

The Bare Basics Of Bear Sightings!



NORTH BAY – The North Bay OPP detachment has responded to numerous nuisance bear complaints in residential areas. The OPP advises the public to be cautious when outdoors.

The potential for human-bear conflicts increases when there is little natural food available for bears. Bears rely heavily on wild berries and nut crops. If these natural foods are scarce, they're attracted to a variety of urban food sources. If this happens, black bears will search for other food sources, such as garbage and bird feed, which can draw bears to populated areas.

Follow these simple instructions to minimize the chances of attracting bears:

- Store garbage in waste containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Put garbage out only on the morning of pickup.
- Put away bird feeders. Seed, suet and nectar (humming bird feeders) also attract bears.
- Pick fruits and berries as they ripen — don't let them rot on the ground.
- Clean outdoor barbecue grills after each use, including the grease trap underneath. Bears will be drawn by smells from great distances, including grease and food residue on grills.
- Make loud noises to scare the bear away.

Call 911 or local police, if a bear poses an immediate threat to personal safety:

- Enters a school yard when school is in session;
- Enters or tries to enter a residence;
- Wanders into a public gathering;
- Kills livestock/pets and lingers at the site;
- Stalks people and lingers at the site.

For non-emergency encounters call the toll free Bear Wise reporting line at 1-866-514-2327 if a black bear is:

- Roaming around, checking garbage cans;
- Breaking into a shed where garbage or food is stored;
- In a tree;
- Pulling down a bird feeder or knocking over a barbecue;
- Moving through a backyard or field but is not lingering.

The toll-free line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week from April 1 until Nov. 30. Trained staff can provide advice about black bear behaviour, how to avoid human-bear conflicts and how to remove attractants from property.

Visit ontario.ca/bearwise for tips and to learn about bears.