

Bear, Moose & Wolf Warnings

The following list of points should be included in a 10 to 12-minute talk at the beginning of any program offered in or about Denali National Park and Preserve (exceptions are the dog sled demonstrations and guided climbs of Mt. McKinley).

Tip: It can be fun and effective to present much of this info as a series of questions for visitors to try to answer before you present the correct information.

Bears

- ◆ If you see a bear in the distance: Quietly re-route to avoid.
- ◆ If you see one nearby ignoring you: Quietly move away and re-route to avoid.
- ◆ If you see one near or far that is aware of you and shows any interest: Raise arms, wave them around and talk to the bear while backing slowly away. (Demonstrate to your audience and have them join you in raising and waving their arms.)
- ◆ If a bear charges: **STAND YOUR GROUND**. Continue to wave and talk. It's probably a bluff charge and the bear will stop short of touching you or veer away at the last minute.
- ◆ If a bear makes contact: Fall to the ground, keep pack on, put hands behind neck and curl up in a fetal position so vital organs are protected. Play dead & be as boring & unthreatening as possible.
- ◆ If a bear starts a full-fledged attack, *fight back*.
- ◆ **NEVER TRY TO RUN AWAY**. Running causes bears to react to you as if you were a prey animal (lunch). Also, bears run much faster than humans, so running is futile.

Regarding food:

- ◆ Do NOT leave behind food when moving away from a bear.
- ◆ When eating outdoors, do not spread out picnic-style. You should be able to pick up all food and items with food odor on a moment's notice.
- ◆ Dispose of food in bear-proof garbage cans. If camping at a campground, please do NOT dispose of food in the bathroom trash cans.

At programs in or near campgrounds, please add the following information:

- ◆ Do not dump gray-water on the ground. First, clean bits of food out of the water and put them in a bear-proof garbage can or into a plastic bag that you can then keep in a bear-proof food container. Then...
 - Teklanika campground has gray-water drains next to the bathrooms.
 - Riley Creek campground has drains in the middle of the restrooms.
 - Savage campground has flush toilets into which you can pour your gray-water.

Moose

- ◆ Do not approach.
- ◆ More deaths and injuries from moose than from bears.
- ◆ They're faster than they look.
- ◆ If they charge, **RUN**.

Summary of bear & moose encounter tips: Moose-run, bear-don't run.

See following page for wolf warnings.

Wolves

- ◆ A wolf that doesn't act very, very wary around humans is potentially dangerous.
- ◆ Do not do *anything* to encourage a wolf to approach you.
- ◆ If a wolf does approach, make noise, group up with other people, try to look big and intimidating, and try to frighten them away. In the extremely rare event that they continue to approach, throw sticks or rocks in their direction, poke them with a long stick or pole and/or use pepper spray.
- ◆ Do not leave ANY food scraps, crumbs, paper, cans or any type of trash anywhere that wildlife may be able to get to it. Be especially careful of crumbs dropped on the ground.
- ◆ Attacks are extremely rare. If one *were* to attack, you would want to fight back, never run and never 'play dead.' A wolf about to attack is unlikely to growl or bare its teeth or give any of the signs that you'd expect from an aggressive dog.

Summary of wolf encounter tips: A wolf that has lost its fear of humans is a potentially dangerous wolf. Do NOTHING to cause habituation.