your voice will help identify you as human and non-threatening.
- Never feed a bear.
- Never be careless with your garbage or food scraps. Never keep food in your tent.
- Hike during daylight hours in as large group as possible and stick together, especially in grizzly country.
- If you smell or see a dead animal, leave the area.
- Keep dogs on a leash and under control. Dogs may agitate bears and create conflict.
- If you are hiking in grizzly habitat, carry bear spray and know how to use it.
- Use a telephoto lens to take photographs.



**Bears are far more likely to enhance
your wilderness experience than to spoil it!**



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If You Encounter a Bear...

- Stay calm.
- Speak to the bear calmly but firmly to let it know you are not a threat.
- Do not run - back away slowly, moving in the direction you came from.
- If you must pass the bear, give it plenty of space, allowing it an easy escape route.

Don't Attract Bears to Your Home

The North Shore is black bear habitat. Garbage, waste fruit, barbecue drippings, and bird feeder waste will entice black bears into our yards. Removing these bear attractants will make our neighbourhoods safer for people and bears.

Steps to Reduce Conflict

- Store all garbage inside your house or in a secure enclosure.
- Place your garbage at the curb side only on the morning of pickup.
- Remove bird feeders if there is a bear in your neighbourhood.
- Add lime to compost, rinse eggshells, and don't add meat or fish.
- Clean barbecues after each use.
- Keep pet food inside.
- Pick ripe fruit and vegetables and clean up windfalls.
- Rinse jars and cans before recycling.
- Keep refrigerators and freezers inside your house.

The Bear Facts

- Bears are smart and curious.
- Bears have excellent senses of smell and hearing and better sight than most people believe.
- Every bear defends a personal space. The size of that space varies with each bear and each situation. Some bears are comfortable when people approach to within a few metres, while other bears feel threatened when people come within a few hundred metres.
- Grizzly bear females aggressively defend their cubs against danger. Black bear females send their cubs up trees to protect them from danger.
- Bears can run as fast as horses, uphill or downhill.
- Although black bears are better tree-climbers than grizzly bears, both can climb trees.

For More Information

www.NorthShoreBears.ca
www.bearaware.bc.ca
www.bearsmart.com

Information adapted from the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks brochure *Safety Guide to Bears in the Wild* and the North Shore Black Bear Network's, *There's a Bear in my Neighbourhood* brochure.

