

Living with Black Bears

We have received several calls this spring from folks who have had issues with black bears. These troubles have included damage to bee hives, issues with garbage and bird feeders being torn up, and chickens being eaten. In all of these cases, the bear was searching for an easy food source. The problems begin when that easy food source is something that we don't want eaten.

Luckily, we can avoid most bear damage by making it difficult for bears to access these food resources. This sometimes requires us to change our behaviors to some extent. Common changes may include protecting beehives with electric fencing, or storing garbage inside a closed building until the morning of trash pickup, or not leaving pet food outside where bears can smell it. All of these things can be somewhat of a hassle, but a little bit of prevention goes a long way.

There are several excellent sources of information for learning to live with black bears. One of my favorites is BearWise (<https://bearwise.org/>). BearWise has a ton of actionable tips that you can put into place today to decrease your odds of bear nuisance. Of course, you can also find excellent information from KY Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (https://bit.ly/KDFWR_Bears). In addition to nuisance tips, the KDFWR site also includes a lot of natural history information regarding black bears in Kentucky. You can also scan the QR codes below with your smartphone camera to go to these websites.

BearWise



Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

