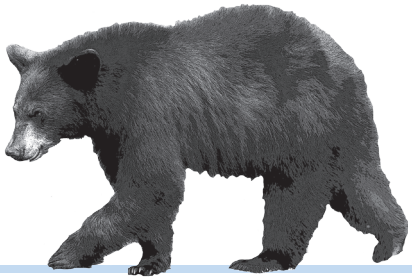
Deterrents...

- Include 12 gauge cracker shells, air horns, flares and chemical repellents such as pepper spray.
- Are not completely effective against every bear in every situation.
- Should not make you less careful to avoid bear conflicts.
- Are potentially dangerous so use with extreme caution.
- If you are using a chemical repellent, try to stay upwind of the bear before using.

If a Bear Charges...

- Many charges are bluffs. The bear will often veer to the side at the last minute.
- Use a chemical repellent only at close range.
- If you have a firearm and contact appears unavoidable, shoot to kill.
- If you play dead during a bear attack, lie on your side, curl into a ball with your legs tight to your chest and hands clasped behind your neck.

If you must shoot a bear in self-defence, report the kill to a Renewable Resource Officer as soon as possible and provide an explanation of the incident, the date and location of the incident, and any other information requested by an Officer. You may not keep any part of a bear killed in self-defence.



For more information, contact the Environment and Natural Resources regional office nearest you:

Fort Simpson	867-695-7450
Fort Smith	867-872-6400
Inuvik	867-678-6650
Norman Wells	867-587-3506
Yellowknife	867-767-9238 ext. 53461
Sahtú Wildlife Emergencies	867-587-2422
Dehcho Wildlife Emergencies (May – Sept)	867-695-7433
Fort Smith Wildlife Emergencies (May – Sept)	867-872-0400
Hay River Wildlife Emergencies (May – Sept)	867-875-7640
Inuvik Wildlife Emergencies (May – Oct)	867-678-0289
North Slave Wildlife Emergencies	867-873-7181
Wildlife Collisions/ Report a Poacher	866-762-2437

www.enr.gov.nt.ca

May 2017

Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country



Government of
Northwest Territories

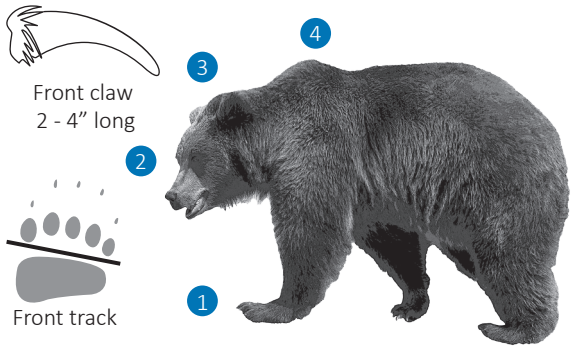
Welcome to Bear Country

Grizzly and black bears can be found throughout the Northwest Territories. They are an important part of the northern ecosystem. Northerners are committed to maintaining healthy populations of all wildlife, including grizzly and black bears. Treat bears with respect. Remember, you are in a bear's territory.

What's the Difference Between...?

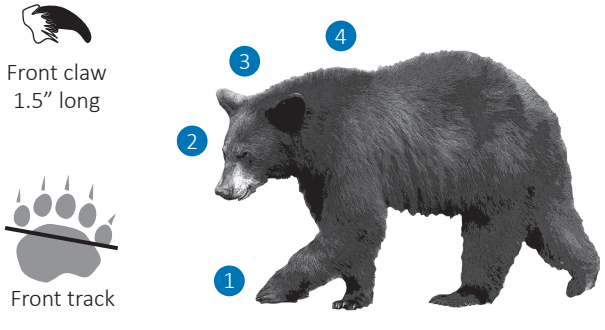
Grizzly Bear

1. Long, light claws
2. Dished face profile
3. Short, rounded ears
4. Shoulder hump



Black Bear

1. Short, dark claws
2. Straight face profile
3. Taller ears
4. No shoulder hump



While You are Travelling...

- Always be alert.
- Travel in groups.
- Travel only during daylight.
- Avoid carrying strong smelling foods.
- Make noise where visibility is limited.
- Avoid bear feeding areas such as flood plains, berry patches and areas rich in horsetails and other grasses.
- Avoid bear travel areas, including shorelines, trails or near berry patches.
- Watch for fresh bear droppings and tracks.
- Carry bear deterrents.

If You are Camping...

- Avoid camping in areas frequented by bears.
- Always sleep inside a shelter (tent, cabin, etc.).
- Don't keep food in tents or areas of your camp other than the cook tent or kitchen/cooking area.
- Keep a clean camp. Wash all dishes and utensils after every meal.
- Avoid cooking greasy foods.
- Burn all garbage every day or take it to a bearproof disposal site. ***Burying garbage does not eliminate odours.***
- If you are going to leave your campsite:
  - Bearproof your camp. Store food and other attractants (dish detergent, toothpaste, dog food, etc.) in an inaccessible place.
  - Let someone know where you are going.
  - Take a partner and bear deterrents with you.

If You Are Fishing...

- Be cautious near streams or lakes. Bears frequent these areas.
- Clean fish and dispose of guts away from camp.
- Keep and take home fish you catch on your last day only, to minimize bacterial growth in fish, and fish smells in camp.
- Don't wear clothes to bed that smell like fish.

If You are Hunting...

- Avoid hunting late in the day and returning to your camp in the dark.
- Stay alert when dressing game or handling meat and make sure you are away from your camp.
- Avoid shooting more than your party can pack out in a single load.
- If you must leave meat in the field, protect it from disturbance by other animals or the natural environment. Clearly mark the cache as yours before leaving it. Make sure you have a clear approach route when returning, and retrieve the meat as soon as possible to prevent wastage. Mark the meat to identify the harvester.
- Don't keep bloodied clothes in your tent.

If You Encounter a Bear...

- Remember the 3 S's... Stop, Stand still, Stay calm.
- Make sure others know a bear is in the vicinity.
- Do not run.
- Leave the bear an open avenue of escape.

...at a DISTANCE

- Alert the bear to your presence by speaking in low tones and slowly waving your arms.
- Quietly walk backwards the way you came or make a wide detour.
- Keep an eye on the bear.
- Stay downwind.
- Consider using warning shots, noisemakers.

...that is NEARBY

- Do not shout or make sudden movements.
- Avoid direct eye contact.
- Back away slowly.