

Campers and Hikers You're In Bear Country

***Black bears are wild animals –
follow these tips to avoid encounters
at the campsite and on the trail!***

- Select a campsite or facility that utilizes bear-proof dumpsters and bear-proof food storage containers.
- Most conflicts between bears and campers/hikers occur at locations that don't utilize proper bear-proof equipment and techniques.
- Store your food securely – options include in a bear-proof food storage container (e.g., bear canisters, bear boxes), a secure building or in a closed-up vehicle. Coolers are not bear-proof.
- If no other options are available, hang your food at least 10 feet off the ground and 5 feet out on a limb that will not support a bear.
- Maintain a clean campsite. Put all food away (including condiments) when not in use.
- Don't put food scraps and fat drippings in the campfire – either place in closed containers or dispose of in a bear-proof dumpster.
- Do not cook or eat in your tent. Keep food and cooking gear separate from your sleeping area.
- When hiking with food, keep your pack with you at all times.
- Never feed bears. Ever.



Normal trail noise typically alerts bears to your presence and prompts them to move, often without being noticed.

But, what should you do if you do encounter a black bear?

- Keep your distance. If you find yourself close to a bear, begin repeating “hey bear” in a calm voice, maintain eye contact, and slowly back away. Do not run or climb trees.
- Never throw a bear food in an effort to prevent it from approaching or following you – that teaches a bear to approach for a food reward.
- Black bears will sometimes “bluff charge” when approached or if a person is in very close proximity. This is a common behavior and does not indicate that the bear will attack – you have simply gotten too close. Black bears are rarely aggressive or dangerous. Don’t run from a bluff charging bear. Begin repeating “hey bear” in a calm voice, maintain eye contact and slowly back away.
- Report bear encounters to camp management.



**More about bears:
wildnh.com**
fs.usda.gov/whitemountain

