



Bear Sightings May 22, 2020

The City of Corning has received reports of black bears roaming Corning's neighborhoods.

The black bear's return to our community began early this year. Sightings were reported in February and March. In past years, the sightings normally begin in May.

The Police Department encourages people to follow practical guidelines set out by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Some of those guidelines include storing garbage and bird seed in secure containers and keeping those containers in a secure place, such as a garage. Put garbage out only on mornings when it is scheduled to be collected. Only feed birds from December 1st, until April 1st. Feed family pets indoors, and clean your grill after every use.

Most importantly never approach a bear. Bears are large powerful wild animals that act and react out of instinct.

Please review information contained on the New York DEC website below for more information. The Black Bear Guidelines are also attached (page 2).

[Reducing Human-Bear Conflicts](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6995.html) - (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6995.html>)

"A police officer might not always be able to respond to a bear sighting, but residents should still call the Corning Police Department so that we will have accurate data to share with DEC officials." - Jeff Spaulding, Corning Police Chief

MEDIA CONTACT: Corning Police Department 607-962-0340 ext. 1500

Black Bear Guidelines

Below are some general tips for avoiding conflicts with bears and reacting to a possible encounter with a bear. According to the NYS DEC and Corning Police Department, bear sightings are not uncommon in the Southern Tier of New York State, even in the City of Corning's neighborhoods and residential areas. Black bears are large powerful wild animals that act and react out of instinct. In most cases, black bears are simply seeking an easy food source and will pass through residential areas without conflict.

If You Meet a Bear While Out Walking, Stay Calm

1. **NEVER RUN.** Running can make a bear chase you.
2. Keep your distance. Back slowly away while facing the bear. Avoid direct eye contact.
3. Slowly and calmly leave the area. Talk aloud so the bear will become aware of you.
4. Be extra careful around a female with cubs. Never approach a cub.
5. **NEVER throw food** to distract a bear. This teaches a bear to approach people for food.
6. Fight back if attacked. Black bears have been driven away when people fight with rocks, sticks, or even bare hands.
7. Report bear sightings to the Corning Police Department – (607) 962-0340 Ext 1500. Call 911 if it's an emergency.

Bear-Proof Your Backyard - Once a bear finds food, it will come back for more.

1. Bear-proof your trash. Keep garbage indoors until it's time for trash pick-up.
2. Feed pets inside and store pet food indoors.
3. Clean barbecue grills immediately after use. Remember to empty or clean the grill's "drip pan"
4. Only feed birds between December 1 & April 1. This is when birds need it and when bears normally hibernate. Bears love bird seed and hummingbird feeders.
5. Never store any food outside. Bears can even tear open locked containers.
6. Fruit-bearing trees and bushes can attract bears. Harvest fruit and vegetables as they ripen. Pick up fallen fruit from the ground. Keep your lawn mowed and free of flowering dandelions and clover.
7. Keep compost clean and enclosed securely.
8. Educate your neighbors. If you follow these steps but neighbors don't, bears may still come to your backyard.

If You See a Bear in the Area:

1. Stay calm. If the bear finds no food, it will usually leave.
2. Stay away. Bears could attack if they feel threatened.
3. Warn others. Bring kids and pets indoors. Remind others to keep their distance.
4. Scare the bear. Make sure the bear has a clear escape path. Make lots of noise, turn on lights, and bang pots and pans together. Don't let the bear become comfortable around your home.
5. Remove attractants. After the bear is gone, make sure your home and yard is bear proof.
6. If the bear is threatening human safety or pets, or is destroying property, call the police at 911.