

As snow settles in for winter, so do bears across Jasper National Park. 2022 saw frequent bear activity in the Municipality of Jasper, with about a dozen bears drawn to town by attractants in yards and non-native fruit trees.

Thank you to all the residents, businesses and the municipality who worked with Parks Canada to remove fruit trees and other bear attractants. More than 100 non-native fruit trees were removed across the municipality and at Jasper Park Lodge.

RELOCATING BEARS: A LAST RESORT

Human-wildlife conflict specialists responded to the unwelcome visitors using a variety of hazing strategies to deter bear presence in the townsite.

In some cases, trapping and relocating the bears was a necessary last step in ensuring both bear and human safety. Trapping, immobilization and release is a last resort because it is stressful and risky for bears, particularly cubs. Bears across the park are now looking for denning sites or have settled into dens for the winter and Parks Canada is pleased to report all relocated bears have kept their distance from town.

GRIZZLY SIBLINGS: UPDATE SINCE MAY 2022

This pair was spotted in various yards throughout town in May 2022. On May 31, Parks Canada staff trapped, put GPS collars on and relocated the male and female siblings to the south end of the park. By the middle of the summer, the pair had separated. The male remained in the southeast corner of Jasper National Park, while the female moved south into Banff National Park.

BLACK BEARS: UPDATE SINCE SEPTEMBER 2022

On September 9, 2022, Parks Canada staff successfully trapped one mother and her two cubs using a borrowed family bear trap from Banff National Park. This family unit had frequently accessed fruit trees in the Jasper townsite. The bears were released into suitable habitat in a remote area of the park along the Icefields Parkway. They were spotted by a hiker on the Poboktan Trail and have not been observed or recorded any further north, likely denning well away from the town.

A second family of black bears was trapped on October 4, 2022, and relocated to the south end of the park. The mother bear's last telemetry signal was within the Tonquin area where they are presumed to be denning this winter.

Three other individual black bears frequented town. Two of these were last spotted in town on October 14 and are presumed to be denning in an unknown location. The third was trapped and relocated on October 23 and will hopefully den in his new surroundings at the south end of the park.

WILDLIFE SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

While the bears may be snoozing, many other animals keep roaming in the winter. For wildlife safety tips all year round, please visit the Jasper National Park website.

Parks Canada recommends dog walkers still carry bear spray while in the park for potential encounters with **wolves** or cougars. Keep bear spray in a warm place like your pocket and do not let it freeze. Always keep your dog on a leash to ensure the safety of you and your pet and to help protect national park wildlife and habitat.