

Florida Black Bears

UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

At a glance

Florida black bears are an important native species, and the only bear species found in the state. Although their populations are increasing due to conservation efforts, bears are threatened by habit loss and fragmentation as more residents move to the state.

Habitat

Preferred habitat contain trees and shrubs that produce nuts and fruits. One of the most important food sources is palmettos. Habitats include flatwoods, swamps, scrub oak ridges, and bayheads. Dense vegetation is preferred.



1/4TH

Florida land in conservation



45%

Bears use of original range

BEHAVIOR

Black bears are solitary creatures, but do form family groups of mother/cubs and pairs during the mating season. They are curious animals with relatively good senses. Bears can see great up close but not able to see details beyond 30 yards away. They have acute hearing that is twice as sensitive as humans. A bear can smell a scent from over a mile away, they are considered to have the best sense of smell of any land mammal.

POPULATION

Populations estimates come from the 2014/2015 study conducted by FWC. Estimating populations can be very difficult, however the increase in bear-related calls is a good indicator of potential population increases.



North Region
500+



State
4,050+



Bear Related Calls
5,500+

FACTS

1

Size

Adult males usually weigh between 250 and 350 pounds. Adult females weigh between 130 and 180 pounds.

2

Territory


Adult male black bears usually have a 60 square mile territory range, whereas females usually live within a 15 square mile area. Bears are not territorial.


3


Diet

Nearly 80% of the black bear's diet comes from plants, 15% from insects, and 5% from meat. Bears have been observed to consume over 66 species of plants, 29 insects, 3 arthropods, and 13 vertebrates.

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