



BLACK BEAR BASICS

The North American Bear Center website (bear.org) contains the most factual information on black bears available today. The information is provided by the [Wildlife Research Institute*](#) and is based on over 50 years of black bear research. The following pages have a list of topics with corresponding links.

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Basic Bear Facts

- Quick Black Bear Facts: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/quick-black-bear-facts/>
- Typical Year of Black Bears: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/typical-year-for-black-bears/>
- Black Bear Range: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/black-bear-range/>
- Classification of Black Bears: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/classification-of-black-bears/>
- Weight: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/weight/>
- Size and Appearance: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/size-and-appearance/>
- Skull of a Black Bear: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/skull-of-a-black-bear/>
- How to Age a Black Bear: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-to-age-a-bear/>
- Activities and Social Organization: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/activities-and-social-organization/>
- Sense and Abilities: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/senses-and-abilities/>
- Adaptations for Seasons of Food Scarcity: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/adaptations-for-seasons-of-food-scarcity/>
- Food and Habitat: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/food-and-habitat/>
- Reproduction: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/reproduction/>
- Longevity and Causes of Death: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/longevity-and-causes-of-death/>
- Capabilities: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/capabilities/>
- Problems: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/problems/>
- Black Bear Color Phases: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/black-bear-color-phases/>
- How did white fur become established? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-did-white-fur-become-established/>
- What is a Spirit Bear? <https://bear.org/wp-admin/post.php?post=78&action=edit>
- Maskwa - the Little White Cub: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/maskwa-the-little-white-cub/>
- How high can a black bear reach? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-high-can-a-black-bear-reach/>
- Are bears related to pigs? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/are-bears-related-to-pigs/>
- Are black bears like dogs? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/are-black-bears-like-dogs/>
- How timid are black bears? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-timid-are-black-bears/>
- How to Tell Black Bears from Brown/Grizzly Bears: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-to-tell-black-bears-from-brown-grizzly-bears/>



Hibernation

- 5 Stages of Activity and Hibernation: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/5-stages-of-activity-and-hibernation/>
- Digging a Den: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/digging-a-den/>
- Do black bears hibernate? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/do-black-bears-hibernate/>
- Heat Loss in Dens: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/heat-loss-in-dens/>
- How do a chipmunk and black bear hibernate differ? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-chipmunk-and-black-bear-hibernation-differ/>
- Will snow accumulate on a black bear's back? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/will-snow-accumulate-on-a-black-bears-back/>
- Whiteheart Den Cam: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/whiteheart-den-cam/>
- The Cub Probe: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/the-cub-probe/>
- Researchers Discover Clues to Bear Bone Strength: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/researcher-discovers-clues-to-bear-bone-strength/>
- Hibernating Bears Conserve Muscle: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/hibernating-bears-conserve-muscle-strength/>
- Strong Arm Tactics: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/strong-arm-tactics/>
- Bears' Mysterious 'Fecal Plug': <https://bear.org/bear-facts/bears-mysterious-fecal-plug/>



Reproduction

- What is the black bear reproductive cycle? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-is-the-black-bear-reproductive-cycle/>
- Black Bear Litter Size: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/black-bear-litter-size/>
- Cub Survival in Litters of 1, 2, 3, or 4: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/cub-survival-in-litters-of-1-2-3-or-4/>
- Can malnourished black bears reproduce? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/can-malnourished-black-bears-reproduce/>
- Courtship and Mating: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/courtship-and-mating/>
- Mating Battle: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/mating-battle/>



Mothers Raise Cubs

- Preparations for Birth: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/preparations-for-birth/>
- Care of Newborn Cubs: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/care-of-newborn-cubs/>
- The Cubs Develop: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/the-cubs-develop/>
- Dealing with Water in the Den: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/dealing-with-water-in-the-den/>
- The Family Emerges: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/the-family-emerges/>
- The Refuge Tree: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/the-refuge-tree/>
- Cub Vocalizations – Mother Responses: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/cub-vocalizations-mother-responses/>
- Travel Widens: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/travel-widens/>
- Why do Bears Play? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/why-do-bears-play/>
- Family Breakup: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/family-breakup/>



Foraging and Food

- Vegetation – The Dietary Mainstay: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/vegetation-the-dietary-mainstay/>
- Berries – a Critical Food: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/berries-a-critical-food/>
- Ant Brood – an Important Food: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/ant-brood-an-important-food/>
- Hazelnuts – a Favorite Food: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/hazelnuts-a-favorite-food/>
- Animal Protein: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/animal-protein/>
- Forest Tent Caterpillars: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/forest-tent-caterpillars/>
- What do bears like to eat in a beehive? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-do-bears-like-to-eat-in-a-beehive/>
- Effects of Food on Survival: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/effects-of-food-on-survival/>
- Adaptations for Obtaining Food: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/adaptations-for-obtaining-food/>
- Limitations: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/limitations/>
- Learning Which Stem to Pull Down: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/learning-which-stem-to-pull-down/>
- Scat Analysis Versus Walking With Bears: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/scat-analysis-versus-walking-with-bears/>



How do Black Bears...?

- How do black bears respond to mirrors? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-mirrors/>
- How do black bears respond to bright sunlight? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-bright-sunlight/>
- How do black bears respond to menstrual odors? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-menstrual-odors/>
- How do black bears respond to thunder and lightning? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-thunder-and-lightning/>
- How do black bears respond to wind? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-wind/>
- How do black bears respond to ticks? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-ticks/>
- How do black bears respond to deer flies and horse flies? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-deer-flies-and-horse-flies/>
- How do black bears respond to mosquitoes? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-do-black-bears-respond-to-mosquitoes/>



Communication

- Vocalizations & Body Language: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/vocalizations-and-body-language/>
- Sociable Sounds: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/sociable-sounds/>
- Harmless Bluster: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/harmless-bluster/>
- The Black Bear's Voice: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/the-black-bears-voice/>
- How dangerous are bluff charges? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-dangerous-are-bluff-charges/>
- Scared Cubs and Crying Babies Sound Alike: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/scared-cubs-and-crying-babies-sound-alike/>
- Do black bears growl? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/do-black-bears-growl/>



Bears and Humans

- How dangerous are black bears? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-dangerous-are-black-bears/>
- What if I see a black bear? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-see-a-black-bear/>
- What if I see a bear that seems threatening? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-see-a-bear-that-seems-threatening/>
- Will a black bear sense I'm afraid and attack? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/if-a-black-bear-senses-im-afraid-will-it-attack/>
- What if I get between a black bear mother and her cubs? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-get-between-a-black-bear-mother-and-her-cubs/>
- What does Steve Herrero say about mothers defending cubs? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-does-steve-herrero-say-about-mothers-defending-cubs/>
- What about bears and dogs? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-about-bears-and-dogs/>
- What if I corner a black bear? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-corner-a-black-bear/>
- What if a black bear ignores me and doesn't run away? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-a-black-bear-ignores-me-and-doesnt-run-away/>
- What if I want to watch a black bear I see? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-want-to-watch-a-black-bear-i-see/>
- What if I meet a black bear that wants to eat me? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-if-i-meet-a-black-bear-that-wants-to-eat-me/>
- How to shoo a black bear: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/how-to-shoo-a-black-bear/>
- What is a "nuisance" black bear? <https://bear.org/bear-facts/what-is-a-nuisance-black-bear/>
- When bears steal human food, don't blame mom: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/when-bears-steal-human-food-dont-blame-mom/>



Myths and Misconceptions

- Myth: When bears lose their fear of people, they become more likely to attack: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/myth-when-bears-lose-their-fear-of-people-they-become-more-likely-to-attack/>
- Training Bears: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/training-bears/>
- Folklore: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/folklore/>
- Internet Hoax: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/internet-hoax/>





Black Bear Sign

- Bear Tracks and Trails: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/bear-tracks-and-trails/>
- Scat/Droppings: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/scat-droppings/>
- Marking Trees and Poles: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/marking-trees-and-poles/>
- Straddle Trees and Bushes: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/straddle-trees-and-bushes/>
- Feeding Sign: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/feeding-sign/>
- Summer Beds: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/summer-beds/>
- Winter Dens: <https://bear.org/bear-facts/winter-dens/>





***WILDLIFE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

The Wildlife Research Institute is conducting the longest and most in-depth bear study ever done. In recognizing this study as one of the four major studies of large mammals in the world, Harvard University Professor E.O. Wilson wrote, “A new level of resolution has been attained, in which free-ranging individuals are tracked from birth through socialization, parturition, and death, and their idiosyncrasies, personal alliances, and ecological relationships recorded in clinical detail.”

To learn more about what these studies involve:

<https://www.bearstudy.org/research/current-research.html>