

Department

of

Environmental

Conservation

Things

To Do

Places

to Go

Nature

Environmental

Protection

Regulatory

News

Get

Involved

About

Search

</>

April 11, 2024

DEC Reminds New Yorkers to Be BearWise this Spring

Follow Best Practices to Reduce Potential Conflicts with Bears

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos today reminded New Yorkers to remove or secure outdoor food sources that may attract black bears. Throughout the spring and early summer months, black bears have depleted fat reserves and will search extensively for easily obtainable, calorie-dense foods, which can lead to an increase in the potential for human-bear conflicts near homes and residential areas, especially before the spring green-up when natural food sources for bears are scarce.

“Across New York, black bears are emerging from their winter dens and may seek out human-created food sources,” **Commissioner Seggos said.** “Repeat access to these food sources can make bears bolder, so I encourage New Yorkers to practice the BearWise basics <<https://bearwise.org/six-bearwise-basics/>> to help keep bears wild and prevent the potential for human-bear conflicts.”

Those who maintain bird feeders should begin emptying and cleaning spilled seed from feeders, and let nature feed the birds from spring through fall. Garbage and recycling cans should be secured or stored in a sturdy building. This is also a good time to clean or remove all residual grease and food from grills and smokers. Pet and livestock food should be kept indoors and those with chicken coops or apiaries should consider installing an electric fence to protect flocks and hives. Lastly, neighbors should alert neighbors to any bear activity so they can take these same precautions.

New Yorkers are advised to never feed or approach bears. Feeding bears intentionally is dangerous and illegal. Bears that become habituated to being fed can become a threat to people and property.

By taking some time to practice the BearWise basics <<https://bearwise.org/six-bearwise-basics/>> New Yorkers are helping keep bears away from people, homes, and neighborhoods, and that helps keep bears healthy, wild, and safe by removing any unnatural food attractants and encouraging neighbors to do the same. For more information on how to live responsibly with black bears <<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/black-bear/bearwise/>>, please visit DEC’s website and Bearwise.org <<https://bearwise.org/>>.

More information on reducing backyard bear conflicts is available on DEC’s YouTube page.

More information on reducing bear conflicts while camping is available on DEC’s YouTube page.

An interview with DEC Big Game Biologist, Brendan Quirion is available to download <<https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/fs/programs/press/fish&wildlife/black%20bear%20info.mp4>> (video, 261 MB)

Contact for this Page

Jeff Wernick

Press Office


625 Broadway


Albany, NY 12233

Phone: 518-402-8000

PressOffice@dec.ny.gov


CONNECT WITH US

 **INSTAGRAM** <<https://www.instagram.com/nysdec/>>

 **FACEBOOK** <<https://www.facebook.com/nysdec/>>

 **TWITTER** <<https://www.twitter.com/nysdec/>>

 **LINKEDIN** <<https://www.linkedin.com/company/nys-department-of-environmental-conservation/>>

 **YOUTUBE** <<https://www.youtube.com/user/nysdecvideos/>>

 **FLICKR** <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nysdec/albums/>>

 **Translation Services** <<https://www.ny.gov/web-translation-services/>>

This page is available in other languages