

## ➤ BEAR FACT

Black bears have a strong sense of smell. They can smell food from far away. Bears may break into cars or sheds to get items they believe are food.

## ➤ WHAT YOU CAN DO

Be aware that things that smell like food (chewing gum, toothpaste, air fresheners, vanilla candles, citrus scents, etc.) will also attract bears. Always keep all food, and anything that smells like food, in airtight containers. Do not store food or garbage in sheds and/or garages.

**BE A GOOD  
NEIGHBOR!  
BE BEAR  
SMART!**

## ➤ BEAR FACT

Black bears are important to the ecology and the environment. Black bears eat much of the larvae of insects that destroy plants. The bears also replant trees and vegetation with their vast droppings that contain seeds from all the fruits, trees and other plants they eat. Black bears actually keep the forests continually growing with new oxygen-cleaning plant life. This is vital for ALL life in New Jersey.

## ➤ WHAT YOU CAN DO

Teach other people to understand and respect black bears. New Jersey's black bears are as much a part of the natural landscape as the rivers, lakes and forests. Bears deserve to live out their lives as nature intended. Fortunately, when people become educated, this is possible. As you have just read, there are ways for us

to live peacefully with black bears, and for black bears to live peacefully with us. There is so much to learn about black bears. The more you know, the more your fear and uncertainty will be replaced with wonder and appreciation for this beautiful and majestic animal!

Read all you can about your black bear neighbors. Three excellent websites to learn more about bears and what you can do to protect them are:

Bear.org  
BearStudy.org  
BearSmartNJ.org

Seeing a bear is a joy when you have a positive attitude. Learn more about black bears, so that the next time you see one it will be one of the most wonderful, unforgettable experiences of your life!

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**Bear Education And Resource (BEAR)**  
PO Box 918, Hewitt, NJ 07421  
973-315-3219

The Bear Group's primary mission is to protect black bears and their habitat. Our Bear Smart Community outreach program serves to educate residents about bears, reduce unwarranted fears and increase tolerance of our bear neighbors. Both our protection and education objectives foster a peaceful coexistence and replaces fear with respect and understanding.

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BEAR is a program of Animal Protection League of New Jersey—APLNJ.org

# HEY KIDS!

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# Get to know New Jersey black bears... your OTHER neighbors!





**Black bears have always lived in New Jersey.**

If you should see a bear, this is because of the great amount of building that is replacing forests

and open lands. Black bears are now living in a fragmented habitat, caused by overdevelopment of these precious resources.

**Bears, and other wildlife, have evolved perfect behaviors for living with each other in nature.**

Since people have changed these natural areas and destroyed the homes of the animals, bears have been forced to live closer to people. It is up to us to teach the bears special, new behaviors that will keep them from getting into situations in which people are annoyed by them and want to hurt them.

People need to learn to be good neighbors to the bears. **WE NEED YOUR HELP.** Bears are naturally afraid of people, and simple actions on our part will keep the bears from venturing onto peoples' properties, and will, therefore, keep everyone happy.

**What can YOU do to help?**

➤ **BEAR FACT**

Black bears learn what people teach them. A bear fed by one person learns to expect food from that person.

➤ **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

**NEVER** feed bears. Tell everyone that they should not feed the bears. Teach people also that any food sources left outside, including garbage, bird seed, etc. attracts bears and encourages them to visit our neighborhoods.

➤ **BEAR FACT**

Black bears claim their own "home" in the woods. They chase away other bears from their "territory."



➤ **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

Use this bear behavior to teach bears to respect your property and home. When you see a bear come onto your property, scare her and chase her away. This can be done safely and effectively. Bang two lids of pots together, shake coins in a coffee can, blow a loud whistle, sound an air horn, yell and scream. This can be done from inside the house through an open window or door. The important thing is to send a message to the bear that she is not welcome on your property.

➤ **BEAR FACT**

Black bears are *opportunistic feeders*, which means they look for food that is quick and easy to get, such as bird seed or leftover human food in the garbage. Bears also eat insects and weak or defenseless animals.

➤ **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

Animals outside are at risk from bears. Companion animals, such as dogs, cats, and rabbits belong *in* the home, where they will be safe, not just from bears, but also dangerous people. They should only be outside on a leash or in a securely fenced backyard, and *supervised at all times*. For animals such as companion goats or chickens, whose needs are better served by living outside (with proper shelter, food, and attention, of course!), special protection from bears is needed. Electric fences are best, and are easy to buy, install, and use.

