

Please Don't Feed Bears

Feeding bears, either by direct handouts or by leaving attractants such as garbage and pet food unsecured, is **against the law** and **causes bear problems**. It's bad for bears and bad for people.



What attracts bears?

- Food and food smells (barbecue grills, compost piles)
- Garbage left outside and unsecure
- Pet foods or wildlife feed left outside and unsecure

Remember: Any food source that attracts dogs, cats or raccoons will attract bears.

Did you know?

- Bears can smell food from more than a mile away and if they are rewarded with an easy meal, they learn quickly to return to the area.
- Curious bears that are not rewarded with an easy meal such as garbage or pet foods will look for food away from houses.
- Bears that become used to getting human foods may damage property or become a threat to public safety. These bears often must be killed. To help avoid these problems, please don't provide food for bears.
- Feeding bears is against Florida law – F.A.C. 68A-4.001(3). “Intentionally placing food or garbage, allowing the placement of food or garbage, or offering food or garbage in such a manner that it attracts black bears, foxes or raccoons and in a manner that is likely to create or creates a public nuisance is prohibited.”
- If convicted of feeding bears, you could face up to 60 days in jail, up to \$500 in fines or both.

What can you do to prevent bear problems?

- Store trash in a secure area until morning of pickup
- Bring pet food inside, store securely
- Protect gardens, compost and livestock with electric fencing
- Clean grills and store them in a secure area
- Remove wildlife feeders if there is a bear in the area

If you experience bear problems, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at (561)625-5122. For more information go to MyFWC.com/bear.