

Bears and Human Food Attractants

Feeding bears, either by direct handouts or by leaving garbage, barbecue grills, pet food and bird feeders outside, leads to problems with bears.



Did you know . . .

- Food and food smells (garbage, pet food, barbecue grills) attract bears.
- Taking the trash out to the curb the night before pickup or feeding your pets outside can, and often does, attract bears.
- Bears can smell food from more than a mile away and if they are rewarded with an easy meal, they learn quickly to return to the scene.
- Curious bears that are not rewarded with an easy meal such as garbage or pet foods will direct their attention to natural settings away from human habitation.
- Bears that become used to getting human foods may damage property or become a threat to public safety. These bears often must be killed. To help avoid a needless death, please don't provide food for bears.
- Intentional feeding of bears is against Florida law – see Florida Administrative Code 68A-4.001(3).

Remember: Any food source that attracts dogs, cats or raccoons also can attract bears.

- Store trash in secure area until morning of pickup
- Bring pet food inside, store securely
- Protect gardens, compost and livestock with electric fencing
- Clean grills and store them in a secure area
- Remove wildlife feeders if there is a bear in the area

If you experience bear problems, please contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 863-648-3200. For more information go to MyFWC.com/bear.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is dedicated to reducing conflicts between people and bears in our communities.

Please note: Following this advice does not eliminate the risk of injury.



Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com