

BOW VALLEY MONTHLY WILDLIFE REPORT
(Banff National Park to Bow Valley Provincial Park)
For the period April 30 to May 28, 2010

WILDLIFE CAN BE ENCOUNTERED ANYWHERE, ANYTIME!

Be aware of your surroundings, know how to reduce the likelihood of encounters, and be prepared should an encounter take place. Always use caution by paying attention to signs of wildlife activity such as scats, tracks, and diggings. Make lots of noise while recreating; hike in groups when possible; carry pepper spray; and obey closures.

What's happening with wildlife in the Bow Valley?

Spring is in the air and wildlife are slowly reappearing from their winter slumber. Many mammals will soon be having their young – spring being an optimum time for raising young given the availability of fresh plants and grasses while also providing good hiding cover from predators. Elk will give birth, usually to a single calf, sometime between mid May and early June. Within hours of being born elk calves are able to stand and nurse. Mule deer and White-tailed deer will also give birth around the same time period – though they will often have 1 to 3 fawns. Young deer, weighing in at about 6 pounds, will spend the first month lying quietly under vegetation. For this reason, do not pick up or be overly concerned about fawns that appear orphaned – mom is not usually far away. Cow moose will usually have between 1 to 3 calves in May or June, each weighing approximately 20 to 35 pounds!

Wildlife/ Human interactions

There continue to be cougar sightings in the valley, the most recent in the Rundlevue area of Canmore. There have also been reports in Rundlevue of coyotes closing distance on people, particularly those with dogs. Be aggressive with any coyote encounter by making yourself appear large and waving a stick at the animal. Carry bear spray and discharge it at the animal if possible. As wildlife such as elk and deer begin to have their young, give them a wide berth as they will be particularly protective of their young at this time of year.

Important Notes

We will continue these monthly wildlife summaries throughout the year on a monthly basis. If there is a specific topic you would like to see addressed – please let us know. Comments can be sent to info@wildsmart.ca. Please remain cautious and be aware of your surroundings while out recreating.

Wildlife Cautions/ Closures

Please report all bear, cougar and wolf sightings and any aggressive wildlife encounter to 591 7755. For current postings of Wildlife Warnings and Closures please visit <http://prc.alberta.ca/parks/kananaskis/trailreport.aspx>