

The Bear Behavioral Ladder of Progression

A step-by-step journey from wary beginning to untimely end



Smell something interesting. Follow nose to people place. Food smells good, but people might be dangerous. Wait until dark to explore.

Gobble up birdseed on ground. Knock down feeder, eat lots more. Run back to the woods.

Come back a few nights later. Feeder is full again! Chow down. Follow nose onto deck.

Jackpot! Find garbage by back door. Open, scatter and eat. Score a day's worth of calories. Plan to return often to this new food bonanza. Amble back to the woods.

Explore the neighborhood. Get much fatter much faster than you could foraging in the woods.

Start coming during the day since food supply seems endless and humans appear to be harmless.

Find open garage, knock over refrigerator. Eat pizza and ice cream. Score a week's worth of calories.

Do enough damage to get reported. Make the news.

Start approaching people, looking for food. Get trapped, ear-tagged and hauled away.

Find your way back. Yummy treats still there! Pick up where you left off.

Scare someone putting out the trash.

Get labeled a threat to human safety.

Get killed way before your time.



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And that makes room for another bear that smells something interesting.