

## **Discouraging bears at home.....**

Properly storing or securing residential garbage and other bear attractants is a proven method for discouraging bears and preventing nuisance problems around homes, farms and neighborhoods.

The following items attract bears and should always be protected by an electric fence or stored in a secure place, such as a garage or sturdy shed:

**Garbage Cans • Bird Feeders • Pet Food • Squirrel and Other Wildlife Feeders • Pet Food Bowls • BBQ Grills and Smokers • Pets and Small Livestock such as Goats, Rabbits, Pigs and Chickens • Livestock Feed • Compost Piles • Beehives • Fruit and Nut-Bearing Trees and Shrubs**

**Remember: Anything that attracts dogs, cats or raccoons will also attract bears!**

**Also, it is illegal to intentionally feed black bears in Florida.**

### **The Bear Facts.....**

Black bears are the only type of bear native to Florida and once roamed throughout the state's entire 34.5 million acres.

Human activities in Florida have eliminated bears from about 83 percent of their former range. Florida bears are black with a brown muzzle and may have a white chest marking called a blaze. Adult black bears typically weigh 150 to 400 pounds. The largest male bear on record in Florida weighed 624 pounds; the largest female weighed 342 pounds.

Female bears, called sows, begin breeding at about 3.5 years old and generally have one to four cubs every other year.

In Florida the breeding season runs from June to August, and cubs are born about seven months later in late January to early February. Bears of all ages are excellent climbers and climb trees when they are frightened. About 80 percent of a black bear's diet is plant matter (plants, berries, nuts, etc.). The other 20 percent includes insects and meat.

**Bear sightings have become more frequent  
.....stay alert!**

**CALL THE BEAR HOT LINE IMMEDIATELY.....1-888-404-3922 (24 HOURS)**

**FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

**<http://floridaconservation.org/bear>**