





Figure 1. Historic and present distribution of black bears (*Ursus americanus*) in North America.

Responses from 35 states, black bear populations are increasing with the exception of Idaho and Colorado. The total population estimate of black bears in the United States is between 186,881 and 206,751. This does not include data from Alaska, Idaho, South

Carolina, and Florida, where populations have been reduced due to hunting and habitat loss. Baker (1962) mentioned the possibility of a population in Nayarit, and Hall (1981) also included the southern states of San Luis Potosi and Aguascalientes. A recent attempt has been made to establish

Grizzly Bear >>

Short, round ears

Dished face

Pronounced shoulder hump

Long front claws



<< Black Bear

Long, pointed ears

'Roman nose', sloping forehead

No shoulder hump

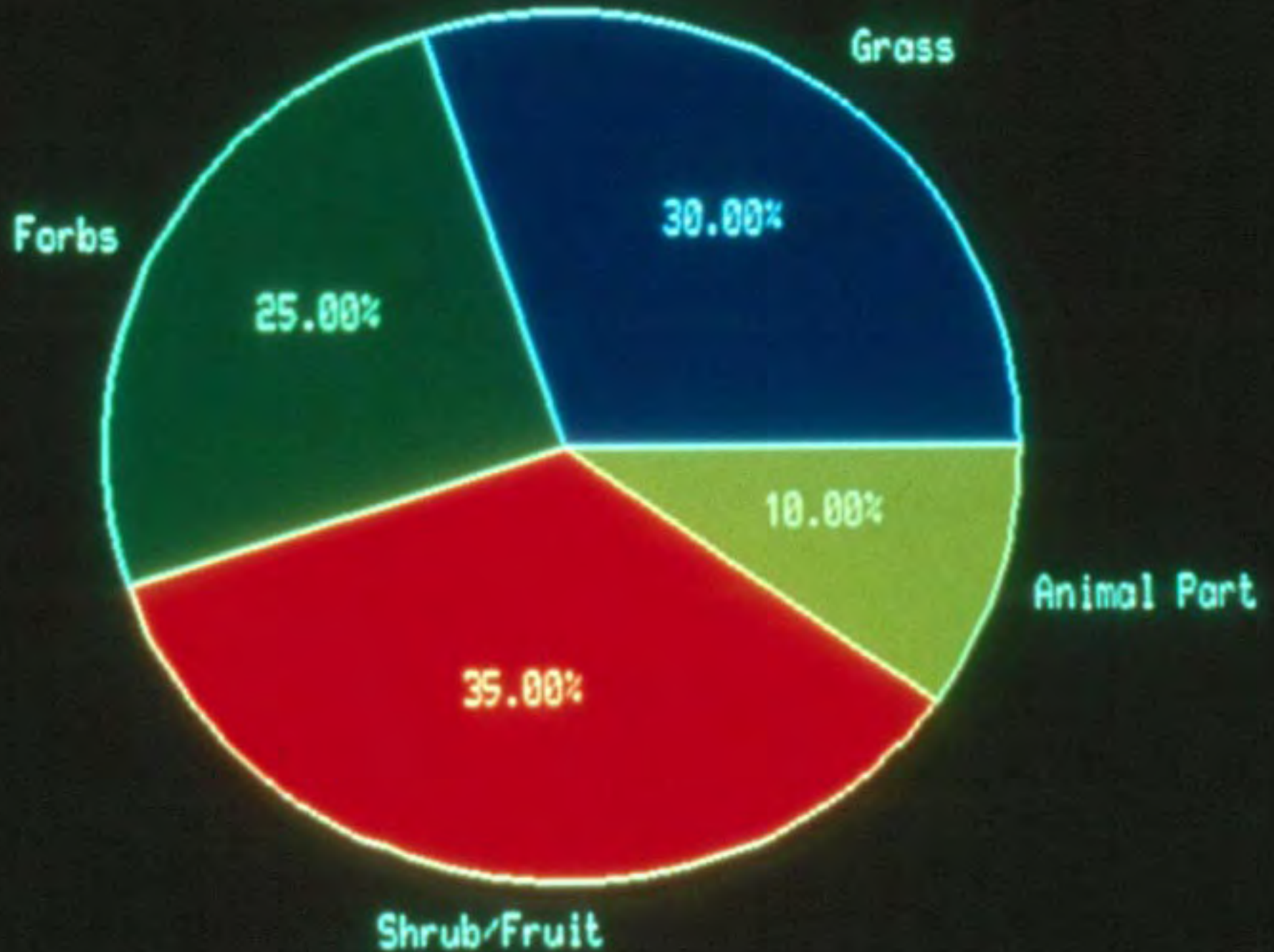
Short front claws



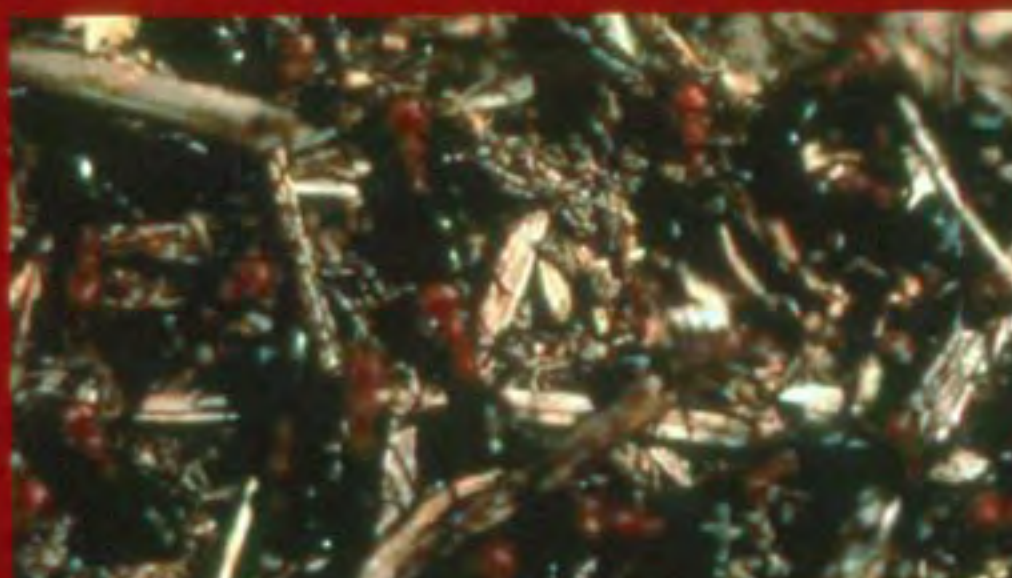


FOOD HABITS

from scat analysis



































































And no one ever heard from the Anderson brothers again.

BE BEAR AWARE

CD Narrative for Oregon and Washington

2002

Slide	Narration
<p>1. Black bear in tree.</p>	<p>North America has three of the world's eight bear species (polar bears, brown/grizzly bears and black bears).</p> <p>Only the black bear is found in Oregon, although there is a chance of encountering a grizzly bear if you recreate in parts of Washington or Idaho.</p> <p>This is the North American black bear (Scientific name: <i>Ursus americanus</i>. Males weigh an average of 250 pounds, while females average just over half of this.</p>
<p>2. Black bear distribution in North America.</p>	<p>There are estimated to be more than 500,000 black bears in North America and some 25,000 to 30,000 in Oregon alone. This places Oregon in the top five states for black bear numbers.</p> <p>The black bear's adaptability and preference for forest habitat means that wherever there is forest in the Pacific Northwest, there are black bears - including forested areas where humans live, work and recreate.</p>
<p>3. Grizzly -Black bear comparison</p>	<p>Because black bears can be any color from coal black to cinnamon, it is easy to see why people often report seeing grizzlies when what they have actually seen is a brown colored black bear. There are four main physical differences between black bears and grizzly bears:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The front claws are longer on a grizzly bear, and extend far beyond the toe pads. Black bear claws are shorter.2. A grizzly bear has "dished" or "concave" facial profile; a black bear has more of a "Roman nose".3. The muscular shoulder hump is much more pronounced on a grizzly bear.4. A grizzly bear's ears are generally smaller and rounder.
<p>4. Grizzly Track.</p>	<p>Bears have five toes, which usually show up in their tracks.</p>

<p>5. Black bear in tree eating apple.</p>	<p>By knowing something about the behavior and habits of bears we can learn to avoid problems.</p>
<p>6. Food habits pie chart</p>	<p>People are often surprised to hear that 90-percent of a bear's diet is vegetation and just 10-percent is animal matter. They are technically known as "opportunistic omnivores," meaning that they'll eat a wide variety of foods. Since they eat so much vegetation, knowing where that vegetation occurs can help you to predict bear behavior.</p>
<p>7. Combo: cambium, berries, scat, grazing, vegetation.</p>	<p>Bears follow the emergence of different plant species through the seasons, eating them when they are at their most nutritious stage of growth. In the spring, bears will be at lower elevations seeking plant shoots. They also will strip bark from trees for the sugar-rich cambium layer beneath: look for scraping marks from their front teeth on the tree. As the season progresses, bears may follow emerging vegetation into higher country, returning to lower levels when berries appear there. During the late summer and fall, bears will gorge on berries – consuming tens of thousands in a day. Bears may consume 50,000-60,000 calories a day during mid summer to early fall. They also leave behind plenty of scats.</p>
<p>8. Combo: Flipped rock, broken log, ants.</p>	<p>Bears also consume a wide variety of insects and insect larvae (like ants and grubs). They will flip over rocks, tear up logs and rip apart anthills to get at insects and larvae. Ants especially are a major source of protein for black bears.</p>
<p>9. Deer fawn</p>	<p>Bears can be effective predators of deer fawns and elk calves for short periods in the spring, and have been known to prey on adult deer and elk. They eagerly seek out and eat carcasses, too. Black bears are not normally predators on livestock, but often feed on dead animals they find.</p>
<p>10. Black Bear</p>	<p>As you can see, bear behavior is driven by a strong desire for food. A bear's summer feeding must prepare it for a winter of inactivity in the den. Bears lose and must replace 25 to 35% of their body weight as a result of hibernation. The bear's need for food, combined with a bear's excellent sense of smell and natural curiosity, can bring bears into conflict with humans. But, most incidents are avoidable with the proper knowledge.</p>

<p>11. Bear in garbage can.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, if a bear receives even one food reward from any human source, it can become food-conditioned.</p> <p>Bears become food-conditioned very quickly, and will keep returning for more.</p> <p>To prevent this pattern, it is vital to make sure that bears cannot gain access to human associated food rewards.</p>
<p>12. Black bear on log pile.</p>	<p>A food-conditioned bear may become very bold, and show up in residential areas where there are many potential rewards to be obtained.</p> <p>A pattern of increasing boldness is frequently seen in bears:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The bear visits at night – leaving clues for the property owner to find in the morning (garbage cans turned over, scats etc.) 2. The bear starts to visit at dawn and dusk. 3. The bear starts to visit in middle of the day. 4. The bear becomes very bold, approaching houses, domestic animals etc. <p>It's best to prevent this behavior before it starts, but if a bear shows you something you didn't think of – you must make sure that the attractant is removed immediately.</p>
<p>13. Black bear and bird bath.</p>	<p>Here are some of the things you can do to minimize the likelihood of conflicts if you live in bear country.</p>
<p>14. Black bear in garbage can.</p>	<p>Sanitation and proper garbage storage and disposal are key to avoid creating nuisance bears, which become regular visitors.</p> <p>Keeping your garbage in the garage until the morning of pickup is a good idea.</p> <p>Don't leave food scraps or pet food where they may be reached by a bear. This includes compost piles.</p> <p>Livestock growers should remove and properly dispose of animal carcasses to avoid attracting bears.</p>
<p>15. Combo with bear in tree, beehives</p>	<p>Other attractants include fruit – try to collect apples from the ground so that the smell of cider doesn't catch a bear's sensitive nose.</p> <p>And everyone knows how much bears like honey.</p> <p>To avoid damage, consider the use of specially designed, bear resistant, electric fencing around beehives and orchards.</p>

<p>16. Combo, chewed up bird feeder, etc.</p>	<p>It's surprising, but bird feeders and hummingbird mixers are some of the most common bear attractants. The protein-rich seeds and sweet scent attract bears from great distances.</p> <p>Make bird feeders inaccessible – 15 feet from the ground, and 5 feet from any tree trunk. Or, consider feeding birds only during winter months when bears are denning up.</p>
<p>17. Panhandler bear.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, people do not always know how to behave appropriately around bears. We have to remember; once a bear receives a reward it will continue to seek food from humans.</p> <p>This behavior will almost certainly lead to the death of this bear, and may also place people at risk.</p> <p><i>NEVER feed a bear.</i></p> <p>Even worse, food-conditioned bears may become aggressive if they do not receive food.</p> <p><i>NEVER approach a bear.</i></p> <p>But if they don't learn to obtain food from us, and we learn not to provide it, we should be able to avoid some of the direct conflicts that occur.</p> <p><i>NEVER get between a mother bear and her cubs.</i></p>
<p>18. Bear in culvert trap</p>	<p>Landowners who experience damage to agricultural crops, livestock or timber should contact their state Department of Fish and Wildlife for more information and assistance.</p>
<p>19. Hikers with bear sign</p>	<p>Recreational use of wild areas is at an all time high, and all forested areas in Oregon and Washington are bear country. If you spend much time in or near the forest, the chances of seeing a black bear are reasonably high. The same rules of sanitation and proper food and garbage storage and disposal apply in the backcountry.</p> <p>When hiking, be knowledgeable about bear ecology.</p> <p>It is a good idea to make some noise as you hike, particularly in brushy areas. Bears are warned of your presence and can move out of your way without feeling threatened. Also, hike in groups.</p>
<p>20. Dead fawn</p>	<p>When hiking in bear country never approach dead animals – a bear may be protecting that carcass. Avoid areas with concentrated food sources, such as spawned out salmon.</p> <p>Avoid hiking in areas where bears have been recently feeding.</p> <p>Big game hunters, in particular, should be very wary and cautious when dealing with their kill.</p>

<p>21. Bear in campsite.</p>	<p>When camping there are several things to consider. First – be aware of your surroundings – it’s good idea to try to look at them from a bear’s perspective. Don’t camp near wildlife travel routes, near bear sign, or near berry patches.</p> <p>Tents should be located 100 yards from cook areas and food caches.</p> <p>Keep a clean camp that is free from odors. Do not burn or bury garbage – it will still attract bears.</p> <p>Remember: pack it in - pack it out.</p>
<p>22. Bear & cooler.</p>	<p>The best place to store food and garbage, if you are car camping, is in your car trunk. Remember to also store any other bear attractants such as toothpaste, gum, cosmetics, pots, food utensils, food coolers and cooking or hunting clothes with your food,</p>
<p>23. BRFC.</p>	<p>Bear Resistant Food Containers are an effective way to carry and store bear attractants in the backcountry. They come in at least two sizes and can be purchased at outdoor stores, or loaned from some National Parks and Forest Service ranger stations.</p>

<p>24. Hanging food cache.</p>	<p>Another option if you are backcountry camping is to place your bear attractants inside several layers of sealed plastic bags and then a stuff sack (such as a waterproof “dry bag”).</p> <p>Then, cache your bear attractants one hundred yards from your tent, at a height of 10-15 feet and at least 4 feet from top and side supports. Use two trees and hang bear attractants between them. In some campsites, communal bear wires are provided for this purpose. Cache your food whenever you are not actually using it.</p> <p>NEVER leave food or garbage unattended.</p>
<p>25. Destroyed tent.</p>	<p>Never store bear attractants near or inside your tent. You are putting yourself in potential danger, and food conditioning a bear that will end up being destroyed.</p>
<p>26. Dog in campsite.</p>	<p>Remember to always keep your pets supervised and under control. Dogs in particular may chase after a bear and then lead it back to you. Consider leaving your dog at home.</p>
<p>27. Mountain scene with no bear.</p>	<p>Encounters with aggressive bears are rare. Attacks by bears are even more rare. Many thousands of people live, work and recreate in bear country, and North America averages one or two fatal injuries and 5-10 serious injuries from bear attack per year.</p> <p>*A bear’s natural reaction is to avoid humans. This is the typical view of a bear in the wild - it disappeared long before you arrived at the scene.</p> <p>*If you see a bear at a distance – enjoy it as part of the scenery, but respect the bear’s need for space. Leave the area or make a wide detour.</p>
<p>28. Bear on hillside</p>	<p>But what happens if you have learned the many ways to avoid bear conflicts but you still run in to a bear – at home, or in the backcountry? No two bear encounters are the same, but some patterns of bear behavior have emerged from encounters all over North America.</p> <p>REMEMBER – NEVER APPROACH OR FEED A BEAR.</p> <p>Know something about a bear’s body language. A bear standing up like this is NOT in an aggressive posture (except in the movies!). A bear standing on its hind legs is merely trying to identify you by sight or scent.</p>

<p>29. Grizzly acting aggressive</p>	<p>This bear, on the other hand, is acting aggressively – staring directly at you, perhaps “popping” its jaws, swatting the ground, huffing and snorting. The chance of this happening <u>is extremely unlikely</u>, but you should know what to do if you encounter an aggressive bear.</p> <p>Bear attacks generally fall under one of two categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Sudden encounters, when you surprise a bear-more common with grizzly bears ii. Predacious encounters, when the bear sees you as potential prey-more common with black bears <p>The more-likely successful response to each is completely different.</p>
<p>30. Arms outstretched.</p>	<p><u>SUDDEN ENCOUNTERS:</u></p> <p>In the unlikely event you suddenly encounter a bear at close range, the bear may act defensively – especially if you have startled it, or if it is protecting cubs or a food cache. Black bears are less likely to be aggressive than grizzly bears are in these situations.</p> <p>Remain calm. NEVER RUN. Assess the situation. Identify yourself as human in a non-threatening way by talking in low tones, with arms outstretched. Pick up small children. If you can, move slowly away and upwind so that the bear can catch your scent. Avoid direct eye contact, since bears may perceive this as a challenge. Leave the bear a clear escape route and it will probably exit.</p>
<p>31. Charging bear.</p>	<p>In very rare instances, the bear may bluff charge or run past you in an attempt to intimidate you – usually stopping well short of contact. A bear may bluff charge several times before leaving. Remain standing and hold your ground.</p>
<p>32. Pepper spray.</p>	<p>If a bear actually attacks, you can use a bear pepper spray to disorientate the bear. Emit a deterring blast, preferably when the bear is about 25 feet away. This gives the animal time to deter or stop its advance. Save enough spray for a full blast in the face, close up.</p>

<p>33. Playing dead.</p>	<p>Defensive encounters are usually the result of a sudden encounter with a grizzly protecting its space, cubs or food caches. The bear is attacking you because it feels threatened. If the bear attacks in a <u>sudden encounter</u>, and the bear makes contact, you should lie face down on the ground with your hands clamped around the back of your neck and play dead.</p> <p>Remain still. Once the bear senses that you are no longer a threat, it will usually leave the area.</p> <p>REMEMBER: SUDDEN ENCOUNTER <u>ATTACKS</u> ARE MORE COMMON WITH GRIZZLIES THAN WITH BLACK BEARS.</p>
<p>34. Looking big with jacket raised</p>	<p><u>PREDACIOUS ENCOUNTERS:</u></p> <p>PREDACIOUS ENCOUNTERS ARE MORE COMMON WITH BLACK BEARS THAN GRIZZLY BEARS.</p> <p>If a bear follows or approaches you and is acting aggressively, it may be treating you as prey. NEVER RUN. Move back slowly, always facing the bear. For instance, if a bear continues to approach you in a slow and steady gait after you have made the bear aware that you are human, it may be deciding whether to attack you.</p> <p>If the bear continues to approach, shout and make lots of noise, try to appear as large as possible [raising your shirt or coat overhead may help make you look bigger].</p>
<p>35. Throwing stones.</p>	<p>Throw rocks and sticks at the bear if it doesn't leave.</p> <p>MAKE THE BEAR UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE NOT AN EASY PREY ITEM.</p> <p>Let the bear know that you will fight back if attacked.</p>
<p>36. Pack on ground.</p>	<p>If the bear continues to follow, consider dropping something as a distraction.</p>
<p>37. Person up tree.</p>	<p>If the approaching bear is a grizzly, climb as high up a tree as possible (a minimum of 35 feet is recommended).</p> <p>If it is a black bear, continue to throw items and act intimidating.</p> <p>The bear will usually move on when it realizes that you are not a potential menu item – BUT - <u>don't ever give up and play dead if you are the victim of a predacious bear attack – keep fighting.</u></p>

Now that you have some information about what causes most conflicts between humans and bears, and how to react if you encounter a bear,

<p>38. Bear in the woods</p>	<p>we hope that you will do your part to reduce the risk of harm to you and your loved ones, and also to bears.</p> <p>If you do have a negative interaction with a bear or want more information about how to act during a bear encounter, please contact the appropriate authorities. In Oregon you can contact the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife at 503-872-5260. In Washington, if the situation is an emergency, you can contact the Emergency Incident Hotline at 1-800-477-6224 or the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at 360-902-2200 during regular business hours. In Idaho, if the situation is an emergency, contact the Idaho State Police or your local sheriff's office. During regular business hours, contact the Idaho Department of Fish and Wildlife at 208/334-3700.</p> <p>If you would like to learn more about living and recreating in bear country, visit: www.BeBearAware.org for more information.</p>
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