



FWC releases new videos to help Florida residents avoid conflicts with bears

News Release

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Bear videos available at: <https://vimeo.com/album/3605088>

Photos available on the FWC's Flickr site:

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/myfwcmedia/0FpB7w>

As part of ongoing efforts to reduce conflicts with bears, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is releasing two new videos in the "Living with Florida Black Bears" series. These videos are designed to help educate the public about how to safely coexist with bears in Florida.

The "Bear Behavior" video describes how a person should react if they encounter a bear in the wild, such as speaking in an assertive voice and backing away slowly. Bears are generally not aggressive toward people, but an encounter may become dangerous if a bear feels concerned or threatened. Knowing how to interpret bear behavior can help people react appropriately when they have a close encounter with a bear.

The "Scare the Bear" video illustrates how residents can reduce conflicts with bears that may come onto their property. Bears are driven by their need for food and powerful sense of smell, which often leads them into neighborhoods and areas with readily accessible food sources. While properly securing garbage and other attractants is critical, scaring bears away from neighborhoods is also important because it can reinforce their natural fear of people. A bear that has been frightened by people is less likely to stay in areas where people are present, which reduces the risk to public safety.

"The No. 1 cause of conflict with bears is unsecured trash and other attractants, such as pet food, barbecue grills and birdseed," said Dave Telesco, who leads the FWC's Bear Management Program. "As bears spend more time in neighborhoods, they begin to lose their natural fear of people, which can lead to dangerous encounters. These videos highlight steps that can be taken to ensure the safety of both bears and humans."

The new videos are being added to the existing "Living with Florida Black Bears" series, which already includes the following videos:

- How to Make Your Wildlife Feeders Bear-Resistant
- How FWC Conducts Bear Population Estimates
- A Day in the Life of a Florida Black Bear
- How to Protect Livestock and Pets from Bears
- Cause for a Call
- BearWise Communities

The FWC plans to release more bear-related videos in the coming months. These videos help educate the public about black bears in a quick and convenient format.

The entire "Living with Florida Black Bears" video series can be viewed at [MyFWC.com/Bear](https://www.myfwc.com/Bear) in the "Brochures & Other Materials" section.

In addition to educational efforts, the FWC is inviting local governments to apply for BearWise [funding](#) for their communities. The FWC will focus on providing financial assistance to local governments with BearWise ordinances in place, which require residents and businesses to keep their garbage secure from bears. A total of \$515,000 will be available to offset the costs for communities to use bear-resistant equipment to secure their garbage and help reduce conflicts with bears.

To learn how to become BearWise, visit [MyFWC.com/Bear](https://www.myfwc.com/Bear) and click on "BearWise Communities" on the left side of the page.