



BE COYOTE SMART

Avoid Encounters

- Never feed coyotes. Attacks are often related to coyotes that have been fed intentionally or unintentionally when food is left out for wildlife.
- Store all possible attractants such as garbage and pet food inside or in bear proof bins.
- Remove fruit from trees and pick up any fallen fruit. Consider removal of fruit bearing shrubs and trees.
- Supervise children in your yard and on the trail. Children may be seen as easier prey by coyotes.
- Walk your dog on leash. Dogs are often seen as prey by coyotes and coyotes have been known to use coordinated tactics with other coyotes to lure dogs away from their owners.

Handling Encounters

- If a coyote approaches you, make yourself look as large as possible.
- Pick up small children and dogs.
- Shout in a deep voice at the coyote and maintain eye contact.
- If the coyote continues to approach don't run or turn your back on the coyote, continue to shout, wave your arms and slowly move to safety.
- Throw rocks, sticks or other objects.

Handling An Attack

- If you are attacked, fight back.
- If you have bear spray use it (keep canister easily accessible and warm in winter to improve effectiveness).

Why do we have conflicts with coyotes?

Coyotes habituate to urban environments quickly and seek food within towns and villages from any source. This type of behavior is especially dangerous for both the coyotes and people. You can help keep our neighborhoods safe for children and pets by storing attractants properly and not feeding wildlife, including feral rabbits.

Report aggressive coyote encounters
403.591.7755

WHY BE WILDSMART?

The Bow Valley, with its growing human population and location in quality wildlife habitat and movement corridors, sees numerous human-wildlife encounters every year. Some encounters have resulted in people suffering injuries or fatalities and the animal being relocated or destroyed. Fortunately, few result in any serious human injury.

A successful public education program will increase awareness, public safety and reduce human-caused wildlife mortality and is essential for the long term sustainability of large carnivores in the region. The Bow Valley WildSmart Community Program serves to meet this need and has become a benchmark for human and wildlife safety and education programs in the region.



How Can I Help?

- Learn about the wildlife of the Bow Valley and how to behave in order to avoid encounters and serious injury.
- Carry bear spray and learn how to use it
- Keep yourself and your pet safe by walking them on leash.
- Help keep our neighborhoods safe for children by removing wildlife attractants such as pet food, unsecure garbage, birdfeeders and fruit bearing shrubs and trees from your yard.
- Spread the word. Share information on how to be WildSmart with neighbors, friends and family and people you meet on the trail.
- Sign up for bear safety programs in your area.
- Respect trail closures and bear warning signage by choosing alternative trails.
- Volunteer your time or donate to our programs.
- Sign up for our weekly bear report at www.wildsmart.ca
- Report bear, cougar and aggressive elk and coyote sightings to 403.591.7755

CARRY BEAR SPRAY?



- Bear spray has been proven to be effective at deterring attacks by black and grizzly bears. It could also be a useful deterrent for encounters with other species, such as cougars and coyotes. It will not prevent encounters but can prevent an attack or save you from injury or death.
- Take precautions to avoid encounters in the first place by travelling in groups, making noise and being aware of your surroundings.
- Carry your bear spray every time you adventure into the outdoors and throughout the year.
- In winter keep your bear spray easily accessible and warm to ensure its effectiveness.
- Check the expiry date and purchase a new can every three years.

Sign up for a bear safety course.

Learn how to use bear spray.



MORE INFORMATION

How to Donate to Bow Valley WildSmart?

Bow Valley WildSmart is a program of the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley and relies entirely on donations and sponsors. You can donate online at www.wildsmart.ca, by mail or in person. Please make checks out to the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley (WildSmart program).



Contact Us

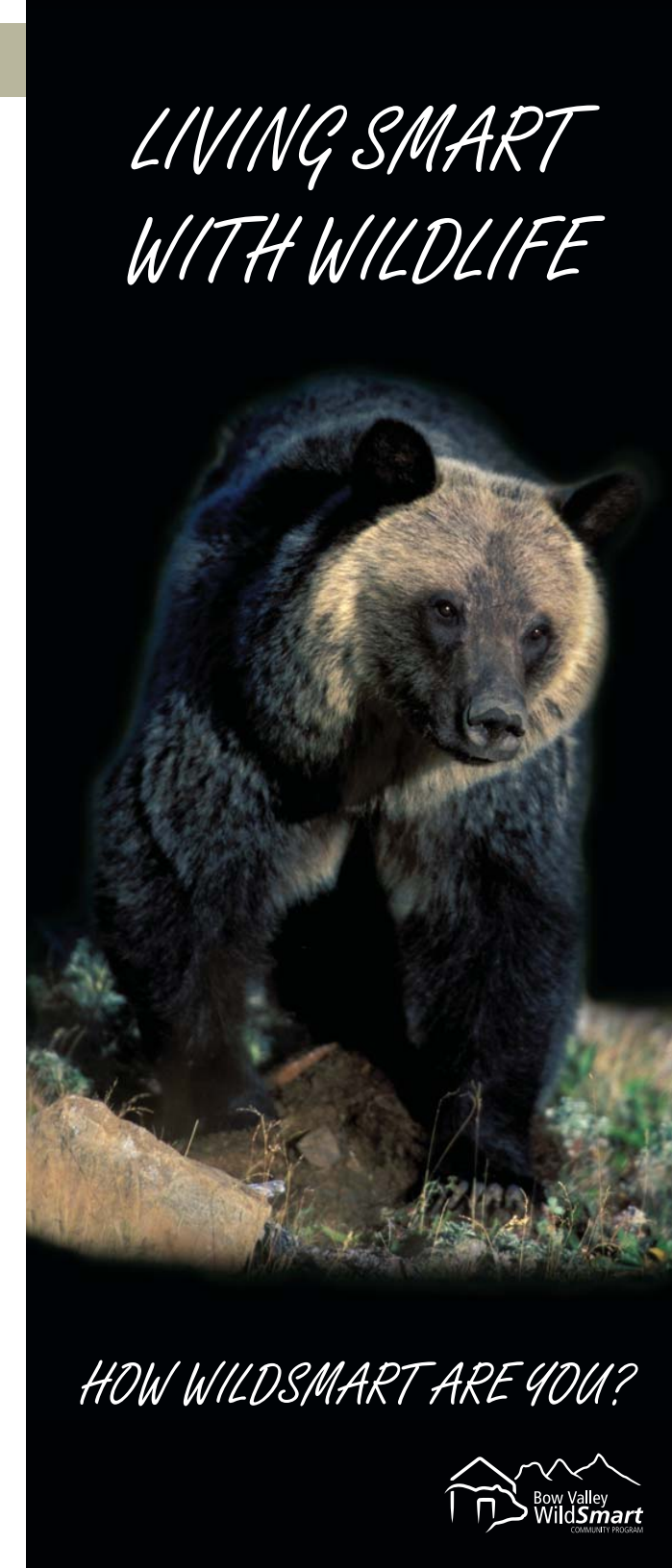
Bow Valley WildSmart Community Program

Biosphere Resource Centre
Suite 201, 600 - 9th Street
Canmore, Alberta T1W 2T2

Tel: 403-678-3445

info@wildsmart.ca

For all public safety emergencies call 9-1-1



LIVING SMART WITH WILDLIFE

HOW WILDSMART ARE YOU?



www.wildsmart.ca • Facebook • YouTube

Our Mission

The Bow Valley WildSmart Community program is a proactive conservation strategy that encourages efforts by communities to reduce negative human-wildlife interactions.

Our goal is to develop a coordinated approach to education/outreach programs and help support direct management activities that will aid in increasing public safety and enjoyment as well as contribute towards sustainable wildlife populations.



The program was first established in 2005 by a coalition of local interest groups including businesses, environmental groups, and public, municipal and provincial government agencies. In 2009 WildSmart became a program of the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley.

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley is a **non-profit charitable society** dedicated to enhancing understanding of ecological integrity as it pertains to the Bow River Watershed. Learn more at www.biosphereinstitute.org

Population Served

Bow Valley WildSmart serves all residents and visitors to the Bow Valley (from the east gate of Banff National Park to the Kananaskis River).



BE ELK SMART

Avoid Encounters

- Elk can be dangerous.
- If the animal is responding to your presence – you are too close.
- Give them plenty of room. Keep at a distance of at least 3 bus lengths.
- Do not approach elk or their calves.
- Elk can endanger themselves or humans by suddenly running into traffic or fences if spooked.
- Walk your dog on leash.
- Female elk can be especially aggressive during the May - June calving season.
- Male elk can be especially aggressive during the September - October breeding season.

Handling An Attack

- If you are charged by an elk, position yourself behind a solid structure such as a tree or car.
- If you have bear spray consider using it.

Report any aggressive elk encounters
403.591.7755



BE BEAR SMART

Avoid Encounters

- Do not approach or feed bears, this could elicit an unsafe response that could lead to human injury and/or the destruction of the bear.
- To avoid surprise encounters, make lots of noise.
- Watch for fresh evidence of bear activity e.g. tracks, scat, diggings, or overturned rocks and logs.
- Travel in groups.
- Walk your dog on leash.
- Carry bear spray and know how to use it.
- If you see a bear or see or smell a dead animal, leave the area.
- Respect all trail closures and information signs, they are there for your safety.
- Remove potential attractants from your property such as garbage, pet food, bird feeders, and berry bushes and fruit trees.

Handling an Encounter

Most encounters with bears end without injury. If the bear is unaware of your presence – leave the area in the direction you came.

If the bear is aware of your presence and does not leave, be non-threatening – speak calmly, don't yell. Stay calm and back away slowly – DON'T RUN.

If the bear closes distance on you –even after you have tried to retreat, such behavior could be considered curious, indifferent or predatory.

If the bear continues closing distance – make yourself large, stand your ground and talk firmly to the bear.

Handling an Attack

You may increase your chance of survival by following these guidelines. In general, there are 2 kinds of attacks:

Defensive Attack

- The bear is protecting a carcass, protecting its young and/or is surprised by your presence. It attacks because you are perceived as a threat. Remember bears will often bluff charge.
- Be non-threatening — don't run or yell. Stay calm and back away slowly.
- Use your bear spray.
- If the bear makes contact with you: PLAY DEAD!
- Drop to the ground face down, interlace your fingers over the back of your neck and spread your legs to make it more difficult for the bear to turn you over. By playing dead the bear will likely lose interest in you and leave. Defensive attacks are generally less than two minutes in duration. If the attack continues, it may mean the attack has shifted from defensive to non-defensive (i.e. predatory) – in this case fight back!

Non-Defensive Attack

- The bear is aware of your presence, has time to leave but continues closing distance on you – even after you have tried to retreat. This behaviour could be considered curious, indifferent or predatory.
- Use your bear spray. DO NOT PLAY DEAD and FIGHT BACK!
- Intimidate the bear: shout; hit it with a branch or rock, do whatever it takes to let the bear know you are not easy prey.

Report bear sightings or aggressive encounters
403.591.7755



BE COUGAR SMART

Avoid Encounters

- Cougars generally avoid people.
- Travel in groups and keep everyone together including children and dogs.
- Cougars can be attracted to children, due to their small size and erratic movement patterns. Keep watch over your children, especially during dusk and dawn, when cougars are most active.
- Walk your dog on leash.
- Make noise to alert cougars of your presence.
- Leave the area if you see or smell a dead animal. Cougars usually cover their kills with forest debris.

Handling Encounters

- Immediately pick up children and pets.
- Do not turn your back on a cougar.
- Maintain eye contact with the cougar.
- Always leave room for it to escape.
- NEVER RUN; it may trigger an attack.
- Make yourself appear as large as possible.
- Back away slowly.

Handling An Attack

- Fight back with anything at hand.
- Use bear spray (keep canisters easily accessible and warm in winter to improve effectiveness).

Report any cougar sightings
403.591.7755