Gouveia, Susan

From: Lashway, Lisa
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 3:04 PM
To: Canning, Sean; Gouveia, Susan; Nelson, Frank
Subject: FW: DEP Release: DEP Offers Tips on Reducing Conflicts and Encounters with Black Bears in New Jersey
Attachments: Black Bears South Jersey-- P65.pdf

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From: Kellermueller, Max [mailto:Max.Kellermueller@dep.nj.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 2:34 PM
Cc: Randazzo, Cindy; Rogers, Joseph
Subject: DEP Release: DEP Offers Tips on Reducing Conflicts and Encounters with Black Bears in New Jersey

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 24, 2014

Contact: Lawrence Ragonese (609) 292-2994
Bob Considine (609) 984-1795
Lawrence Hajna (609) 984-1795

DEP OFFERS TIPS ON REDUCING CONFLICTS AND ENCOUNTERS WITH BLACK BEARS IN NEW JERSEY
SLIGHT INCREASE IN BEAR SIGHTINGS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH JERSEY

(14/P65) TRENTON – With several prominent sightings of black bears in Central and South Jersey over the past few weeks, the Department of Environmental Protection is reminding residents in all 21 counties to take a few basic precautions this summer to reduce the potential of encounters with black bears, and offering tips on co-existing with the creatures.

"Black bear sightings and incidents across the state, in general, have declined for the past few years, especially as we reduce the number of bears overall and people better understand how to coexist with them,'' said Dave Chanda, director of the State Division of Fish and Wildlife. "However, in some areas of the state where bears have been far less common, residents may be alarmed to encounter bears. We urge people to be cautious when encountering bears, but there is no need for alarm.''

You can reduce the risk of interactions with bears by taking a few simple steps. Most important, do not feed bears, intentionally or unintentionally. Bears that learn to associate food with people, and their homes and living areas, can become nuisance bears that forage in neighborhoods looking for easy sources of food.

It is illegal to intentionally feed black bears in New Jersey and punishable by a fine of up to $1,000. But a more common problem is unintentional bear feeding by homeowners. By taking a few easy steps, you can dramatically reduce the potential of bear encounters. Secure your trash and eliminate obvious sources of food, such as pet food on decks, easy-to-reach bird feeders, or food residues left in barbecue grills. In areas regularly frequented by bears, livestock and beehives should be protected with properly installed electric fences.

"Bears have been sighted in all 21 New Jersey counties, and bear-human encounters have occurred a bit more frequently in recent months in places such as Burlington County, outside of traditional bear country in Northwest Jersey,'' said DEP Senior Wildlife Biologist Kelcey Burguess. "Please understand that a black bear passing through a residential area should not be considered a problem, as long as it is behaving normally and not posing a threat.''

The following tips to can help minimize conflicts with bears this summer:

- Use certified bear-resistant garbage containers if possible. Otherwise, store all garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids and place them along the inside walls of your garage, or in the basement, a sturdy shed or other secure area.

- Wash garbage containers frequently with a disinfectant solution to remove odors. Put out

garbage on collection day, not the night before.

- Avoid feeding birds when bears are active. If you choose to feed birds, do so during daylight hours only and bring feeders indoors at night. Suspend birdfeeders from a free-hanging wire, making sure they are at least 10 feet off the ground. Clean up spilled seeds and shells daily.
- Immediately remove all uneaten food and food bowls used by pets fed outdoors.
- Clean outdoor grills and utensils to remove food and grease residue. Store grills securely.
- Do not place meat or any sweet foods in compost piles.
- Remove fruit or nuts that fall from trees in your yard.
- Properly installed electric fencing is an effective way of protecting crops, beehives and livestock.
- If you encounter a bear remain calm and do not run. Make sure the bear has an escape route. Avoid direct eye contact, back up slowly and speak with a low, assertive voice.

Report bear damage, nuisance behavior or aggressive bears to the Wildlife Control Unit of the DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife at (908) 735-8793. During evenings and weekends, residents should call their local police department or the DEP Hotline at (877) WARN-DEP.

To learn more about New Jersey's black bears and ways to avoid problems with them, visit http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearfacts_education.htm and http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearfacts_avoid.htm

For more information on the Christie Administration's Comprehensive Black Bear Management Plan, visit: To http://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/bearpolicy10.htm

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NEWS

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
P. O. Box 402, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402
www.state.nj.us/dep
Bob Martin, Commissioner

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June 24, 2014

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