



"Living With Urban Wildlife"

Vol. #1 – Issue #2 (2024)

By: Fish and Wildlife

Commissioner James Etter

Safety precautions and learning about one of the most commonly seen wildlife in Los Angeles County.

The California Black Bear

The Bears in Los Angeles County are a good likeness of the one pictured above.

(Commonly the "BLACK" Bear is Black, but can be a lighter color, such as Brown to Blond or in rare instances Albino/White) Whatever the color, the Black Bear is the ONLY species of Bears that inhabits Los Angeles County. (-or- California)

There are more Coyotes and smaller Wildlife around you at any one time, however; mostly nocturnal, so you likely have no idea how many of these critters are on your property.

-BUT-

When something comes walking into your backyard as big as your Refrigerator, it is well noticed!

The Black Bear is usually a peaceful animal, however; they can be a formidable PREDATOR and being an ¹Omnivore, they forage and feed on anything that might quell a Ravenous Appetite. Especially when coming out of hibernation in Spring or Early Summer.

I will make suggestions on how I managed this large animal from my personal experiences, and I have had many, being awakened in the mid of night with a bear in my tent! However; in my quest to post the BEST available ²"Safety Bulletins" I have found some EXPERT ADVICE posted locally, which provides information if encountering A "Wildlife Moment" with a Bear!

REI EXPERT ADVICE IF YOU MEET-UP WITH A BEAR!

1.) Never Approach a Bear! 2.) If you see Cubs, be especially cautious and stay away. Mother Bears can be very protective of their young. *(A Commissioner Jim NOTE: Never get between a Mother Bear and her Cub(s). This might provoke an attack.)* 3.) If you see a Bear, before it sees you, Back Away Slowly, keeping your eyes on the Bear. *(A Commissioner Jim NOTE: NEVER-EVER turn and Run! Instinctively the Bear might see you as PREY! -also- The best defense when facing most Wildlife is to keep eye contact. Running displays weakness and the animal will be more prone to pursue you!* 4.) Retreat and/or reroute to give Bears a wide Berth. 5.) If you have Bear Spray, get it Ready! *(More Commissioner Notes: See "Over")*

If you see a BEAR in your Neighborhood CALL 911

They will call the Local Authorities and California Fish and Wildlife to help keep you safe!

¹ **OMNIVORE:** Animals that eat both Plants and Meat: (Bears, Birds, Dogs, Raccoons, and Humans are examples)

² "Safety Bulletins": Simple to understand "Safety Bulletins" can be found at "ANIMAL TRACKS" (a Non-Profit Wildlife RESCUE) Located near Vasques Rocks. In your URL put: ANIMAL TRACKS. -OR VISIT- (Recreational Equipment INC.) in your URL put:



My Family and their Friends LOVE the Outdoors!

I have trained them to be aware of their surroundings. In all my experience with nearly 80 years camping, hiking and experiencing our wonderful California Wilderness, it has been a great Journey!

I encourage everyone to experience this wonderful state and our Amazing County, with places to visit and make discoveries untold, however; wildlife is a partner in this

majestic (almost Spiritual) discovery. Knowledge is strength when meeting some predatory animal. *(Be them coming into your backyard or in the wilderness.)*

My position as Los Angeles County Fish and Wildlife Commissioner

Requires me to EDUCATE the public, which is outlined in my OATH of Office.

There are Resources available to you in becoming Wildlife Safe!

From the comfort of your own home, go to the REI Web-Site (**Wildlife Safety Tips /REI EXPRT ADVICE**)

REI outlines wildlife Do's and Don'ts to help you with safety at home or in the Great Outdoors.

-also you can-

Contact "ANIMAL TRACKS"

info@AnimalTracksInc.Org

Agua Dulce, Ca. (Vasquez Rocks)

Animal Tacks has produced an easy to read and understand, tri/fold brochure regarding Wildlife "Safety"

If a BEAR wanders into your backyard (Call 911) however; Bears generally are rather skittish.

(Advice from Commissioner Etter)

- When coming upon a Bear, NEVER GET CLOSER to them. A BEAR CAN RUN 40/MPH.
- Make NOISE! Like Banging on a pan, air horns or shouting, but never RUN at them!
- Keep Your Distance (ALWAYS)
- Seek a Safe Place. In your House, Car, or Protective Structures if possible.
- Learn what to do if a Black Bear should attack you! *(³It may save your life)*
- Black Bears can Climb Trees, so seeking a Safe Place in a Tree is not very effective!
- Put away all smelly items. Creams/Lotions, food when on Outings. *(⁴Rig a bear Cache')*

NOTE: A Bear can smell a stick of Gum, 1-mile away! At the end of my series "*Living With Urban Wildlife*" I will post a "FINAL" wrapping-up bulletin titled: "*Happy Trails To You*" which will highlight Home, Camping-Hiking and Overnight; Personal Wildlife Encounters. I advocate and promote discovering "Wild California" and hope you will also do the same.

Commissioner James Etter

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DISCLAIMER: The opinions and/or information expressed is that of Commissioner James Etter and not necessarily the opinions of the other Los Angeles County (seated) members on the Fish and Wildlife Commission, or the County Board of Supervisors and/or any others. The information expressed in this or other similar posting are that of Commissioner Etter along with, ADVICE from: REI/Recreational Equipment INC and/or Animal Tracks. Be aware that all information in this post, are only an ADVISORY!

³ **How to REACT if you are ATTACKED:** The Black Bear reacts completely differently than a GRIZZLEY. If you are attacked by a Black Bear FIGHT BACK! (REI/Expert Advice) Put in your URL: **Wildlife Safety Tips / REI EXPERT ADVICE** for more details. (There are No Grizzly Bears in California.)

⁴ **Camping Cache':** I have been successful utilizing several different methods for safe food storage camping or hiking, of which each requires different procedures. When Backpacking, I use a Bear Barrel (Loaned or purchased at most Trailheads, like Whitney Portal for hiking overnight.) I will produce a Bulletin at the end of my series of "*Living With Urban Wildlife*" to extend further info for wildlife safety (Titled "*Happy Trails To You*") after I finish posting my planned 8 Safety Bulletins.