



A black bear strolling past a residence on the Mesa. Photo: Sandi Hahamian

Conservancy Advisory: Keep Black Bears Wild

Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) activity on The Preserve is a hallmark of summer, but also a reminder of the importance of preventing wildlife habituation and unwanted animals around your home. Bear sightings on The Preserve are typically brief and are not cause for immediate alarm. Black bears are naturally wary of humans and are rarely aggressive, preferring a diet of nuts, berries, and the occasional small mammal. They are, however, attracted to homes by odors from grills and smelly garbage.

The Preserve is a protected landscape for wildlife and our community is responsible for ensuring our wild neighbors remain wild. When bears become comfortable in our human environment, it is best to use hazing techniques recommended by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to restore their natural aversion to humans and push them away from residences. Without sufficient deterrents, bears may become habituated to human activity on The Preserve, unlearning their fear of humans and increasing the likelihood of undesirable encounters.

How to Haze a Black Bear

Always give the bear an escape route.

Never corner the bear or force it into a narrow or enclosed area.

Stay calm and don't run.

Never engage with the bear if you feel unsafe. When possible, face the bear and raise your arms to appear larger, while slowly backing away.

Make noise.

Bang pots and pans, use an air horn, activate your car alarm, or play loud music or radio programming to scare the bear away from your property.

Spray the bear with a garden hose.

You can also throw rocks at the bear to encourage it to flee.

In addition to hazing, there are other easy steps you can take to make your home less attractive to bears:

- Secure your trash containers and make them completely inaccessible to wildlife.
- Remove all sources of water and food, including ripe and unripe fruit from trees and the ground.
- Clean BBQs and grills after use and bring outdoor furniture cushions inside at night.

Please report any sightings of black bears to Dr. Christy Wyckoff.
(cwyckoff@slconservancy.org, 831-402-2001)

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