





In New York State people and black bears often find themselves living in the same areas. With frequent encounters nearly inevitable, it's good to know how to keep those encounters safe and enjoyable for you and the bears.

How to prevent bear problems

Proper storage of garbage and the removal of bird feeders during periods when bears are active are the **two most important steps** you can take to drastically reduce nuisance bear problems in your area.

-  Store garbage in cans or dumpsters and keep them in a secure place like a garage.
-  Put garbage out only on the morning of pickup. Burning and composting of garbage may attract bears.
-  Feed birds only from December 1 until April 1. During the rest of the year, you may be attracting more bears than birds.
-  Bird seed and garbage are favorite foods for bears. In many cases, bears will choose them instead of natural food sources.

The Bear Facts

- New York has a healthy population of about 8,000 black bears (*Ursus americanus*).
- The average adult male bear weighs about 300 lbs, females weigh about 160 lbs.
- Black bears are New York's second largest land mammal after the moose.
- New York State black bears are generally black in color; rarely cinnamon or blonde colors are found.
- Preferred natural foods include; nuts, roots, fruit, plants and insects. Bears will scavenge dead animals but rarely feed on live prey.

Check the DEC Web Site at www.dec.ny.gov for more information about black bears.



Living With Bears



New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation