

BEAR NOTICE

Bears have been quite active throughout Bear Hole since at least April and it's likely they will continue to be active through late fall or early winter. There have been many encounters. People are often concerned about bears and if they'll attack. Black bear, generally speaking, are timid and not aggressive to humans. Their draw to humans are typically because we have an appealing food source either when camping or in our yard (bird feed, pet food left outside or apples).

Second, black bear attacks are rare, although they will bluff charge and similar. Being killed by a black bear even more rare. According to Wikipedia, from August 2010 to September 2014 there have been five wild black bear attack human fatalities, three of which were in the United States. June 2015 a teenaged camper was mauled by a black bear in a remote area of North Carolina's Great Smoky Mountains. It is suspected the attack was in part due to a natural food shortage for bears. Just like any wild animal, when food is scarce, you get what you can get to survive.

In August, black bears have been observed in Mittineague Park's Tatham section. As in Bear Hole, expect continued run-ins. Bears are an important part of a natural ecosystem. It is quite doubtful bears are living in the park. They're passing through. It's much more probable bears are living in Bear Hole. The habitat is more conducive.

Be aware of your surroundings and be sure you can gain control of your pet(s) at a moments notice. A dog charging a bear could be viewed as a threat to the bear and the bear could respond defensively, although more likely than not the bear will quickly vacate the area. There have been no reports of a bear threatening anyone in Bear Hole or Mittineague Park. They're foraging for food, but do cross trail areas unexpectedly.

Bear encounter basics:

1. Never run. A bear will outrun you, out climb you, out swim you. Don't look like prey.
2. Never get between a female bear and a cub that may be nearby feeding.
3. Always have an escape route. Don't corner yourself.
4. Create noise, raise your arms. Look big.

Remember, you're in bear habitat. It's their home, not yours. Be smart; be aware, when enjoying woodlands. Black bear encounters can be very positive and memorable experiences.