



Camping in Black Bear Country

- * Know when you are in bear country
- * **Always store your food and other attractants every time you are done using them and when you go to sleep**
- * Dispose of garbage in a bear-proof way
- * Keep your sleeping bag and tent free of odors— do NOT cook or eat in your tent
- * Keep a clean camp
- * **Respect bears and give them space**
- * Keep a close watch on children and pets



For additional information,
check our website:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/sawtooth/>
Click on the **Be Bear Aware** quick link

*Thanks for keeping our wildlife wild
and people safe.*



Report bear incidents to:

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Idaho Fish and Game
Regional Office - Jerome
208-324-4350

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Sawtooth National Recreation Area
208-727-5000

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Stanley Ranger Station
208-774-3000

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Ketchum Ranger Station
208-662-0091

BEAR COUNTRY

FOOD STORAGE AND
OTHER TIPS



Sawtooth
National
Recreation Area



Bear Ecology



The Sawtooth National Recreation Area (Sawtooth NRA) is home to a healthy population of black bears (*Ursus americanus*). Black bears are large carnivores with short tails, small eyes, round ears and coloration that can vary from black to cinnamon to blueish. Males are typically between 200 and 300lbs while females are typically between 100 and 150 lbs.

Bears are known for their keen sense of smell which makes them exceptional at finding different food sources. In order to maintain healthy populations, forest users are responsible for ensuring their actions do not result in the destruction of bears. By following our food storage requirements YOU can make a difference in their survival.

Bears have a very positive impact on this unique ecosystem. They help control prey populations, clean up carcasses, disperse seeds of trees and shrubs, and more. They enrich our lives and the experiences we have here on the Sawtooth NRA.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What is an attractant?

An attractant is anything a bear might sniff out and try to consume.

This includes food, garbage, pet food, toiletries, dirty dishes, alcohol, empty food and drink containers, canned goods and more.

How should I store my attractants on the Sawtooth NRA?

In order to prevent our bears from learning bad behavior, all food and attractants need to be stored in a

- * Closed hard-sided vehicle, structure, or trailer
- * Bear hang suspended 10 ft up and 4 ft away from trees
- * Certified bear-proof container. See <http://igbconline.org/certified-products-list/>

Food storage is required.

Order Number 0414-04-123

What should I do if I see a black bear?

- If seen from a safe distance (ideally 100+ yards away), change your course of travel to give the bear plenty of space keeping an eye out for cubs in the area. Give a sow and her cubs a lot of space.
- If the bear is close or approaching you, make yourself as big as you can and calmly speak out to the bear.
- Speak out and back away slowly. Never run or turn your back on a bear.
- If the bear charges, stand your ground. They are known to bluff charge and will typically back off if you hold your ground.
- If the bear attacks, fight back with all that you've got; aim for sensitive areas like the eyes and nose.

Hiking in Black Bear Country

Always make noise while hiking alone or in groups. By making noise you decrease the chance of surprising a bear and making them feel threatened. Carry bear spray and know how to use it. Hike with the spray in a quick access location— like on the waist belt of your pack.

