

Black Bear Attacks in the News

Black bears are dangerous. They can and do kill people.

Black bears are curious and adaptable. They quickly become accustomed to human activity, which leads to aggressive food gathering habits. Black bears have also been known to stalk people – following them or circling to approach from ahead. Bears will defend their territory – especially if it is a food source. Finally, females (known as sows) are very aggressive in attacking real or perceived threats to their cubs.

The news articles shown here represent only some of the recent black bear attacks, but they will give you a pretty good representation of what these animals can do.

Bear Mauls and Kills Infant in New York State

Associated Press
August 19, 2002

<http://espn.go.com/outdoors/conservation/news/2002/0819/1420224.html>

A bear killed an infant Monday afternoon as it tried to drag the girl into the woods, officials said. The baby, Ester Schwimmer of Brooklyn, was snatched out of her stroller by the bear at the bungalow colony, police said. Fallsburg is about 70 miles northwest of New York City.

Isaac Abraham, a community leader from Williamsburg in Brooklyn, said witnesses told him the 5-month-old girl was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital upon arrival.

The baby was in a stroller in front of the porch with members of her family, said Mike Fraser, a state Department of Environmental Conservation spokesman. The bear grabbed the stroller and the child, Fraser said.

The child was knocked out of the stroller and the bear tried to drag her into the woods, Fraser said.

Her father was able to get the infant away from the bear, which reportedly ran up a tree. A short time later, DEC officers and police shot the animal.

The black bear was being taken to the DEC's laboratories outside Albany, Fraser said.

Abraham said people at the colony desperately tried to save the girl. "People started chasing the bear, throwing rocks at it," he said.

The attack happened in the heart of what is known as the Borscht Belt, which beckoned to tourists and big name stars in the post-World War II era. Big hotels and bungalows attracted thousands of visitors each summer, many of them Jewish families from New York City. Scattered bungalow colonies still remain.

The Williamsburg community in Brooklyn was in shock Monday, Abraham said.

The baby's grandfather is Mendel Schwimmer, who is active in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community of Kiryas Joel.

"The governor knows the man," said Michael McKeon, Gov. George Pataki's chief spokesman. "At the appropriate moment, the governor will be reaching out to call him to express his condolences."

Ward Stone, the state's chief pathologist, said the bear would be examined. "Obviously, we'll be pursuing a rabies test at the earliest time," he said.

It was the first time in 34 years that Stone could remember a black bear killing a human. Black bears are the only native species in New York.

Stone said one bear from the Catskills tested positive for rabies in the recent past, the only time he has found rabies in that species.

"In all my many years, 34 summers, we've had them eat birdseed, get into trouble eating dog food in people's yards, but black bears are just not noted for attacking humans," Stone said.

Bear Kills 93 Year-Old New Mexico Woman

By Joe Garner
Scripps Howard News Service
August 21, 2001

<http://espn.go.com/outdoors/general/news/2001/0821/1242277.html>

The 100-pound elderly woman didn't have a chance against a 275-pound bear in the kitchen of her home, wildlife officials point to bears desperate for food as the continuing cause of people-bear incidents

A 93-year-old New Mexico woman was mauled to death by a black bear that broke into her home over the weekend, stunned wildlife officials have confirmed.

Adelia Maestas Trujillo of Cleveland, in north-central New Mexico, was killed "by multiple bite injuries," said Scott Wilson, associate director of the Office of Medical Investigator.

"I've never heard of someone being killed in their home by a bear." — Don MacCarter, New Mexico Game and Fish Department

Trujillo, a great-grandmother who lived alone, was found Saturday morning, Aug. 18, on her kitchen floor when her son, Raymond Trujillo, came from his nearby home to check on her, authorities said.

"From our preliminary investigation, she was asleep during the night, when she heard a disturbance and went to investigate," Wilson said. "At that point, the bear pushed out the screen door and came at her through the window in the door. There was little evidence of a struggle."

Wildlife officials said the attack was unusual but shows black bears in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado are desperate for food. Spring frosts and summer drought have killed off choke cherries, service berries and acorns, which make up the animals' summer and fall diet.

"I've been here 18 years, and I've never heard of someone being killed in their home by a bear before now," said Don MacCarter, spokesman for the New Mexico Game and Fish Department. "But just like in Colorado, we're seeing bears in the towns and on the highways."

"Trujillo was an elderly woman who weighed in the vicinity of 100 pounds (and) who didn't have a chance against a 275-pound bear" — John Sanchez, Sheriff

New Mexico wildlife officials had been planning a meeting Thursday to deal with bear-people confrontations even before Trujillo's death. "Her death shows you how desperate the bears have become," MacCarter said.

Mora County Sheriff John Sanchez said Trujillo "was an elderly woman who weighed in the vicinity of 100 pounds (and) who didn't have a chance against a 275-pound bear."

Trackers with dogs found a bear they believe was the attacking animal and killed it Saturday afternoon. The bear was less than a half-mile from Trujillo's rural home, which lies on an acre of land in a community of 500 to 800 residents. The animal's carcass is being tested, Sanchez said.

"You hear lots of different stories that she was cooking, but she wasn't," the sheriff said. "We're still investigating, but the bear might have been hurt and she spooked him."

In Colorado, bears have been seen near malls and schools. As many as 16 sightings were reported in one night this month in Trinidad, Colo., said Todd Malmsbury, spokesman for the state Division of Wildlife.

Bear attacks also have been reported at campgrounds this summer, Malmsbury said, but "We haven't had a person killed in their home by a bear in the last 100 years."

Fatal Bear Attack Shows Need for Vigilance

April 17, 2003

Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association (OFSWA)

http://www.ofswa.on.ca/thelog/july_2003/july_03_page_4.pdf

A fatal encounter between a forestry worker and a black bear in northern Quebec this past spring underlines in the worst possible way the need for workers to be aware of the risk of bear encounters and of how to deal with such encounters.

The incident occurred on April 17, near Waswanipi, a village 154 kilometers west of Chibougamau. A logging foreman with Norbord Industries in Senneterre, QC had gone out alone to survey cut sites for the coming summer. Investigators concluded from tracks in the snow and other evidence that while the foreman was surveying a site, the bear left its den and walked parallel to him for about 50 meters. The bear then moved ahead of him, eventually confronted him and charged. Judging from the pattern of tracks, the worker turned and ran from the bear for about 15 meters before he was struck down and mauled. It's believed that death was instantaneous. The bear then dragged the worker into its den.

The next day, Good Friday, a search and rescue team found the company truck and snowmobile. Following foot tracks in the snow, they found a hardhat and boots on the ground with bear tracks all around them. They followed the trail to the den, where they shot a 400-pound

male bear and recovered the victim's body. Tissue samples from the bear later tested negative for rabies or any other illness.

J.P. Cousineau, Human Resources Health and Safety Superintendent at Norbord's hardwood plywood mill in Cochrane, said the incident had a devastating effect on the victim's co-workers and associates. "The week after, the same operational people went back into the bush and one of the guys, against all odds, tripped over an adult bear that was sleeping. It's pretty touchy in that area and I don't blame anyone for being upset. It was a pretty isolated type of attack, but it did happen. There are more bears in Ontario with the spring hunt being out of the picture. But we can't really help that, other than supplying the necessary information to avoid this kind of interaction."

In addition to offering psychological assistance, Norbord management in Senneterre and La Sarre, QC immediately began developing a procedure for working alone. The procedure includes radio contact with a supervisor at regular intervals, an emergency response plan if radio contact from a worker is one hour late, a mandatory "pen gun" (a small device that shoots a noisy mini-firework) and pepper spray for any worker who works alone, and mandatory written reports within 24 hours of every encounter with potentially dangerous animals.

The April incident was the third black bear-related fatality in Canada in less than a year. Last September, a hunter was attacked and killed by a bear in his campground in the Gaspé region of Quebec. That same month, an Alberta man was mauled to death by a black bear at a remote oil rigging site in northeastern British Columbia.

Experts on black bear behavior advise that under no circumstances should a person turn and run away from a black bear, as this will trigger a bear's hunting/pursuit response and bears can easily outrun humans. They have been recorded running at speeds of 50 km/h [35 mph].

Even in the extremely rare case of an encounter with a predatory bear that has been stalking its intended victim and has begun to press closer and even gives evidence of its intention to charge, the best advice is to be aggressive, throw rocks or sticks and make as much noise as possible.

OFSWA has published an information guide for tree planters, "Dealing with Black Bears". The information in the booklet is useful to anyone who works in the bush. The booklet is available from OFSWA for \$1. The Ontario Ministry of Natural has produced a brochure,

Living with Black Bears in Ontario, that is available free from any MNR office or as a PDF file from:

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/pubmenu.html

Bear Attack Leaves Two Campers Injured - Episode a First at National Park Since Early 1970s

By Tillie Fong
Rocky Mountain News
July 15, 2003

http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/state/article/0,1299,DRMN_21_2109981,00.html

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK - Two men were mauled by a black bear while they were camping near Fern Lake, and one said Monday "it was extreme pain and a whole lot of blood," yet he vowed not to be deterred from future outings.

"I just woke up, and it was a blur in my head, then the blood was going everywhere," said Boulder resident Patrick Finan, 22, of the attack early Sunday. "The bear was standing outside my tent, staring in."

Finan and Tim Schuett, 23, of Glen Ellyn, Ill., were treated and released from a hospital in Estes Park Sunday. Finan had bite marks on his forehead and scalp, and Schuett had a laceration on the top of his head.

"It's rare for bears to attack people (in the park) - the last time was in 1971," said Kyle Patterson, spokeswoman for Rocky Mountain National Park.

"It appears that all the folks did everything they could to store food properly. This bear's behavior is extremely aggressive. Some bears are frightened when they see people, but this particular bear does not seem to be afraid of people. There was no food in the tents. The bear was going for the campers."

An eight-mile area from Bear Lake to Fern Lake, including Odessa Gorge, was closed Sunday to campers and hikers while rangers searched for the bear. If it is found and identified, it will be killed.

Finan said he and four other campers had gone to the campsite on the east side of the park Saturday evening.

His tent was the closest to the bear pole, where they hung their stored food.

His friend, Dan Purdom, 22, of Denver, had the tent 10 yards to the left of his, and Schuett's was 30 yards away. "We cooked dinner that night and hung out," Finan said.

Finan said he didn't recall hearing anything before the bear attacked him through the tent, which had a mesh lining.

"He bit through the lining and down into my head," he said.

After he was attacked, Finan said he started yelling and ran out of his tent, blood streaming from his wound.

"I was getting out of the tent, when the bear got to Tim's tent and swiped at Tim's head (through the mesh lining). Then he just walked away."

Schuett, who was staying with Purdom, did not return calls Monday.

After the bear, which Finan estimated at 250 pounds, left the camp, the group used a cell phone to call rangers.

"We made sure that we were cognizant and had our wits about us," Finan said.

A ranger later accompanied Finan and Schuett as they hiked to a spot where an ambulance was waiting.

The same bear apparently was seen an hour later by campers at an individual campsite, about 200 yards due west of Fern Lake, apparently trying to get into a food-storage container.

An unidentified Colorado man videotaped the bear rummaging for food. "The park is in possession of the videotape," Patterson said.

"This area has seen black bears before," she said. "The whole Fern Lake and Cub Lake area has bear sightings, but not aggressive bears like this."

A bear trap was flown to the Fern Lake area Monday as the search continued.

"We will look for the next 48 to 72 hours and reassess at that point," Patterson said.

In 1971, John Richardson, 31, of Denver was honeymooning on the west side of Rocky Mountain National Park when he was killed by a bear.

As for Finan, he said the experience would not stop him from camping.

"It was definitely shocking. It was something pretty unbelievable in retrospect, but it's not going to stop me," he said.

"Considering the circumstances, I'm feeling pretty good. I'm just thankful that it turned out good, and everyone is alive and well."

Camper Attacked by Bear

By Matthew Baker
The Salt Lake Tribune
July 10, 2003

<http://www.sltrib.com/2003/Jul/07102003/utah/utah.asp>

A black bear attacked a sleeping camper on the Green River early Monday morning, leaving him with bites and puncture wounds on the back of his neck and a laceration across the side of his head.

Nick Greeve, 18, was camping with 14 students and five instructors from the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) at Fret Falls in Desolation Canyon when the bear attacked.

Five of the students were sleeping in a circle with their feet in the middle of the circle when the bear grabbed Greeve by the head and neck and tried to pull him from his sleeping bag.

Greeve's screams woke the other campers, who chased the bear out of the camp.

After the incident, the group rafted 60 miles in near-100 degree temperatures and arrived in Green River Monday night.

Greeve was then driven to Castle View Hospital in Price, where he was treated and released. On Tuesday, Greeve suspected an infection had started to develop in some of his wounds, and was taken to the Ashley Valley Medical Center in Vernal.

He has since been released and returned to his home in Wilsonville, Ore.

Greeve was not immediately available for comment.

Black Bear Attacks Hiker

By Kevin O'Donnell
Environmental News Script
September 10, 2000

<http://www.etsu.edu/writing/enews/bears.htm>

"They might move toward some rabies treatments," said Bruce Palmer, executive director of NOLS, a Wyoming-based nonprofit organization that leads mostly college-age students on wilderness trips around the world.

The group was five days into a 16-day trip when the bear attacked. The rest of the group is still floating down the river.

Although people have seen bears in the area, this is the first time a bear has attacked a person in Desolation Canyon and is the first bear attack in Utah in 11 years.

"There [are] a high number of bears in those mountains," said Derris Jones, southeastern regional manager with the Division of Wildlife Resources. "We've had several years of dry conditions and we are having bears show up in places that they normally wouldn't go. Normally they would be in higher elevations."

Wildlife managers flew into the campsite Tuesday, but were unable to find the bear. The search has since been called off and wildlife managers are advising people not to camp around Fret Falls, suspecting the bear could return.

"We hope it doesn't come back," Jones said. "We hope it got scared as much as the boy who got attacked got scared."

If the bear is found, the Division of Wildlife Resources plans to kill it and test it for rabies and any other disease that may have contributed to its behavior.

Palmer credits NOLS instructors with treating Greeve and getting him to the hospital quickly.

"All of our instructors have a minimum of a wilderness first aid response certification," Palmer said. "They are well trained. They're the people you want to be out there with you."

NOLS guides several trips through Desolation Canyon each year and plans to take another group through the canyon in July.

The last Utah black bear attack was believed to be in June 1992, when a black bear broke through a camper shell window at Strawberry Reservoir and pulled a 9-year-old girl out of her sleeping bag.

The bear dragged the girl about 50 yards to a barbed-wire fence, where the girl's grandfather managed to ward off the attack.

This past May, a hiker in the Great Smoky Mountains National park -- along Little river trail, near Elkmont campground -- was apparently attacked and killed by a 111-pound female black bear and her 40 pound yearling.

The tragic incident was widely reported in the news media, along with the disturbing detail that the bears had, indeed, eaten parts of the hiker's body.

But it's important to keep this incident in perspective. Black bear attacks on humans -- especially fatal attacks -- are extremely rare. This incident was the first deadly black bear attack in the sixty-six-year history of the park. It was the first EVER in the southeastern United States. And, in all of North America, only 43 black bear mauling deaths have ever been recorded.

Nonetheless, black bear populations appear to be on the rise in the southeast. About 1800 black bears live in the Smokies alone. So it can't hurt to think ahead about what you should do, in the highly unlikely event that you find yourself in a tight spot with a black bear.

Stephen Herrero, in his book, *Bear Attacks: Their Causes and Avoidance*, says that the best thing to do if you find yourself facing a black bear is to make noise, while slowly backing away.

Do NOT run, because running could provoke a charge. Also, do not block the bear's escape route. And NEVER place yourself between a sow and a cub.

If a black bear DOES start to approach you, stand your ground, make noise, and wave your hands to make yourself appear as big as possible.

In the extremely rare case where a black bear actually charges, the best thing to do, according to Herrero, is to fight for your life. Use all your resources -- fists, feet, sticks, whatever you have, to fight the critter off.

That's how you deal with a BLACK bear, according to the experts.

However, do not confuse that with how you handle a Grizzly Bear. There are no Grizzlies in the east, of

course. And the Grizzlies in the American Rocky Mountains were largely wiped out by the early 20th century. But Grizzly populations out west have rebounded somewhat in the past few decades. And Grizzly fatalities, though very rare, do occur. According to Herrero, Grizzlies killed an average of two people per year in North America during the 1990's.

A U.S. Forest Service pamphlet entitled "Living with Grizzlies" says that if you encounter a grizzly, you should "stay calm, drop something like your hat or gloves on the ground in front of you and slowly back away, speaking in a soft monotone."

If the Grizzly charges you, stand still, because it may turn out to be a "bluff charge." If the grizzly keeps charging, roll up in a cannonball and play dead.

Whatever you do, don't even THINK about yelling at a Grizzly, much less fighting one. Unlike the black bear, the grizzly is just too massive and ferocious to mess with. Oh, and make sure not to look the grizzly in the eye, because that will only make the bear mad. And you do not want to do that.

Camper Leaps off Cliff to Escape Bear Attack

By Bruce Hickey
The Toronto Star
June 29, 2002

A Toronto woman slipped free from a black bear's grasp, ran for her life and made good her escape by leaping off a rock into a lake at Algonquin Park.

"I just kept running to the edge of a cliff and jumped into the water," 25-year-old Sylvie Haert, a High Park area resident, said yesterday. "The bear followed me on to the cliff. I swam just a little further away and saw the bear looking at me."

Algonquin Park authorities said yesterday they had hunted down and killed the 68-kilogram black bear.

Haert and her boyfriend, Simon Guerette, 24, were camping on an island at Big Trout Lake. "We were about to leave in the morning," said Haert, whose injuries were minor but include a scraped back. "My boyfriend realized there was a bear coming down to our campsite. We backed up very slowly."

"The bear just kept walking past our food bag. I am not sure if I made a false movement, or got very scared, but I turned around and started running and the bear was running after me."

The quick-moving bear caught Haert and pushed her to the ground.

"That's when he put his claws into my back. At this point I did not feel any pain. I was too stressed, but I was sure that was it for me. Game over," she said.

"It all happened so fast. The only thing I remember is seeing the bear running after me and feeling the presence of the bear on top of me. I remember feeling his weight and hearing the sound of my boyfriend's voice and that was really great."

Guerette screamed at the bear to let his friend go.

The noise startled and distracted the animal, allowing her to get away and jump to safety.

As Guerette hid behind a tree, the bear strolled over to the couple's garbage bag picked it up with its teeth and returned to the bush - but not for long.

"We put all our stuff in the canoe and the bear came back to the shoreline, maybe to say goodbye," Haert said.

After a half-day paddle and portage, they reached The Portage Store on Canoe Lake, where they were met by general manager Erik Sultmanis.

"They were happy the situation had resolved itself. They were in a positive frame of mind and calm," said Sultmanis, who contacted park authorities.

Park Superintendent John Winters said the woman suffered two claw punctures on her lower back that did not require her to be hospitalized.

"This is not a scarring injury, but it is what we consider a very dangerous bear encounter," he said. "We have had some other reported contact with a bear in the area. It could be the same bear."

Chief Park Naturalist Rick Stronks said that a young adult bear, about 68 kilograms, was trapped on Friday morning in a snare set near the couple's campground. The bear was then shot.

Stronks said usually when attacks occur in the park, the bears are at least 189 Kilos.

In this instance, park officials said the young bear was likely on an “exploratory” mission, possibly sizing up the two campers as its next meal.

Normally black bears will avoid humans.

Winters said there was likely only one bear inhabiting the island.

“A 20-hectare island would only have one adult (bear) on it at one time. There is not enough food to sustain more than one. Bears are territorial,” he said

Campsites on Big Trout Lake were closed for the week, but reopened Friday.

As a precaution, the island campsites will remain closed for the Canada Day long weekend, Stronks said.

“It is extremely rare that something like this happens, but it happens,” said Stronks.

“It is important for people who go into the back country to know the bear rules.”

The Key guideline is maintaining a clean campsite. Food should be suspended at least 3 metres off the ground on a rope strung between two trees. Stronks said bears should never be fed and in the rare instance that an encounter becomes dangerous, campers must be aggressive.

“Stay together, yell and scream. Throw things if you have to and never turn your back and run. Back away but never run,” he said.

“Our assessment on this is that (the bear) was testing this girl and under different circumstances she could have been mauled or seriously injured,” said Winters.

These articles are not secrets. Feel free to use the web links to see for yourself. Additional articles on bear attacks may be found on any major search engine – keywords “bear attacks.”

Bear Attacks, Bites Two Hunters; State to Track, Destroy Animal

By Gary Gerhardt, News Staff Writer
Rocky Mountain News
September 14, 2000

A large black bear bit two Missouri archers Wednesday while the men hunted on the eastern slope of Grand Mesa, the state Division of Wildlife reported.

“We aren't releasing their names yet, but believe they went to a hospital in Glenwood Springs, where they should be treated and released,” wildlife division spokesman Todd Malmsbury said.

He said the pair, a father, 46, and his son 25, were hunting with a third man from Arkansas.

“The bear came out of the bushes and attacked the younger man, biting him on one buttock,” Malmsbury said. “His father was carrying a 44-caliber handgun, but apparently became so unnerved by the attack he ended up throwing the weapon at the bear.”

The man's toss succeeded in getting the bear to break off attacking his son, but the animal turned on the father, biting him on the thigh.

The third man grabbed the handgun and fired a few shots, although it isn't known if he hit the animal, Malmsbury said.

Malmsbury said wildlife agents would track the bear with dogs and destroy it.

“We have a strict policy: If anyone is injured by a bear, it must be destroyed and checked for diseases,” Malmsbury said.

Manitoulin Senior Fends Off Bear Attack

By Margo Little
The Sudbury Star
September 26, 2003

Posted by Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters:

<http://www.ofah.org/news.cfm?Section=Media%20Watch&Action=GetDoc&ID=477>

A marauding black bear met its match Wednesday night during an encounter with a Manitoulin grandmother who was ready for a fight. The animal was driven off an Ice Lake farm by the protective pet owner wielding a garden hoe.

The incident happened just after 10 p.m., said Const. Al Boyd, Little Current OPP community services officer.

Margaret Montgomery, 81, the owner of a farm on Highway 540 near Gore Bay, had released her dog for a run just before bedtime.

The dog surprised a bear eating apples from a nearby tree. The bear chased the dog back into the garage, where Montgomery was waiting.

She attempted to protect her pet by holding on to the bear and punching it.

Eventually, the animal was scared off, but the woman suffered injuries in the struggle.

By the time Ministry of Natural Resources officers responded, the victim had been taken by ambulance to Mindemoya Hospital.

Montgomery is recovering from claw marks to the face and chest, as well as a puncture wound in her thigh.

MNR spokeswoman Carol Trepanier said Montgomery had the presence of mind to hit the bear with a garden hoe in the garage.

“She is a very resourceful woman,” Trepanier said. “She displayed a lot of courage, given the situation.”

Manitoulin Island conservation officers Dave Scarlett and John Diebolt, accompanied by a canine team, spent Thursday combing the area around the Ice Lake property. Michel Chaumont, MNR acting enforcement supervisor,

and the acting district manager, Ernie Heerschap, were also on the scene.

Officers were going door-to-door to gather information on local bear activity from neighbours, said Trepanier.

“We want to see how the bear was behaving,” she said. “The MNR needs to know if the bear was predatory or if it was just feeling trapped in a bad situation.”

Conservation officers are also handing out literature on bear safety tips.

An inspection of the apple trees reveals “a fair bit of bear activity,” Trepanier said. “The bears do quite a bit of damage to the trees. They like to show other bears that this food source is spoken for.”

The only effective deterrent to keep bears away from orchards is electrical fencing, she said. Neighbouring Ice Lake resident Calvin Nelson said orchards are frequent targets.

“I had an apple tree torn up a week ago,” he said. “The bark was torn off and the bear left fibers like frayed rope behind. It did quite a job on the tree. I expect it was just marking its territory.”

A mother bear and cubs have been spotted in the bush area to the south of his residence on Highway 540, he said.

Two bear traps have been set up at the Montgomery property with a third trap expected to be added.

“It had to count” Bowhunter Saves Son

Nolan Koller had one opportunity to take down the charging black bear that had just mauled his son, Jason — and he pulled it off

By Lynn Burkhead, Associate Editor
ESPNOuthdoors.com
September 29, 2002

<http://espn.go.com/outdoors/hunting/news/2002/0930/1439178.html>

POCATELLO, Idaho — Many bowhunters know what it's like to be at full draw, aiming at a big-game animal with butterflies dancing in their stomachs. That's called buck fever.

Often a black bear can prove to be more dangerous than its more-notorious brethren the grizzly.

But few, if any archers have ever faced the intense pressure Nolan Koller did recently when he made a life-or-death shot with his bow and arrow.

Early on Saturday, Sept. 28, Koller shot and killed a charging black bear sow that had just mauled his 29-year-old son Jason.

The sudden attack happened as the Soda Springs, Idaho, pair bowhunted for elk in southeastern Idaho's Caribou National Forest, located not far from the Wyoming border and the Teton Mountains.

As the younger Koller sat quietly hoping for an elk to wander by in bow range, he suddenly spotted danger approaching.

"I saw the cubs first and they came into the open where I was sitting," Jason recalled from his hospital bed Wednesday morning, Oct. 2.

"Then the mother came into the open. I let my father know on the radio what was happening. He was about 100 yards away."

"I can tell you that it was totally different than buck fever. I knew that I only had one chance. It was pretty much instinctive." — Nolan Koller, on the bow shot that took down the bear that attacked his son

The situation deteriorated very quickly from that point on.

"The sow was walking right to me," the younger Koller said. "When she got about five feet away from me, I stood up to draw my bow and try to defend myself. But she knocked the bow out of my hands and jumped on me."

When Nolan arrived on the scene, he found the 200 pound bruin mauling his son. As the father yelled at the bear, the sow broke off her attack on the son and began moving quickly in Nolan's direction.

"I can tell you that it was totally different than buck fever," said the elder Koller, 50. "I knew that I only had one chance. It was pretty much instinctive."

As the attacking bear closed the gap, Nolan came to full draw with his bow. At a distance of only 10 feet, he cut the shot.

"I took just a split second trying to place the shot, because she was coming right at me," said the experienced hunter, who began bowhunting in 1967.

"I was trying to decide where to place the arrow. I was actually aiming for the shoulder and chest cavity. It happened very fast. I was just aiming to disable it."

Fortunately, the shot put the attacking bear down for the count.

"The bear fell immediately because the arrow hit the spinal cord," Nolan said. "At that point, I was just thinking to get to my son and see what his injuries were and to help him."

Upon arriving at Jason's side, Koller discovered his son had multiple bite wounds to his legs and upper torso. He quickly radioed two nearby hunting companions for help.

The pair of hunting friends found two other hunters from Washington a short while later. They summoned rescue personnel.

By mid-afternoon Saturday, Jason had been air-lifted to Bannock Regional Medical Center in Pocatello, where he later underwent surgery for his wounds and is expected to make a full recovery.

"It took them five hours to get him from the time the mauling happened until emergency help arrived," said Larry Hlavaty, a senior conservation officer with the Idaho Fish and Game Department. "One thing in their favor was their walkie-talkies, so they had communication. They also had GPS units, so the Life Flight helicopter could get to them."

While Hlavaty notes that black bears rarely attack humans — this is the first such attack he has investigated in his 25-year career — he said that when they do attack, a black bear can prove to be more dangerous than a grizzly bear.

"A black bear just keeps on attacking once they start." — Larry Hlavaty, Idaho state conservation officer

The wildlife officer attributes that to the fact that the claws on a black bear are smaller, sharper and more curved than those found on their grizzly cousins.

There are other reasons that black bears can prove deadly in an attack situation.

“A black bear, Number 1, can pursue you up a tree,” Hlavaty explained. “A person could normally get away from a grizzly by going up a tree. But a black bear can go up a tree after you.”

“In some grizzly attacks, the victim has played dead, and, sometimes, the grizzly will make a couple of swats and leave them alone,” he added. “That’s happened.”

“But a black bear just keeps on attacking once they start.”

After investigating the bear attack, Hlavaty credits Nolan with saving his son's life.

“It's not a long shot, by any means,” Hlavaty said. “You look at it and say that’s a reasonable situation. Until you put a moving bear into that situation that is yelling and screaming, you're yelling and screaming, and the bear is mauling your son. And it had to count, or he (Nolan) would have been in trouble, too.

“He’s a very good archer and he’s pretty cool-headed, considering the situation.”

Nolan Koller's mother agreed.

“My son is a real good hunter. How he ever did that without the bear attacking him, I'll never know,” said Dorothy Koller of Lava Hot Springs, Idaho.

But Koller is quick to deflect any attempts at painting his shot as heroic. After all, he did what any other father would have done.

Instead, he praises the assistance that he and his son received from others in the Idaho backcountry.

“For then on (after the shot), there were a lot of other people who were the real heroes,” Nolan said. “From the first-aid EMT’s to the other hunters who came to our assistance, everybody who was there was a hero.”

A fund is in the process of being set up to help defray the family's medical expenses. For information, contact Nolan Koller at (208) 547-3445.

Black Bear Kills Teen Near Yellowknife

CBC News
June 3, 2001

[http://cbc.ca/cgi-bin/templates/view.cgi?
category=Canada&story=/news/2001/06/03/bear_attack010603](http://cbc.ca/cgi-bin/templates/view.cgi?category=Canada&story=/news/2001/06/03/bear_attack010603)

YELLOWKNIFE - A weekend camping trip in the Northwest Territories turned to tragedy Saturday when an 18-year-old man was mauled to death by a black bear.

Kyle Harry of Yellowknife was camping with a 14-year-old female friend about 25 kilometers east of the city when the bear approached them, the RCMP said.

The bear caught Harry and mauled him to death.

But the girl was able to escape through dense bush and find a nearby highway, where she was picked up by passing motorists.

She was treated in Yellowknife for injuries she received while running from the bear.

Emergency response teams were sent to the area and found Harry's body about 200 meters from the campsite.

While the teams tried to recover the body, a black bear appeared and was shot and wounded. It's not known whether it was same bear responsible for Harry's death.

Man Injured in Black Bear Attack

**Wildlife Worker was
Studying Woodcocks near Milaca**

By Kavita Kumar
Minneapolis Star Tribune
September 16, 2002

Miles Becker was tracking woodcocks he and colleagues had tagged when a black bear attacked him Sunday in a central Minnesota wildlife management area.

Becker, 24, was listed in fair condition Sunday night at St. Cloud Hospital after surgery. He suffered broken facial bones, puncture wounds to his head and left leg, and a broken fibula. The only other bear attack recorded in Minnesota occurred in 1987, when a female bear

attacked campers in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, said Dave Garshelis, a bear biologist with the state Department of Natural Resources. Wildlife officials have set a trap for the bear.

Becker was working on a study in the Four Brooks Wildlife Management Area 10 miles north of Milaca when he was attacked at 12:45 p.m.

He is part of a team of about six people who have been studying woodcocks.

The three-state study is funded by the DNR, U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said Steve Wilds, regional migratory bird chief for the wildlife service.

The researchers, who are studying the effects of hunting on the woodcock population, have been attaching radio transmitters to the birds to track them, Wilds said.

Dick Tuszynski, manager of the Mille Lacs Wildlife Management Area and the nearby Four Brooks area, learned that Becker had radioed his partner to say that he had been attacked by a bear.

His partner was able to locate him in rough terrain from Becker's directions and by using the bird radio transmitters, he said.

The partner enlisted the help of some dog trainers competing nearby. They took an A TV part of the way to Becker and walked the rest, and carried him out of the woods to an ambulance, Tuszynski said.

He said he didn't know why the bear attacked Becker, hypothesizing that he might have been wearing earphones to listen to the transmitters and might not have heard potential warning signs such as growls.

I've bumped into bears when I was out jogging early in the morning or when hunting, but bears are almost always wary and will leave," he said. "It's usually them that run away. That's why we're not sure why the bear attacked Miles."

Tuszynski said he plans to go to the scene of the attack today to search for clues. He said he will look for bear hairs to get a DNA sample that could be used to identify it.

Garshelis said one of the most common reasons for a black bear to attack is if a person stumbles upon it when it is sleeping. In rare cases, a bear actually tries to kill

people for food, which seems to have been the case in the Boundary Waters attacks, he said.

Right now, chokecherries, hazelnuts and other bear foods are abundant -so much so that hunters have been having trouble luring bears with bait in what has been a slow hunting season, he said.

Garshelis said people should not be overly concerned about being attacked by a bear in Minnesota.

"People should always be wary of bears because they are large carnivores and potentially dangerous," he said. "But the rarity [of an attack in Minnesota] is documented by the fact that the last time there was an attack was 15 years ago."

If you do encounter a bear, Garshelis said to back away slowly. If it charges, throw something at it.

There are an estimated 30,000 black bears in Minnesota.

Predatory Black Bear Attack

By Jim Lockwood
Newark Star Ledger
August 12, 2003

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?/base/news-3/105539953559010.xml>

She was a 5-foot-3, 105-pound hiker, out for a Sunday walk. He was a 400-pound hulking young bruin officials described as "predatory," looking for a meal.

She said he came up behind her on a trail in Wawayanda State Park in Sussex County, chased her down and tackled her.

She said she did the only thing she could. She threw a hard elbow at his snout, and caught him flush, stunning the bear and giving her time to escape.

"This bear was in predatory mode," said Jack Kaskey, a state Department of Environmental Protection spokesman. "This was classic predatory behavior. The bear was out to eat her. She had to fight for her life."

The 18-year-old woman, whom wildlife officials refused to identify, escaped with only a set of 4-inch welts on her midsection after the encounter, which wildlife experts say is rare.

“Predatory black bear attacks are extremely rare, and I've never heard of one quite like this, in which someone punches or elbows the bear and is able to get up and run,” said Lynn Rogers, a renowned bear behavior expert with the North American Bear Center of Wildlife Research Institute in Minnesota. “It's baffling that, if it was a predatory attack, anyone could escape a bear so easily and without injury.”

The attack occurred Sunday at 12:30 p.m. The victim, who lives near the park, was hiking there on Wingdam Trail. She was alone when the attack occurred and no one saw the incident, officials said.

The young woman saw the bear standing on a bridge, which she had just crossed, officials said. As it stood about 30 yards behind her, she started backing slowly away when she saw the bear and tried to run when it charged her, Kaskey said.

The bruin, a 2 or 3 year old male, tackled her from behind, Kaskey said.

The woman told officials she managed to pop the bear in the snout with her elbow, startling it enough so that she was able to get up, run about 40 yards and hide behind a tree. She then told officials that she watched as the bruin stood on its hind legs and sniffed the air.

The bear came close by, but didn't find her and eventually wandered off. The woman then ran to her home in Highland Lakes, which is about three-quarters of a mile from where she told officials the attack took place. She lives with her parents, and her father called authorities.

Authorities have now closed the trail where the incident occurred and have set a trap for the bear, Kaskey said. The rest of the park remains open.

It was the latest high-profile bear incident in recent months, coming amid debate over the state's first bear hunt in 33 years, scheduled for December. It also was the second report of an unprovoked bear attack on a human this year; the other occurred on May 20, when a bear swatted at a toddler outside his home in Sparta.

Staff writers Kristen Alloway and Brian Murray contributed to this report.

The previous news item is also available from the Daily Record News website, titled:

Woman Fights Off Bear Attack

By Rob Jennings
August 12, 2003

<http://www.dailyrecord.com/news/articles/news3-Bearattack.htm>

Canadian Biathlete Killed in Apparent Bear Attack

WebPosted
July 4, 2000

CBC SPORTS ONLINE - A national biathlon team member died while training Sunday, apparently the victim of a bear attack.

Canadian biathlete Mary-Beth Miller is dead after an apparent black bear attack while training near Val Cartier.

Members of the team identified the athlete as 24-year-old Mary-Beth Miller of Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Police were alerted after she failed to return from training near a military base in Val Cartier, northwest of Quebec City.

“She was full of vitality,” said her mother, Mary Carol Miller from Yellowknife. “She was the biggest encourager. There are going to be people all over this country who have bumped into her at races and different things, who she's encouraged.”

“She was the most precious thing in our lives and we're having a heck of a time here,” she continued. “She taught us all to live each day, each moment.”

The biathlete had arrived in Quebec last week for a summer of training at the Miriam Bedard Centre.

“At first sight, it seems she was attacked by a bear,” Capt. Johanne Bournival of CFB Valcartier said.

Authorities say there were bear bite marks on her neck and bear tracks were spotted near Miller's body.

An autopsy was to be performed Monday.

“The autopsy will confirm whether the bear was the exact cause of death or whether she had a heart attack or

something before and the animal found her injured,” said Sarah Coup-Fabiano of the Haute-St-Charles police department.

“It’s just a hypothesis, but it’s our belief that the bear was responsible.”

She added that two cyclists were attacked by a black bear on the same path only two weeks ago.

Wildlife officials have placed traps around the area in an effort to catch the bear.

The area includes 115 kilometers of running and cycling trails.

“Yes, it’s dangerous,” Bedard said. “But, on the other hand, it’s the beauty of the sport to be in the forest.”

Miller, who started her run at 9 a.m., was reported missing by her trainer at 11.

The previous news item is also available from the ABC News website, titled:

Canadian Athlete Killed in Apparent Mauling

ABC News and Associated Press

[href="http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/
DailyNews/bearattack000704.html](http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/bearattack000704.html)

Bear Swats Sparta Toddler

By Rob Jennings
Daily Record
May 21, 2003

<http://www.dailyrecord.com/news/articles/news1-BEAR.htm>

SPARTA - A black bear swatted a 2-year-old boy outside his family’s home Tuesday afternoon, police said.

Mark Tregidgo suffered a bump to the head but was otherwise uninjured in the 1:19 p.m. incident, Police Sgt. Russell Smith said.

The 150-pound, 4-year-old female bruin was shot and killed by police shortly afterward, Smith said. The

frightening incident, although extremely rare, is expected to strengthen calls for a statewide bear hunt.

The bear batted at the boy with the pad of her paw, and not the claws, state Division of Environmental Protection spokesman Jack Kaskey said.

Tregidgo’s mother, Amy, watched in horror from inside her Deer Field Road house as the bear approached her young son on the porch steps. She raced outside, picked up her wounded son and called 911.

But Tregidgo, an animal lover with five cats and a dog, had sympathetic words for the dead bear.

“It did not strike my son as an attack strike,” Tregidgo said. “It was more like, ‘What are you - are you a toy?’”

Because the bear struck a person, it was immediately dubbed a Category 1 bear. Under DEP guidelines, Category 1 bears do not get any second chances.

Amy Tregidgo said that after swatting her son, the bear went into a neighbor’s yard and relieved itself before returning to their property. Police Sgt. Joe Schetting, who is trained to handle aggressive bears, then fired up to three gunshots into the bear.

Tregidgo said she pleaded for the bear’s life, to no avail.

“I’m upset about it. I’m devastated,” Tregidgo said.

“It didn’t harm my son,” she said of the dead bear. “It was just curious.”

She said she appreciated the quick police response. “I just wish it could’ve gone a different way,” she said.

Kaskey said the bear had previously been tagged by wildlife workers, but was not viewed as potentially dangerous until Tuesday’s incident.

“There was no prior history,” Kaskey said.

On Thursday, the state Fish and Game Council will hold a public hearing in Trenton on proposed amendments to the state gaming code, council member Jack Schrier of Mendham Township said. One of the amendments would permit New Jersey’s first black bear hunt since 1970.

“Talk about good timing,” said Schrier, who cast the only dissenting vote in March when the council first proposed a six-day hunt in December. A final vote is expected next month, Schrier added.

Council member Richard Culp of Jefferson said Tuesday's incident made him more committed than ever to a hunt.

"Somebody is going to get killed someday, or badly mauled, and I don't want to see it," Culp said.

In the past three decades, New Jersey's bear population has skyrocketed from approximately 100 to about 2,000 bruins, though the actual number is widely disputed. Schrier said a hunt could result in the deaths of 500 or more bears.

There has never been a fatal attack by a black bear in New Jersey, supporters of a hunt fear that one is inevitable. A 5-month-old infant was killed in upstate New York last year.

"They're going to put this together with the New York incident and say it's only a matter of time. That's the mantra," said Schrier, who argued that a hunt would do little, if anything, to protect public safety.

"You're going to go into the woods and come across the most benign black bear, and he's going to be killed," he said.

As alternatives, Schrier supports additional emphasis on "bear-proofing" private property, along with "adverse conditioning" of nuisance bears and continuing DEP's policy of killing dangerous bruins.

Reflecting on her family's scare by telephone Tuesday evening, Amy Tregidgo said that she and her son had been watching "Tom and Jerry" cartoons earlier in the day.

"I decided to go to the ladies' room. From the time I went to the bathroom, to the time I came out, (Mark) had opened the screen porch door and sat down on the stairs," Tregidgo said.

"I looked outside, and there's Mark, and there was the bear," she said.

Rescue workers treated her son, but she declined a hospital visit.

"It's a lump. It was a pressure shot, like if somebody was to hit their head on a rock," Tregidgo said.

"There's no cuts. No bleeding. He just got a nice wallop."

Mark Tregidgo was frightened for some time after the incident, but had calmed down by the evening.

"He was terrified," his mother said. "He kept smacking his head, going, 'bear bear bear.'"

She and her husband, Django, also have an 11-year-old daughter, Crystal.

Bears are an increasingly common sight, particularly in northwest New Jersey. Statewide, Fish and Wildlife received 1,412 damage complaints concerning black bears last year, up from 1,096 in 2001.

"There's a 700-pound bear that roams around here and nobody can seem to catch it," Tregidgo said.

Special note - This little baby paid the price for his mother's foolish ideas about wild animals. In the next article, we learn that:

"The mother of the Sparta boy admitted to feeding bears a year ago, but said she stopped even before a law forbidding such feeding took effect. Feeding black bears is dangerous because it leads them to associate people with food and to become more aggressive."

Bear Mauls W. Milford Man

By Rob Jennings
Daily Record
May 24, 2003

<http://www.dailyrecord.com/news/articles/news2-Bearattack.htm>

A West Milford man was mauled by a 150-pound female bear in his backyard Friday as he attempted to rescue the family dog, in one of the most harrowing encounters yet between a person and bear in New Jersey.

Rob Skrypek, 35, of 21 Alvin Road, bled profusely after suffering "significant puncture wounds" in the hand, shoulder and head during the 2 p.m. attack, state Department of Environmental Commissioner Bradley Campbell said.

He was unarmed as he confronted the bear, which scaled a 4-foot-high cyclone fence, apparently attracted by garbage on the property. The bruin's yearling cub was also in the yard, but did not attack Skrypek or his dog, Campbell said.

Skrypek was taken to Morristown Memorial Hospital, where he was listed in good condition Friday evening. His dog was clinging to life, Campbell said.

“The damage the bear caused here might have been limited to injuries to the family dog, but for the efforts of the homeowner to save the dog,” Campbell said. “It’s ill-advised to think you can take on a wild animal of this size or this aggressiveness.”

By nightfall, a team of police officers, hunters and state wildlife officers had not located the bruin. The search was to resume this morning, West Milford Police Chief James Dykstra said.

“We have never had an incident in West Milford where a bear has attacked a human being,” Dykstra said, adding that in this case, “the human being went after the bear.”

“My concern is that people not panic, because this bear clearly did not attack a human being unprovoked,” the police chief said.

While the bear would be killed if located, the yearling would likely be spared because it did not behave aggressively, Campbell said.

The incident was the second in three days involving conflict between bears and people in northwestern New Jersey.

In Sparta on Tuesday, a 2-year-old boy sitting on his family’s porch steps was swatted at by a bear, which used the soft pad of its paw without the claws extended. The boy, Mark Tregidgo, suffered only a bump on the head. The bear was killed by police.

Close encounters with bears have escalated in recent years as the bear population has grown and more people have moved into bear habitat. New Jersey’s bear population has grown from 100 to about 2,000 in three decades.

Campbell said that the West Milford attack “is consistent with a pattern of livestock and pet killings by aggressive bears.”

On Thursday, the state Fish and Game Council held a public hearing in Trenton on the proposed 2003-04 game code, which would grant permission for New Jersey’s first bear hunt since 1970.

While there has never been a fatal attack by a black bear in New Jersey, supporters of a hunt fear that one is

inevitable. Last year, a 5-month-old infant was killed in upstate New York.

Campbell said that Friday’s incident “reinforces the soundness of the decision to authorize a limited hunt” in December, a move that Fish and Game is expected to formalize in the next few weeks.

Council member Jack Schrier of Mendham Township, the only one of 11 members to oppose a hunt, said that a majority of speakers at Thursday’s public hearing disagreed with his viewpoint.

Asked if Friday’s incident in West Milford would make a bear hunt more likely, Schrier said that “the bear hunt is a cinch anyway ... the issue is now sealed.”

The bear hunt would take place from December 8 to December 13 and be restricted to areas north of Route 78 and west of Route 287, where black bears breed most heavily. That would include Morris and Sussex counties.

Skrypek’s house is part of High View Estates, a residential development located near heavily forested areas, Dykstra said.

Skrypek was inside when he heard his dog barking, Dykstra said.

“Who attacked who? Did the bear attack the dog? The bear could have been attacked (first). The cub may have been in danger,” the West Milford police chief said.

Skrypek battled the bear with nothing but his hands, Campbell said.

“The dog is quite seriously injured,” the DEP commissioner said.

Noting that the bear was apparently drawn by garbage on the porch, Campbell said that “with or without a hunt,” people need to do more to avoid encouraging bears.

The mother of the Sparta boy admitted to feeding bears a year ago, but said she stopped even before a law forbidding such feeding took effect. Feeding black bears is dangerous because it leads them to associate people with food and to become more aggressive.

A state law banning the intentional feeding of black bears took effect in November. Campbell said the statute also covers a failure to secure food and garbage, though unintentional feeding - such as leaving out bait for deer - is exempted. Violators face a fine of up to \$1,000.

“If garbage is poorly managed, it effectively is feeding the bear,” Campbell said.

“We are currently looking at what might have occasioned this bear to be attracted to his household,” Campbell added. “Even one person in a community feeding a bear, or failing to control a garbage area, creates a risk for an entire community.”

Woman Fends Off Bear Attack in Her Own Garage

By Clint Austin
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Knight Ridder Newspapers
September 24, 2003

Photo (not shown here) Caption: Kim Heil-Smith of Devil Track Lake, Minn., stands in the entryway of her home where she was mauled by a black bear. [Note - photo very graphic deep scar wounds across her chest/breast!]

DULUTH, Minn. -- Kim Heil-Smith walked into her garage outside Grand Marais, Minn., one night last week expecting to pull something out of her car.

Instead, she ended up wrestling a large black bear.

Heil-Smith, who was talking on a cordless phone at the time, opened the door from her home's entryway into the attached garage about 9:30 p.m. and found herself face-to-face with a sow and her cub.

“I opened the door and she was right there, between the car and the side of the house. She didn't have anywhere to go, so she came at me,” said Heil-Smith, who lives on Devil Track Lake Road north of town.

“I tried to shut the door on her, but she was too strong. She wrapped her arms around me and I fell back.”

The big bear bit her head, shoulder and both thighs.

Heil-Smith suffered multiple puncture wounds and scratches that required many stitches at Cook County North Shore Hospital, said John Shenett, Cook County Sheriff's Department deputy.

Heil-Smith, 37, who was home alone at the time of the attack, was amazingly calm and upbeat when describing the ordeal.

“I was pretty scared at first, I wasn't thinking. Then I just got mad at this bear being in my house. I finally was able to get my knee up so she couldn't bite me, and then I grabbed her nose and yelled, ‘Get out of my house!’” she said. “I think that must have startled her because that's when she left.”

She's also amazingly forgiving toward the bear.

“I don't blame her, really; she was just protecting her baby. I don't think she did it maliciously,” Heil-Smith said.

Heil-Smith had been on the phone at the time with her friend, Debby Nelson. The phone was knocked out of her hand during the attack. But instead of yelling for help, Heil-Smith was yelling, “It's only a bear” to avoid scaring her friend.

“I didn't want her to think it was a man with a gun or anything,” Heil-Smith joked.

“She's pretty tough,” Scott Smith said of his wife. “It was one mother against another. I wasn't here when it happened, but I could see the results when I got home.”

After the bear left with its cub, Heil-Smith found the phone and dialed 911. When paramedics arrived, they found her cleaning blood off the floor.

“I didn't want my daughter to come home from volleyball and see all that blood,” she said. “So they helped me clean it up as they were fixing me up.”

A life-long resident of the Grand Marais, Minn., area, Heil-Smith said she's not really afraid of the many bears in the area. But she may check her garage closer next time she heads out.

“I usually close the garage door to keep them out of the garbage and the sunflower seeds. But I was going out again that night and I didn't close it this time,” she said. “The bear was just helping her cub find food and I got in her way.”

Dave Ingebrigtsen, assistant Department of Natural Resources wildlife manager in Grand Marais, said this attack sounds “more like a cornered animal than a problem bear.”

There have been very few nuisance calls in the area and no reports of troublemaking bears.

“It doesn't sound to me like an animal we'd have to track down,” he said.

Dave Garshelis, a DNR bear expert, agrees.

“Generally with black bears, there’s no indication that females with cubs are more dangerous than a single bear. That comes from grizzly bears,” Garshelis said. “Black bears generally aren’t aggressive. But when any animal feels cornered, they’ll sometimes act. Not very often, but it can happen.”

The most recent attack in Minnesota occurred last year when an upland bird researcher was attacked in the Mille Lacs Wildlife Area. Wildlife experts believe that animal was unusually aggressive and the DNR tried, but failed, to track it down and destroy it.

Garshelis said black bears will almost always avoid confrontations with people. If they attack, Garshelis said, general wisdom suggests fighting back against black bears to ward them off. That’s contrary to advice for grizzly bears, for which experts suggest playing dead.

Minnesota has more than 20,000 black bears.

Bear Invades Home - Ordeal for Terrified Mom & Her 2 Children

Vernon (New Jersey) Web News
June 12, 2003

<http://www.vernonweb.com/vwnews.htm>

Yesterday morning a black bear bashed through the screen door of a Highland Lakes residence and feasted in the kitchen while a mother and her two children, ages 2 and 7, barricaded themselves in a bedroom.

Lisa Spirko and her children finally got out the bedroom window to safety when police and a biologist from Fish&Wildlife, responding to the frantic call made at 8:30 a.m., arrived at the home on Agawa Road.

Police speculated that the bear, which was shot dead after fleeing the premises via another window, had been in the house for about half an hour. Two of the bear’s yearlings were in the vicinity but did not enter the house and eventually went away.

New Jersey’s bear population is estimated at between 1350 and 3300, and reported incidents of aggressive behavior continue to mount statewide. A six-day hunt, to

be conducted in December, has been proposed by the state.

This previous news item is also available from the Newark Star Ledger website, titled:

A Hungry Black Bear Barges Into Kitchen

By Patty Paugh, Tanya Drobness
& Star Ledger Staff
June 12, 2003

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?base/news-3/105539953559010.xml>

Bear Attack First In California Since 2001

August 18, 2003 (Associated Press) — A bear was killed after it knocked down a hiker in the Angeles National Forest, marking the first such attack in California since 2001, Department of Fish and Game officials said Monday.

The black bear was killed July 31 at Little Jimmy Campground, where the attack occurred several weeks earlier, department spokeswoman Lorna Bernard said.

In the July 3 attack, the bear knocked down an unidentified male hiker at the campground, located several miles off Angeles Crest Highway north of Glendora. The hiker suffered only minor bruises.

The hiker told officials he had just reached the empty campground and had dropped his pack as he searched for a place to stash his food.

As he walked back toward his pack, he heard a noise behind him. He turned and was knocked to the ground by the bear. After standing over him for a few seconds, the bear grabbed the backpack and began dragging it away, according to an account provided by Fish and Game.

The man shouted at the bear and threw rocks until the animal ran off, leaving the pack behind.

The department has tallied 12 bear “attacks” — defined as physical contact, injury or death — since 1980,

Bernard said. No human deaths were reported, although several of the bears later were killed.

California has an estimated 30,000 black bears. Officials urge campers, hikers and backpackers to stash their food, garbage and cooking utensils while in the wild.

The 650,000-acre Angeles National Forest lies on the northern and eastern outskirts of greater Los Angeles.

Posted on web, news source unknown:

UPDATE ON BLACK BEAR ATTACK IN TWO MEDICINE VALLEY... PARK OFFICIALS TO DESTROY BEAR

June 28, 2000

WEST GLACIER, MONT -- Glacier National Park rangers continue to search for the black bear that attacked and injured a hiker in the Two Medicine Valley on Monday, June 26, 2000. Because of the bear's aggressive behavior towards humans, it will be destroyed when located, in accordance with the guidelines of the park's Bear Management Plan.

Jason Sansom, 24, of Malstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Montana suffered puncture wounds to both arms after an unprovoked attack by a brown-colored black bear on the south shore trail of Two Medicine Lake on Monday afternoon. Sansom and his wife had been on a day hike when the incident occurred. His wife was not injured.

Park Rangers, with assistance from a paramedic with the boat concessionaire, responded to the scene and stabilized Sansom. He was later transported to Browning Hospital where his wounds were treated. He was released later that night.

Sansom was able to take two photographs of the bear before he was attacked, which later helped park officials in confirming the bear's identity as the same one that had precipitated a temporary closure of the Two Medicine Campground earlier this summer on June 13. In that instance, the bear had shown no fear of humans and resisted attempts by park rangers to haze it away from the

area. In addition, numerous hikers reported seeing the bear along the south shore trail earlier in the day near the area where Sansom was attacked. The bear again displayed no apparent fear of humans.

Glacier National Park's Bear Management Guidelines state that a black bear having received human food or garbage, displaying conditioned behavior to humans, causing property damage, and acting overly familiar with humans will be removed and/or destroyed.

The goal of Glacier National Park's bear management policy is to ensure a natural and free-ranging population of grizzly and black bears. Because the bear had exhibited aggressive behavior towards humans, trapping and relocating the bear was not an option.

The south shore trail along Two Medicine Lake remains closed as park rangers continue to search for the bear. Baited culvert traps will also be set in the Two Medicine area to try and attract the bear.

Since this area is near the Blackfeet Reservation, park officials are working closely with Tribal Fish and Wildlife employees to locate and remove the bear.

Due to the bear's aggressive behavior towards humans, Two Medicine Campground is restricted to hard-side campers only (no tents). This restriction will be in effect until the bear is located and destroyed.

Black bear encounters that cause injury to humans are not common in Glacier National Park. The last incident occurred in 1978, at Trout Lake, in the Camas Creek drainage, when a camper was bit while in his sleeping bag, receiving puncture wounds to his arms and shoulders. The park has never had a fatality associated with a black bear.

Once again, park officials remind visitors that all bears can be dangerous and should NOT be approached under ANY circumstances. Hikers are urged to familiarize themselves with recommended safety precautions while they are in bear country such as, carrying bear spray, making loud noise when hiking, only hiking during broad daylight, and never hiking alone.

A printable copy of this report may be downloaded from the Maine Professional Guides Association's website:

<http://www.maine-guides.org/referendum/>