

Hiking and Camping

*in Bear,
Cougar and
Rattlesnake
Country*

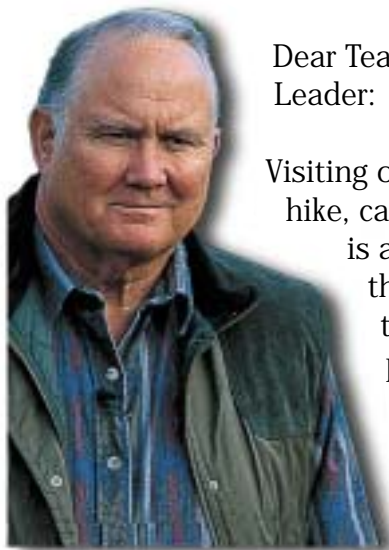
Instructor's Guide



Center For Wildlife Information

www.BeBearAware.org





Dear Teacher or Youth Group Leader:

Visiting our public lands to hike, camp and view wildlife is a great adventure. With this experience comes the responsibility to be properly informed about the appropriate safety techniques to avoid human/wildlife conflicts. This is especially important in the areas that bears, cougars and rattlesnakes call home.

We need to encourage enthusiasm for wildlife, but we must also provide the knowledge people need to enjoy the great outdoors safely and responsibly. Through this program, participants learn how to be responsible for their own safety and preserve our wildlife heritage.

Sincerely,

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf
Spokesman for the National Be Bear Aware & Wildlife Stewardship Campaign

www.BeBearAware.org



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Local Resources

You may consider contacting any of the following resources to assist you with presentations:

- Local land or wildlife agency
- Backcountry Horsemen chapters
- Outfitter and Guide Associations
- Zoos or nature centers
- Outdoor gear retailers (to assist with demonstrations, products and professional assistance)
- Taxidermists (to provide bear or cougar mounts)
- Camera retailers and clubs (for assistance with telephoto lenses and binoculars)
- Hunting organizations
- Outdoor sports stores
- Acorn Naturalists at www.acornnaturalists.com
- McKenzie 3-D Targets at www.mckenzie3d.com

Hiking and Camping in Bear, Cougar and Rattlesnake Country

Each year, more and more of us are venturing into the backcountry to enjoy the great outdoors. New safety techniques are available to make these forays safe and fun. This guide is an engaging program for learning these techniques through hands-on activities.

This *Hiking and Camping in Bear, Cougar and Rattlesnake Country Instructor's Guide* is designed to empower teachers, youth group leaders, hunters, outfitters and guides with the information needed to train others. Participants learn the latest safety techniques for hiking, camping, viewing and photographing wildlife. By putting these techniques into practice, participants engage in wildlife stewardship, helping to keep wildlife wild.

This guide can be used for many different audiences:

- **Youth Groups** (Boy & Girl Scouts, Campfire Boys & Girls, 4-H Clubs, etc.)

Older youth group members can learn the program, and then train their peer group and younger participants. Additionally, this program could be used to earn merit badges, the rank of Eagle Scout or other honors.



- **Schools**

All subject areas can be incorporated in this interdisciplinary guide. Science, math, communication, social interaction and art are emphasized. Science teachers can add topics about plants, habitat and seasonal changes appropriate to the region. Once students have completed the workshop and practiced the techniques, they may act as trainers and mentors for younger students.

- **Communities**

Youth groups and students can work with neighborhood groups to sponsor and host workshops open to the community. This provides an opportunity for youths to perform a community public safety service.

Wildlife Species:

- Bears, Cougars, Rattlesnakes
- Additional regional wildlife such as moose, alligators, insects, other poisonous snakes and wild hogs

Preliminary Classroom Discussion

Objective: Establish what the participants do and do not know about the latest safety techniques for hiking, camping, food storage, and photographing or viewing wildlife before they participate in the field activities. Provide enough information to make the field activities rewarding and a positive learning experience.

Part A-General safety discussion:

- 1) Ask students if they have ever seen a wild bear, cougar or rattlesnake.
- 2) Have students recall personal incidents where an individual or an animal was put in danger due to the carelessness of a person.
- 3) Have students discuss different reasons they think people may cause wild animals to attack them.
- 4) Ask what safety techniques they can use to avoid a confrontation with a bear, cougar or rattlesnake.
- 5) As a group, prepare a list of the safety precautions for each of the following categories: hiking, camping, food storage, and viewing and photographing.
- 6) As an option, the class can be divided into teams, with each team assigned to a different category. During the field activity, these teams will be the “student experts” on these categories, assisting the instructor(s).

Part B-Learning the basics to avoid wildlife encounters:

1) Why do bears attack humans?

When people don't maintain a safe distance, bears may attack because:

- Mother bears are protecting their cubs from possible threat.
- The bears are protecting their personal space or food.
- The bear is surprised when people don't make their presence known.

Special precautions to take are:

- Watch for signs of a bear's presence such as bear scat, claw marks and torn stumps.
- Make your presence known by talking, singing, etc., especially in areas with low visibility or noise from water or wind.

2) Why would a rattlesnake bite someone?

If it is threatened or surprised, it may strike in self-defense.

Special precautions to take are:

- Don't pick them up or tease them.
- Watch where you put your hands when climbing, picking up firewood or personal belongings.
- Watch where you sit down.
- Watch where you put your feet when stepping over logs or rocks, walking through tall grass, etc. Step on the log or rock, and step off as far away as possible.

3) Why do attacks by cougars occur?

Cougars may see people as prey, and pursue them as they do deer, rabbits, or other food sources. Cougars may be lured into residential areas or campsites when people feed deer, ground squirrels, etc.

Special precautions to take are:

- Hike in groups.
- Be aware of your surroundings both ahead of and behind you.
- Don't feed deer, squirrels or other cougar prey animals.

Field Activity #1 Hiking Safety Techniques

Location: Local nature center, forest or picnic area where a short hiking trail exists. Be sure to ask permission to use the area for the workshop and to make the simulated bear signs.

Equipment:

- Four-prong rake for making artificial bear signs (claw marks on trees, torn apart stumps and old logs, bear digging sites)
- Gardening gloves for rolling over logs and rocks
- Trail signs (may be available from state or Forest Service offices)
- 3-D targets or taxidermists' mounts of bear or cougar (from local hunting clubs or taxidermists)
- Rubber rattlesnake (from toy stores)
- Red stickers (for simulated rattlesnake bites)
- Old backpack that can be torn apart as if a bear found it unattended and ripped it open
- Bear scat (either real from state or federal agencies, or imitation from Acorn Naturalists)
- Rubber gloves (for handling bear scat)

Objective: Students will learn appropriate bear avoidance and safety techniques at activity stations as they travel along the hiking trail. Suggested topics for activity stations are:

- Trailhead signs
- Claw marks on trees
- Rocks rolled over
- Digging for ground squirrels



- Tearing logs and stumps apart
- Rattlesnake encounters
- Bear scat identification
- Noisy areas (fast water or wind)
- Low visibility (dense brush)
- Bulbs and roots
- Encounters

Station Preparation: Set up the activity areas a couple of hours prior to students' arrival so the signs are fresh. Instructions for setting up each station are included on the following pages. Be selective when making simulated bear signs to avoid damaging fragile sites or existing homes of other wildlife. If possible use abandoned ant mounds and dried up old logs or stumps.

Vocabulary

bear pepper spray
defensive space
encounter
grubs

habitat
omnivores
predators
prey

rodents
scat
vegetation
wildlife stewardship

Activity Planning Page

Instructors, draw in your schematic for Field Activity #1, beginning with the trailhead and including the sequence of stations to be visited. Most stations can be visited in any order, but the last three stations should be campsite, food storage and viewing/photographing.



Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #1: *Trailhead Info*

At the start of the hike, talk to students about the importance of reading the trailhead signs for the most current information.



Question: When should you start being aware of wildlife?

Answer: The moment you enter the wildlife area, even before you step out of the vehicle.

Question: Why would you need to notify others of your hiking plans?

Answer: So searchers will know where to look if you don't return at the designated time.

Question: What updated information might you find on the trailhead sign?

Answer: Information such as dangerous animal sightings, trail conditions and fire hazard level.

Question: Why might it be necessary to have trailhead sign-in sheets?

Answer: Sign-in sheets record information such as name, date, time and number in party. This information may provide a clue if someone is looking for you.

Station #2: *Claw Marks*

Using the four-prong rake, make claw marks on an old or dead tree (approximately 7-8 feet off the ground) to imitate the marks left by a bear.

Question: How do you know these signs are from a bear?

Answer: They are too high for other animals and the individual claw marks can be seen.

Question: Why do bears claw trees?

Answer: Possibly as a signal to other bears in the area.

Question: What other bear activities may leave marks on trees?

Answer: Bears stripping bark to eat the tree pulp.

Additional Activity: This is an excellent opportunity for students to compare their height to that of the bear claw marks.



Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #3: *Rolling Rocks*

Roll over large and small rocks to imitate a bear searching for a variety of food.



Question: What types of food might a bear find under a rock?

Answer: Moths, centipedes, caterpillars, worms and small insects.

Question: What is the value of the food they find there?

Answer: It is high in protein. Example: Grizzly bears of the Yellowstone Rockies may spend much of the summer rolling rocks on talus slopes to get at Miller moths hiding from the sun. A grizzly bear will eat up to 40,000 Miller moths a day, which equals the energy of about 70 Snickers bars.

Station #4: *Digging - Rodents & Beehives*

Using the four-prong rake, dig away an area of the ground as if you are trying to dig down to a small rodent's den or beehive. Throw the dirt and small rocks across the trail to imitate a bear digging.

Question: What reward is a bear looking for?

Answer: Small rodents such as ground squirrels.

Question: Why do bears eat rodents?

Answer: For protein, so they can store energy.

Question: What kinds of food do we eat that have similar value?

Answer: Meats like beef, pork or chicken.

Question: What tools do they use to dig?

Answer: Claws and muscle.

Question: What is the large hump between a grizzly/brown bear's shoulders?

Answer: It is a large muscle that extends down their front legs, giving them extraordinary strength for rolling logs and rocks, and for digging.



Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #5: *Tearing Logs*

Use the four-prong rake to imitate what a bear does when it tears apart an old stump or log.



Question: Why does a bear tear apart an old log or stump?

Answer: The bear is looking for high-protein grubs and ants, which are important to its diet.



Station #6: *Rattlesnake*

Place a rubber snake under a log or rock that crosses the hiking trail. After the group has crossed over the log, determine who crossed incorrectly. Then have the students sit down in the area for a break, and determine who sits too close to another snake you have placed nearby. Use red stickers to mark who got “snake bit” by either crossing the log incorrectly, or sitting too close to the snake (within five feet). This can be divided into two activities if you prefer. This is also a good time to have them practice stepping over the log correctly.



Question: Why would a rattlesnake bite someone?

Answer: Rattlesnakes do NOT seek out people. They only strike out in defense if they feel they are being threatened, or if someone comes too close.

Question: Why are 60% of rattlesnake bites dry bites, without venom?

Answer: Rattlesnakes need the venom in order to kill and digest their prey. If they use venom in a defensive bite, they have nothing to hunt with until the venom is replenished.

Question: Where is the most common place to get bit?

Answer: Boys—on the hand, when they try to pick up snakes. Girls—on their foot or lower leg, when they are not watching where they step.

Question: What have we learned from this station?

Answer: Wildlife + Distance = Safety
Don't tease or pick up snakes.

Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #7: *Bear Scat*

Place the real or artificial scat you have obtained on the trail for the students to find and examine.



Question: What do you think the bear was eating?

Answer: Will vary. Use a stick, or wear rubber gloves, and break open the scat to examine it for berries, fur, bones and/or grass.

Question: How do you determine if this is a fresh bear sign?

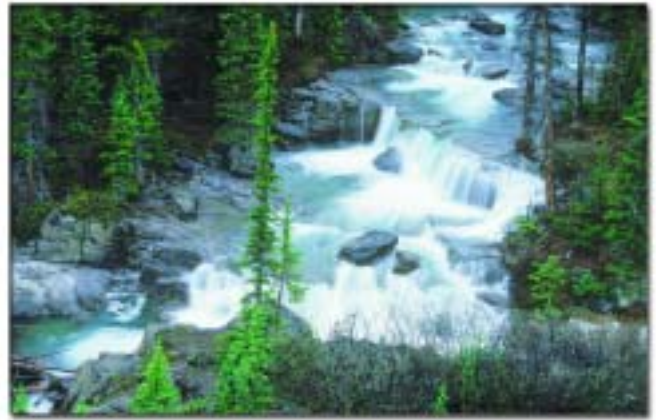
Answer: If it is steaming or still moist it is fresh. If it is old, it will be dried out.

Question: How do you distinguish this from the scat of other animals?

Answer: By its size, shape and contents. Also, bears have poor digestive systems, so much of what they eat comes through intact.

Station #8: *Noisy Areas*

Fast moving water – any river or creek.



Question: What should you do to make your presence known to wildlife when approaching fast-moving water?

Answer: Make additional noise by clapping hands, singing or calling out to be heard above the noise of the water. A bear bell does **not** make sufficient noise.

Question: Why would a bear be near fast-moving water?

Answer: To drink water, and to find fish or carrion to eat.

Question: During what other conditions do we need to make additional noise?

Answer: Rainy or windy days.



Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #9: *Low Visibility*

Approaching dense brush. This is a good opportunity to use taxidermy or target mounts to simulate animals hiding in the brush.



photo by Tim Rubbert

Question: What special safety techniques should be used when approaching areas of dense brush or low visibility?

Answer: Before proceeding down the trail, view the area carefully and make additional noises so animals are aware of your presence. Be sure to stay on the marked trail.

Question: Why do you need to take these precautions?

Answer: Bears, cougars, and rattlesnakes may hide in dense brush.

Question: What would bring bears to an area of dense brush?

Answer: The brush may have berries the bear wants to eat.

Station #10: *Digging Bulbs & Roots*

Using the four-prong rake, scrape and overturn the surface of a four- to six-foot area to imitate a bear pulling up and overturning the ground to get the plant roots and bulbs.



Question: Why do the bears eat only the roots and bulbs?

Answer: They are the most nutritious parts of the plants.

Question: Why do the bears only do this at certain times of the year?

Answer: The nutrition level of the roots and bulbs is highest just before the plant blooms. This takes place at various times of the year, in various locations, depending on rain, sun, temperature and elevation.

Question: What is the nutritional value of the roots and bulbs?

Answer: It is high in carbohydrates, which provide the bear with quick energy.

Field Activity #1 - continued

Station #11: *Encounters*

Local hunting and taxidermy associations may donate the use of pelts or mounts of bears, lions or rattlesnakes. They are also an excellent source for information on how to deal with encounters and for explaining identifying features of the animals.

Working with art students or a woodworking shop, you can make a bear or mountain lion silhouette out of cardboard or plywood. Place it far enough back in the woods where it is not apparent at first that it is a cutout.

It is important to bring in a wildlife expert from a state or federal agency or an experienced outdoorsman for information on how to handle a bear encounter. Here is some basic information for what to do in a defensive situation.

A Bear in the Distance

Regardless of the distance, never approach a bear.

If the bear doesn't see you:

Keep out of its sight and detour as far away as possible and downwind of the bear. If possible, avoid entering dense brush.

If the bear sees you but is not confrontational:

Retreat or bypass the bear, slowly leaving the area as soon as possible.

Sudden Bear Encounter at Close Range

- Do not panic – your safety may depend on remaining calm.
- Do not run, shout or make sudden movements.
- You cannot outrun a bear! Bears run up to 40 mph—faster than Olympic sprinters
- Remain still, avoid direct eye contact and talk quietly and calmly to the bear

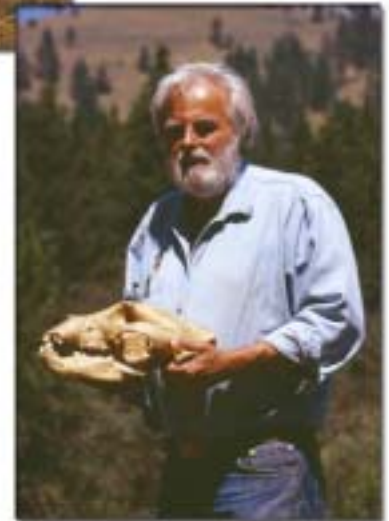
A bear that feels threatened or is protecting its cubs, space or food may warn you to back off by clacking its teeth together, woofing, huffing, panting, growling, staring at you, or slapping its



Land Tawney, instructor



McKenzie 3-D targets



*Dr. Charles Jonkel,
bear biologist*

feet on the ground. Group together and slowly back out of the situation.

Climbing a tree to avoid an attack is often impractical. All adult black bears, and many grizzly bears, climb trees. Running to a tree may provoke a non-aggressive bear to chase you.

Stand still if a bear charges you. Charging bears often veer away or stop abruptly at the last second (bluff charge). If you carry bear pepper spray, point it at the bear and discharge it if the bear charges to within 20-30 feet.

Field Activity #2 Camping, Food & Garbage Handling

Location: Use an open meadow for the good campsite, and a brushy area for the bad campsite. The food, storage and dining area should be 100 yards from the good campsite.

Equipment:

- Two-three tents for good campsite
- One tent in bad condition so you can rip it open as if a bear entered it
- Sleeping bags
- Pillows
- Clothing
- Flashlights
- Bear Pepper Spray
- Tupperware containers
- Assortment of attractants, both snacks and personal hygiene products
- Backpack that can be ripped apart
- 40 feet of light rope or parachute cord (bright color if possible)
- A light, padded weight (ex: a small bean bag)
- Sturdy backpacks or duffel bags to store food and garbage
- A pulley system for use between two trees (option for outfitters and guides classes)



Objective: Students will learn how to prepare a safe campsite that will minimize attractants to bears and other animals.

Station Preparation: Have each station set up prior to students' arrival. Instructions for setting up each station are included on the following pages.

Vocabulary

attractants
bear avoidance
bear pepper spray

clean camp
food-conditioned
food rewards

habituated
odorous
travel corridor

Field Activity #2 - continued

Station #1: *Good Campsite*

Set up 2-3 tents in a line, approximately 6-8 feet apart in an open meadow. There should be no signs of food or cooking equipment. Put only sleeping bags, pillows, clothing, flashlights and bear pepper spray inside the tents.



Question: Why are the tents set up in a line with space between them and not in a circle or clumped together?

Answer: If an animal (bear, moose, etc.) visits the sleeping area, it can easily escape if startled. If the tents were in a circle, the animal would feel surrounded and trapped. If the tents were near thick brush, a bear, cougar or rattlesnake could go undetected.



Question: Why are there no personal hygiene products in the sleeping area?

Answer: These products (i.e., lip balm, toothpaste, deodorant and soap) are stored away from the sleeping area because they have odors that may attract a bear.

Question: Why won't the bear eat all of our food and supplies?

Answer: If our supplies are properly stored, bears will be unable to reach them. The proper method is to hang the supplies at least 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the side supports, or to store them in bear resistant containers. Bears that do not obtain a food reward leave the site more quickly and seldom return,

Suggestion: It's a good idea to carry dry, single-serving packages of food. They are lighter, and have less odor to attract bears.



Field Activity #2 - continued

Station #2: *Bad Campsite*

Pitch the torn tent in or near dense brush, and leave punctured soda cans, food wrappers and torn bags lying around. Leave the torn backpack nearby.



Question: What may happen if you have attractants in your sleeping bag?

Answer: You are risking serious harm to yourself and fellow campers.

Question: If a bear destroys your tent and camp, and eats your food, what problems do you have if it is a two-day hike back to civilization?

Answer: You have no shelter if it rains, snows or gets cold. Your food supply is gone, and you have to keep yourself warm and maintain your strength.

Question: What happens to the bear that has now become conditioned to our food and habituated to humans?

Answer: It may abandon its natural food sources and seek out human activity areas for food. Since there is a possibility the bear could continue to raid other campsites, the proper authority may be forced to trap and remove or destroy the bear.

Station #3: *Food Storage and Garbage Handling*

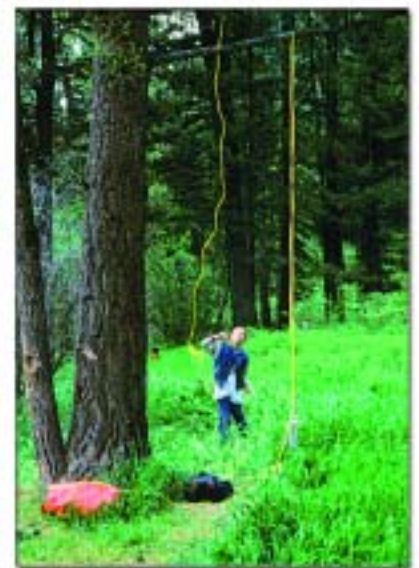
Store the food and garbage 100 yards from the good campsite. Hang the food from a tree limb, four feet from the side support, and approximately ten feet from the ground. Situate the cooking area near the food, but not directly under it. Leave no evidence of wrappers, garbage or cooked food in the fire ring.

Question: How do you properly hang and store the food from the limb?

Answer: Use 40 feet of light rope, with the light padded weight tied to one end. Stand about 30 feet from a limb that is about 20 feet off the ground. Stretch the rope out on the ground in front of you, toward the limb. Using a gentle half-circular swinging motion, build up momentum and let go of the rope when your arm and the weight is aimed just above the limb. After looping the rope over the limb, untie the weight and tie the rope to your food or garbage pack. Pull the other end of the rope until the pack is at least 10-15 feet off the ground. Tie off the end of the rope to a secure anchor or use the counter-balance technique.

Practice makes perfect; let's give it a try!

Suggestion: Practice ahead of time. Students should understand that they need to use centrifugal force and don't have to be too aggressive. Keep students a safe distance from the swinging rope.



Field Activity #3 Viewing and Photographing

Location: An open area with unobstructed viewing for 100 yards.

Equipment:

- Binoculars
- Spotting scopes
- Cameras with telephoto lenses
- Tripods
- 3-D or wildlife targets or plywood/cardboard cutouts
- 100 yards of bright-colored rope for distance marking

Objective: Students learn how to maintain a safe distance while viewing or photographing wildlife. They can also learn how to focus the equipment, and other basic aspects of photography.

Station Preparation: Set up distance markers ahead of time at 25 yards (for elk, moose and deer) and 100 yards (for bears and other dangerous predators). Wildlife targets resembling bears or other animals can add to the fun.

Vocabulary

binocular lens

telephoto tripod

spotting scope

Question: What does the 100x, 25x, 8x, on binoculars or spotting scopes mean?

Answer: The subject appears 100, 25 or 8 times closer than with the naked eye. For example, if you are looking at an animal 100 yards away with a 25x binocular, the animal will appear as if you were only 4 yards away from it.

apparent distance = $\frac{\text{actual distance}}{\text{magnification}}$

Additional activity- Set up markers to demonstrate the differences in magnification power.



Question: What does it mean to “maintain” a safe distance?

Answer: If the animal moves closer, you may have to move as well to keep the minimum safety distance.

Question: Why is the safety distance only 25 yards for elk, moose and deer, and 100 yards for bear and other dangerous predators?

Answer: Experience has shown that grazing animals require a smaller defensive space.

Question: Does maintaining this distance guarantee your safety?

Answer: No. Wild animals are unpredictable, and many may require more space. Your actions could threaten an animal at any range. Be prepared to move away, and remember that you are responsible for your safety, and the animal’s safety.

Question: What factors might require a greater distance for safety?

Answer: Environment, weather, time of year, and location. (Examples: lightning storms scare animals into running; in the spring mothers are very protective of their young)

Graduation Photo

Have the students hang as many packs in a tree as they can. Gather the students and local volunteers in a group with camera equipment, spotting scopes, 3-D mounts, and other supporting props placed in front of them and have a graduation photo taken signifying their completion of the course. Include the equipment the students used in the photo. Keep a classroom copy and send the duplicate to:

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf
c/o Center for Wildlife Information
PO Box 8289
Missoula, MT 59807



Classroom Review and Evaluation

Objective: Reinforce the safety lessons learned in the field activities through classroom discussion, and demonstrate understanding of the lessons through special projects.

Activity #1: Classroom Discussion

Use the list created in the preliminary classroom discussion of safety techniques (page 2). Have the students make corrections to their preliminary list and include techniques they learned in the field activities. As they make corrections to the list, have them talk about the reasons behind the safety techniques. The teacher may want to distribute the reference section on pages 18-19 to the class.

Activity #2: Safety Technique Review

Have the students review articles about human/wildlife encounters, and write a report about the incident. Explain what the individual may have done to cause the confrontation, what safety techniques they could have used to avoid injury, and what techniques they did not use to prevent injury to themselves and the wildlife.

Activity #2: Diagram of Campsite

Have groups work together to draw diagrams of the campsite, noting the appropriate distances for eating, sleeping and food storage areas.

Activity #3: Trailhead Signs

Have students make trailhead signs with information relevant to the region. Include information such as trail conditions, fire hazard level and dangerous animal sightings. Encourage them to be creative, and include any information they might like to know about the trail.

Activity #4: Posters/Bumper Stickers/Badges

Have the students design individual or group posters, stickers or badges that emphasize the importance of hiking and camping safety techniques. Sticker slogans should be simple; posters can be more detailed, or tell a story.



Activity #5: Bulletin Board

Have the students develop a bulletin board that displays pictures, newspaper articles, and slogans demonstrating the appropriate and inappropriate safety practices for hiking, camping and viewing in the wild.

Activity #6: Media Awareness

Wildlife has become a popular subject of television and news programs, written articles, and internet sites. Unfortunately, it is common for media to give the wrong impression regarding interaction with wild animals. It is important that students can identify dangerous and inappropriate human/wildlife interaction messages (this may be stated explicitly or illustrated by actions or photos).

Have the students find at least one example of this (video, newspaper clipping, photos, web page, etc.). Have them explain to the group both what was misleading and how it was represented.

Additional Activity: Have students research who is responsible for the piece and write a letter with the correct information, asking the individual or company to be more careful in the future.

Other Optional Activities:

- Create a web page for their school
- Write a newspaper article for a local or school paper about their field trip
- Video-record the students as they practice the lessons
- Interview residents who may have had a dangerous encounter

Hiking Song: Hey Bear, Are You There?

by Richie Doyle for The Center For Wildlife Information ©

Chorus:

Hey bear ho bear you call me - a bear When you're hi-king where I live, You'll know from the signs I give

The chorus is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features five measures of music with guitar chord diagrams for D, A, D, A, and D above the notes. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes.

Verse 1:

Like claw marks in the trees are just a few of these In
logs I look for ants to munch. So I tear op-en logs for lunch

Verse 1 is written on two staves in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff contains measures 6-10 with guitar chord diagrams for G, A, G, and A. The second staff contains measures 11-15 with guitar chord diagrams for G, A, G, and A. The melody is simple, using quarter and eighth notes.

Verse 2

I eat bugs, berries and leaves
You can see it in the scat I leave
Along the trail see the clues
I like to hike on trails too

Verse 3

I dig up roots in the ground
For bugs I roll rocks around
Look for my tracks in the dirt
Where I live you should always be alert

Verse 4

Don't scare me, I won't scare you
And don't run from me whatever you do
If we meet, don't look me in the eyes
It scares me when you catch me by surprise

Verse 5

So whenever you're hiking where I live
Just look for the signs I give
Please let me know when you're around
Clap your hands, sing and make a lot of sound



Reference: **Traveling in Bear and Cougar Country**

Whether you hike, mountain bike, ride rivers or horseback ride, there are precautions you should take when traveling through bear and cougar country. Following the suggestions below will help make the journey safe for you, your companions, and wildlife.

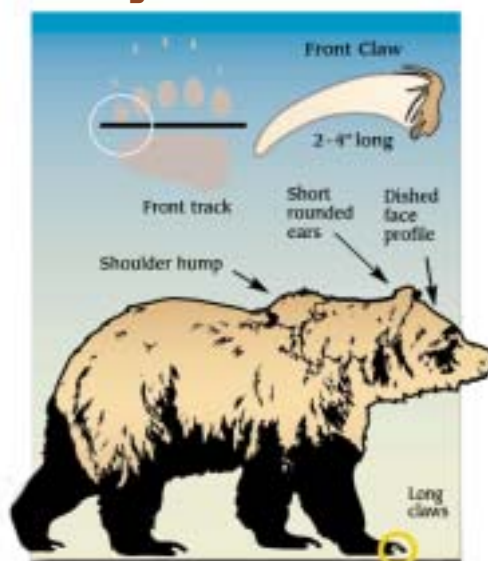
- Inquire about recent bear and cougar activity in the area.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return. Travel in groups and only during daylight hours.
- Make your presence known to cougars and bears! Call out, clap your hands or sing loudly, especially around loud streams, on windy days and in areas of low visibility. Stay extra alert near food sources such as berry patches and spawning fish.
- Watch for wildlife on the trail ahead of you. Stay on trails to reduce the chance of sudden encounters and to protect habitat.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Look for bear-activity signs: tracks, scat, diggings, torn-up logs and overturned rocks.
- Keep children close to you and within your sight at all times. Keep an adult at the back of the group.
- Carry a bandanna, shirt or hat to drop to distract approaching wildlife. Do not drop your backpack! Leave it on for additional protection. Have bear pepper spray readily available.
- Avoid taking pets on hiking trails – it is not advised and often not allowed. If dogs are permitted, keep them on a leash to minimize conflicts with wildlife.



Encounters with Bears or Cougars

- Do not run from a bear or cougar – running may trigger an attack. Bears can run faster than racehorses, both uphill and downhill. Talk to the animal in a calm, low voice while slowly backing away.
- Immediately pick up small children and stay in a group.
- Contact a wildlife management agency in the area you are visiting to learn about local regulations and guidelines or for additional information about wildlife encounters.

Grizzly Bear



Black Bear



Reference: **Backcountry Camping in Bear Country**

Here are some general rules and regulations to follow when backcountry camping. Always follow local regulations.

- Set up the cooking, eating and supply area at least 100 yards from your sleeping area. Store food, trash and odorous items by hanging at least 10 feet above ground and 4 feet from top and side supports, or by storing in approved, bear-resistant containers.
- Select food in individually sealed packages. Plan meals carefully to prevent leftovers.
- Store pet food, livestock feed and garbage the same as food. Never bury it; pack it out.
- Keep pets on a leash while with you, or inside a cool, well-ventilated vehicle. Pets may threaten and harass wildlife, and can lead predators to your camp. Pets are not allowed in most parks and refuges.
- Camp in open areas away from trails, thick brush, berry patches, spawning streams or carcasses. Sleep in a tent for increased safety.
- Have your flashlight and bear pepper spray readily available at all times.
- Keep all food and food-related items inside a closed, hard-sided vehicle or special bear-resistant container, except when preparing or eating food. Ice chests, coolers, boxes, cans, tents and soft-sided campers are not bear-resistant!
- Keep sleeping bags and tents completely free of food, food odor and beverages at all times. Store personal items (such as deodorants, toothpaste, make-up, soap and lotions) with food and garbage when not in use. Any odorous product may attract bears.
- Strain food particles from dishwater using a fine mesh screen and store with garbage. Dump



dishwater at least 100 yards from your sleeping area. Food odors may attract bears.

- Wash your hands thoroughly after cooking, eating or handling fish or game. Always minimize odors.
- Change your clothes before going to bed - do not sleep in the same clothes in which you cook.
- Rehearse what you and others in your group will do - day or night - if a bear appears in your camp or while you're hiking. Review local regulations before your outing.

Camping in Established Campgrounds

Don't be careless with food or garbage when camping in a campground. Wild animals, especially bears, may wander through at any time of day or night. Wild animals near a campground are more likely to be habituated or food-conditioned (used to people and their food). Having lost their natural fear of humans, these animals often become increasingly aggressive in their attempts to obtain human, pet and livestock food.

Glossary of Terms

Attractants—Anything that draws a bear to a human activity area, such as food odors.

Bear avoidance—Practicing the appropriate safety techniques to minimize the possibility of an encounter when hiking, or camping.

Bear Pepper Spray or Bear Spray—A spray that is used to attempt to stop a bear attack. This spray should be used only when a bear is charging. It is NOT the same as personal defense spray.

Binoculars—Double-lens instrument for observing anything at a distance.

Bulbs—The part of a plant that sends roots downward and leaves upward. This part of the plant has a high level of protein.

Clean camp—A camp where the sleeping area is free of any kind of attractant, such as food or personal items, and the food and cooking supplies are properly stored.

Defensive space—The space an animal needs to feel comfortable. The animal will feel threatened if a person or animal enters it.

Encounter—A situation in which you meet a bear, cougar or rattlesnake, and have to use appropriate safety techniques to back out of the situation.

Food-conditioned—A characteristic of a wild animal, especially a bear, that is used to eating and being attracted to human food.

Food rewards—The items a bear finds to eat when it enters a human activity area—it can be a gum wrapper, leftover food, lip balm, etc.

Grubs—The larvae of insects. This provides protein in a bear's diet.

Habitat—The natural home of an organism.

Habituated—Accustomed, used to.

Lens—The part of a camera that focuses light and allows the image to be captured on film.

Mountain lions—A regional name for cougars.

Odorous—Having a strong smell.

Omnivores—Animals that eat both plants and animals.

Predators—Animals that naturally hunt other animals for food.

Prey—The type of animal that predators pursue.

Refuges—Reserved areas where wildlife is protected.

Rodents—Animals such as rats, mice, squirrels, beavers, etc.

Scat (bear scat)—Solid animal waste.

Spotting scope—Single lens instrument for observing anything at a distance.

Telephoto lens—a compound camera lens that produces a magnified image of a distant object.

Trailhead—The beginning of a trail.

Travel corridor—The paths or passages through an area that animals frequent.

Tripod—A three-legged device used to hold and steady a camera or scope.

Vegetation—Plant life.

Wildlife/Bear-resistant containers—Containers that are specially designed to contain food, garbage and animal feed. These containers are designed so that animals will most likely not be able to open them.

Wildlife Stewardship—The responsible actions of visitors to minimize stressing or harassing wildlife, such as viewing and photographing from a distance; using binoculars, telescopes and telephoto lenses; camping in a fashion that minimizes attracting wildlife to the campsite; and hiking using the latest techniques to avoid encounters along the trail. Wildlife stewardship activities and techniques help **keep wildlife wild**.

Hiking & Camping in Bear, Cougar and Rattlesnake Country

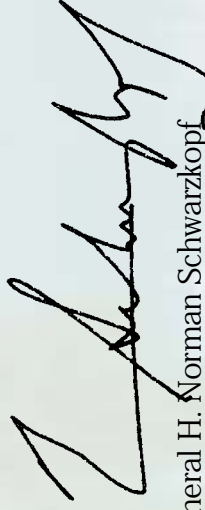
Certificate of Completion

Presented on _____
date

_____ participant

has been trained on the appropriate safety techniques to use when hiking, camping & viewing in bear, cougar and rattlesnake country. Congratulations!
You are now a member of the bear conservation and education team.

_____ trainer/ teacher



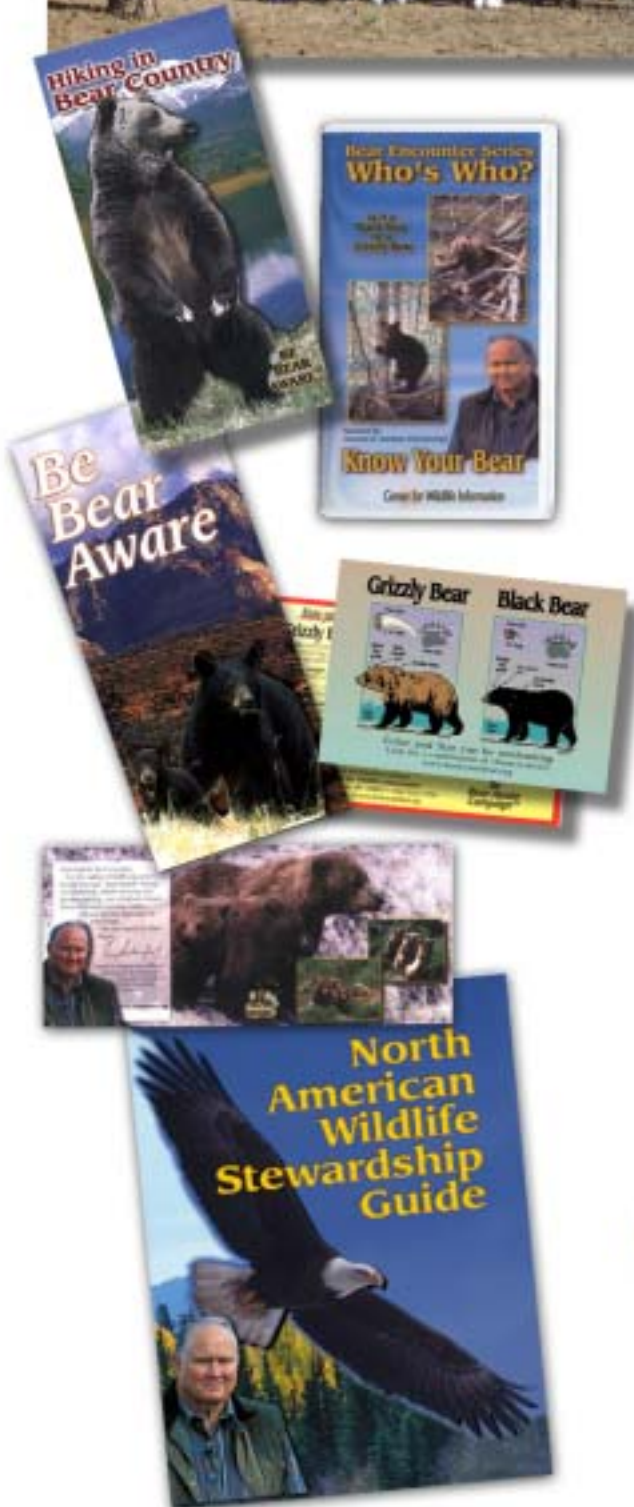
General H. Norman Schwarzkopf
Spokesman for the National Be Bear
Aware & Wildlife Stewardship Campaign

www.BeBearAware.org
www.wildlifestewardshipguide.org





**Current participating partners of the
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You Can Make A Difference! To learn more about educational wildlife stewardship materials, safety techniques for living, hiking and camping in bear country, and techniques for viewing and photographing wildlife safely and responsibly, contact:



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www.BeBearAware.org
www.BearPepperSpray.org