

## Colorado is Bear Country

Black bears have lived in the foothills and forests of Colorado since long before the pioneers arrived. Today 17,000 to 20,000 black bears are trying to share space with an ever-growing human population. With many more people living and playing in bear country, human-bear encounters are on the rise.

### Colorado Bears Have People Problems

Every year, bears attracted to human food sources damage property, vehicles and even homes. Bears don't know they're doing anything wrong. They're just following their super-sensitive noses to the most calories they can find.

Bears that find food around homes, campgrounds and communities often lose their natural wariness of people. Even though black bears are not naturally aggressive and seldom attack or injure people, they are still strong, powerful animals. A bear intent on getting a meal could injure someone who gets in its way. Every year bears that have become too comfortable around people have to be destroyed.

### Bears Need Your Help

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is charged with protecting and preserving the state's wildlife. Every time we must destroy a bear, it's not just the bear that loses. We all lose a little piece of the wildness that makes Colorado so special.

## Black Bears at a Glance

Bears are intelligent, resourceful and amazing animals.

- Black is a species, not a color. In Colorado, our black bears can also be blonde, cinnamon or brown.
- Over 90 percent of a bear's natural diet is grasses, berries, fruits, nuts and plants. The rest is primarily insects and scavenged carcasses.
- Black bears are naturally shy, and very wary of people and other unfamiliar things. Their normal response to any perceived danger is to run away.
- In Colorado most bears are active from mid-March through Thanksgiving. When food sources dwindle they head for winter dens.
- With a nose that's 100 times more sensitive than ours, a bear can literally smell food five miles away.
- Bears are very smart, and have great memories – once they find food, they come back for more.
- During late summer and early fall bears need 20,000 calories a day to gain enough weight to survive the winter without eating or drinking.
- Bears are not naturally nocturnal, but sometimes travel at night in hopes of avoiding humans.

Please  
Do Your  
Part  
to Keep  
Bears  
Wild

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## We're Here to Help

### On the Web

You'll find fact sheets, a homeowner's checklist, information on safe camping and hiking and much more at <https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlifeWildBears.aspx>

### Through Bear Aware

Bear Aware volunteers can answer questions, offer practical advice and even make house calls. They also do educational programs and staff informational booths at events. To find a Bear Aware volunteer in your area or join or form a Bear Aware team, call your local office.

### Colorado Parks and Wildlife Offices

CPW offices are open Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For after-hours emergencies, contact the Colorado State Patrol at 303-239-4501 or your local Sheriff's Department.

### CPW Headquarters - Administrative Offices

6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216 . . . 303-291-7227

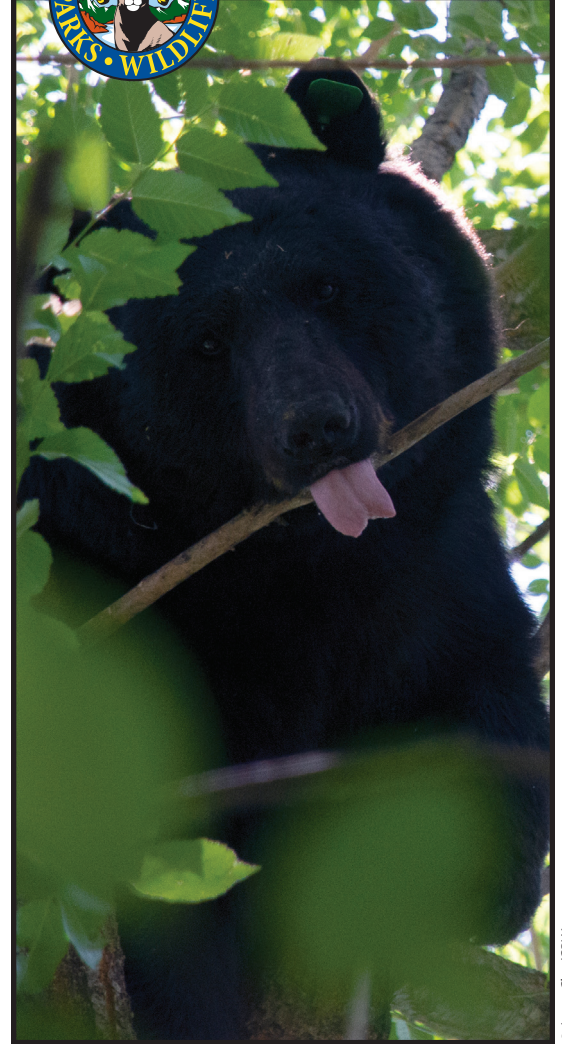
Brush . . . . .	970-842-6300
Colorado Springs . . . . .	719-227-5200
Durango . . . . .	970-247-0855
Ft. Collins . . . . .	970-472-4300
Glenwood Springs . . . . .	970-947-2920
Grand Junction . . . . .	970-255-6100
Gunnison . . . . .	970-641-7060
Hot Sulphur Springs . . . . .	970-725-6200
Lamar . . . . .	719-336-2500
Meeker . . . . .	970-878-6090
Monte Vista . . . . .	719-587-6900
Montrose . . . . .	970-252-6000
Pueblo . . . . .	719-561-5300
Salida . . . . .	719-530-7405
Steamboat Springs . . . . .	970-870-2197

CPW is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 42 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately 900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado.

[cpw.state.co.us](https://cpw.state.co.us)

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# Living With Bears



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## Only People Can Prevent Problems With Bears

Black bears are curious, smart and very adaptable. They're not fussy and will eat just about anything with calories. Bears want to get the most energy they can with the least amount of effort. Every bear's goal is to get fat enough to live through the winter.

Most conflicts between people and bears can be traced to easy-to-get-at human food, garbage, pet food, bird seed or other attractants like beehives or chicken coups. When people allow bears to find food, a bear's natural drive to eat can overcome its wariness of humans. Bears typically need to consume 10,000-12,000 calories a day, but that jumps up to 20,000 in the fall when they prepare for hibernation.

### Bear Calorie Counter

Bird seed (7 lbs.)	12, 180
Dog Food (25 lbs.)	42,425
Peanut Butter (28 oz.)	4,750
Shortening (3 lbs.)	12,430
Berries (1 lb.)	2,000



Bears that get too comfortable around people can destroy property or even become a threat to human safety. Habituated bears must often be destroyed. Please don't let bears die needlessly. Do your part to bear-proof your home and property, and help keep bears alive and wild.

## Garbage Kills Bears

Much of what people throw away smells like food to a hungry bear. Standard metal or plastic trash cans won't keep out bears. Once bears learn where it's easy to get at the garbage, they'll come back again and again.

Never leave trash or recyclables out overnight. Empty cans and boxes still smell like food. One study showed that simply putting trash out the morning of pick up cuts the chances of a bear visit from 70% to 2%.



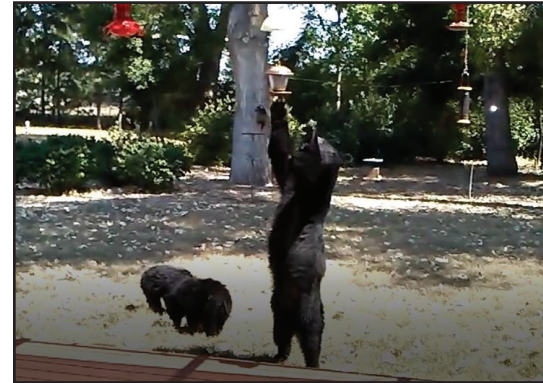
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If you must leave trash outside, buy a bear-proof container, build a bear-proof enclosure or install an electric fence. To avoid attracting bears, clean containers regularly with ammonia or bleach.



Bears that learn garbage = food sometimes come inside homes looking for more. Don't make it easy for bears to visit; keep bear-accessible windows and doors in your home and garage locked.

## Bird Feeders Kill Bears



Studies show that a big meal of tasty, nutritious seeds — a natural food for bears — is often the first reward a bear gets for exploring human places. Letting your bird feeders turn into bear feeders teaches bears that it's safe to come close to people and homes looking for food. And for bears that can be a deadly lesson.

### Bird feeders should not be placed outside from Easter through Thanksgiving.

When you live in bear country, Colorado law requires you take steps to avoid conflicts with bears. Not doing so can lead to citations. This includes removing birdfeeders (seed, suet and hummingbird) and securing trash, cooking grills, pet food, livestock feed and other attractants. Not complying is dangerous for you, your neighbors and the bears.

Other ways to attract birds to your property include placing a nesting box out, creating a bird garden, hanging flower pots or having a bird bath. Add brightly colored, trumpet shaped flowers around your home to attract hummingbirds, butterflies and a variety of beneficial insects. Water, especially running water, actually does a better job of attracting a wider variety of birds year-round than a bird feeder. Just keep your water sources smaller. Bears don't sweat, so larger ponds and uncovered hot tubs can actually attract bears looking for a place to cool off.

## Help Keep Bears Wild

Get in the habit of being bear-responsible. It's like recycling — at first it's a little extra effort, but soon it becomes a better way to live. And you can be proud you're helping to make Colorado a better place for people and bears.

- Don't feed bears, and don't put out food for other wildlife that attracts bears.
- Be responsible about trash and bird feeders.
- Burn food off barbecue grills and clean after each use.
- Keep all bear-accessible windows and doors closed and locked, including home, garage and vehicle doors.
- Don't leave food, trash, coolers, air fresheners or anything that smells in your vehicle.
- Pick fruit before it ripens, and clean up fallen fruit.
- Talk to your neighbors about doing their part to be bear-responsible.



### If You See a Bear

If a bear comes near your home, do your best to haze it away. Yell, blow an air horn, activate the alarm on your vehicle or make other loud noises. But never approach or corner a bear.

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