



Bear Facts

Long before the settlers came, many thousands of native black and grizzly bears roamed throughout California. The last California grizzly was shot near Fresno in 1922. Since then, the northwestern black bear (*Ursus americana altifrontalis*) and the California black bear (*Ursus americana californiensis*) comprise the state's bear population.



A bear's natural diet includes berries, nuts, grasses, insects, small animals and carrion. However, bears will invade human-occupied areas to find other food. Their keen sense of smell attracts them to food and scented items, including toothpaste and soap. Bears learn quickly and return often to places where they've found food.



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TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE:

🐾 Never approach bears or encourage them to approach you. Bears are large, wild, unpredictable animals. Do not run if you see a bear; it can run faster than you can.

🐾 **In the campground**, make noise to scare bears away—try banging pans and shouting.

🐾 **On the trail**, raise your arms to look bigger, pick up small children, and slowly back away. Do not block a bear's escape route.

TO KEEP YOUR FOOD AND PROPERTY SAFE:

🐾 Never leave food unattended. Any food that cannot be safely stored immediately must be properly and promptly discarded.

🐾 Use bear-resistant food storage lockers where available, and close all garbage cans securely. Store wrapped garbage in lockers until you can dispose of it properly.

🐾 Clean up right after meals. Pick up scraps; keep equipment and sleeping areas free of food and beverage odors.

🐾 Tents, cars and coolers are not bear-proof! Do not store food, garbage or toiletries in a tent or vehicle. If food must be left in a vehicle, close the windows tightly and cover visible coolers and food containers.

🐾 Warning: bears can open coolers, and some have learned to open or smash car doors.

TO KEEP BEARS SAFE:

Do not feed them, even unintentionally. A fed bear is a dead bear! Fed bears learn to associate all people with food and can then become aggressive, destructive and dangerous. Dangerous bears may be killed for human safety.

Report all bear encounters to park staff.

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