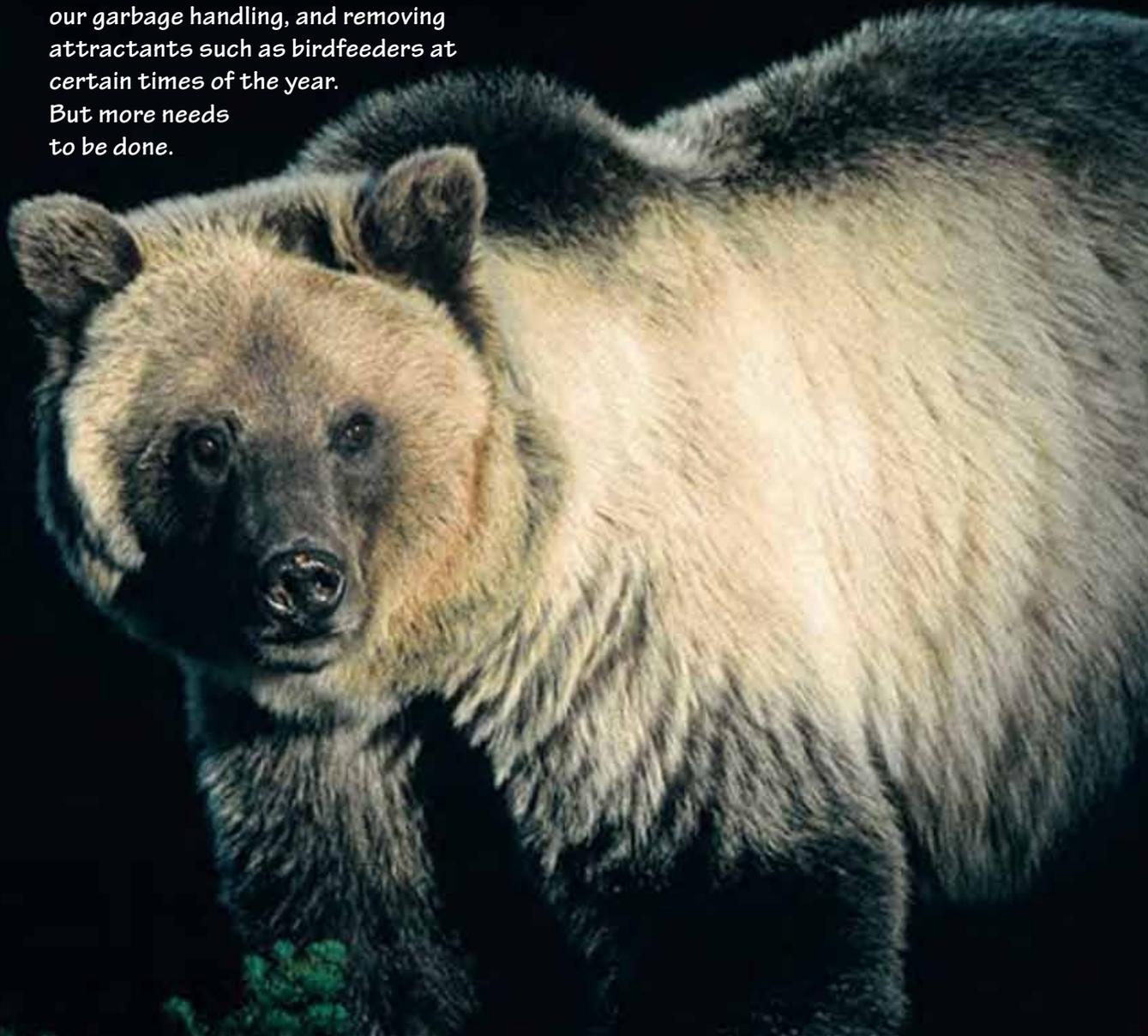


Living With *Wildlife*

Canmore has made great strides in reducing conflicts with bears through actions like bear-proofing our garbage handling, and removing attractants such as birdfeeders at certain times of the year.

But more needs to be done.



The process has begun to make Canmore a BearSmart community. The Town of Canmore, Tourism Canmore, Three Sisters Mountain Village, SilverTip Resort, the Alberta Government, and the BearSmart Alberta Community Program of the Grizzly Bear Alliance are working to coordinate efforts to ensure that living in Canmore means living with wildlife as well.

All of us—residents and visitors alike—have a role to play. This local approach to the BearSmart Program will guide the way we work, play, and live in the Bow Valley.

How can you get involved? Participate in upcoming BearSmart initiatives, and take personal responsibility to reduce wildlife conflicts. Look for further announcements about the program.



What you should know: *Read this, if nothing else!*

Many of the trails around Canmore are located in wildlife corridors. These corridors allow animals such as bears, cougar, wolves, and elk to move between habitat patches. These are places where they can find food, escape predators, breed, give birth, and establish territories.

Within wildlife corridors in provincial parks, people are restricted to designated trails. This helps to prevent human-wildlife conflicts and minimize disturbance to wildlife. It is not legal to use trails other than those shown on trail maps or on posted signs within provincial parks in wildlife corridors.

There is always the potential of encounters with wildlife in our mountain environment. Make your presence known to animals so you don't startle them. Call out regularly. Keep your dog on a leash. Please let us know if you see a bear or cougar by calling Kananaskis Dispatch at 591-7755.

These trails are shared by hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders. Please be courteous and respect the rights of other trail users. Remember that people, like animals, don't like to be startled. Warn others of your approach.

For
emergencies
call 9-1-1

Trails may be closed temporarily due to bear activity or other wildlife concerns. For your safety and that of wildlife, please respect these closures.

Be bear smart

Avoid surprise encounters. A loud shout regularly or singing loudly, is more effective than bear bells.

If possible, travel in groups and during daylight hours.

Keep your dog on a leash.

You might consider carrying bear (pepper) spray.

Leave the area if you see a bear, fresh bear droppings, or if you see or smell a large dead animal.

Report bear sightings to Kananaskis Dispatch at (403) 591-7755.

If you encounter a bear, never run; it may trigger an attack. Slowly back away. You should appear passive; do not raise your voice or make direct eye contact. Climbing a tree is an option, but offers no guarantee of safety.

Black bears are excellent climbers, and grizzlies have also been known to climb trees.

If the bear charges you, appear non-threatening. It may be one of a series of bluff charges. Stand your ground, and speak to the bear in a normal voice. If it continues to charge, try shouting or direct pepper spray into its face.

In the event of an attack by a grizzly, drop to the ground face down, interlace your fingers over the back of your neck and spread your legs to make it more difficult for the bear to turn you over. If you play dead, a grizzly will likely lose interest in you. If a black bear attacks you, fight it off with any weapon you have, including your fists.

Be elk wary

All elk can be dangerous. Female elk can be especially aggressive during calving season in May and June. During autumn rut (September to November) male elk can also be aggressive.

Do not approach elk or their calves. Give them plenty of room.

Keep your dog on a leash.

Be cougar alert

Keep children close to you.

Avoid surprise encounters. Make noise to alert cougars of your presence. Cougars generally avoid people.

Keep your dog on a leash.

Avoid any area where you smell a dead animal. Cougars often cover their kills with forest debris.

If you encounter a cougar, always leave room for a cougar to escape. Immediately pick up children. Do not turn your back on a cougar. **Do not run.**

Back away slowly. Make yourself appear as large as possible. Maintain eye contact with the cougar.

If a cougar attacks, fight back with anything at hand.

Want more information?

Barrier Lake Visitor Information Centre (403) 673-3985

Travel Alberta Visitor information Centre (403) 678-5277

"Living With Cougars" and "Bear In Mind" brochures are available at the Alberta Community Development office in the Canmore Provincial Building, at Kananaskis Country visitor centres, and available to download on our website

(including trail reports):

www.cd.gov.ab.ca/parks/kananaskis

Research articles that summarize the science behind wildlife corridors, and wildlife tracking in the Bow Valley, can be found at the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley.

They can be reached at (403) 678-3445 or www.BiosphereInstitute.org

What you may want to know:

Many of the trails around Canmore are in Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park.

Designated trails, including the new Montane Traverse Trail near the Silvertip Resort, have been approved by the Town of Canmore, the Government of Alberta, the MD of Bighorn, and various stakeholders. These include the Bow Valley Mountain Bike Alliance, the B.V. Riding Association, and local hiking groups. These trails are intended to protect wildlife corridors and other habitat—while providing high-quality trail experiences.

Much of the trail upgrading has been accomplished by volunteers coordinated through the Trail Care Program of The Friends of Kananaskis Country.

Wildlife studies that have taken place over the last 15 years tell us that wolves, cougars, and bears regularly use the corridors to travel around the community to access larger regional habitat patches.

To report a sighting of
a bear or cougar,
please call Kananaskis Dispatch
at (403) 591-7755.