

# BACKPACKING IN BEAR COUNTRY

While hiking or backpacking in bear country keep in mind . . .

**Enjoy the woods!** You will be lucky if you see a bear.

**Bears are most** active at dawn and dusk  
Watch for tracks and scat.

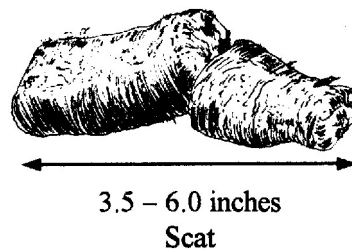
**Use extra caution** in brushy areas and berry patches.

**Make noise,** sing, or talk to avoid surprising a bear.

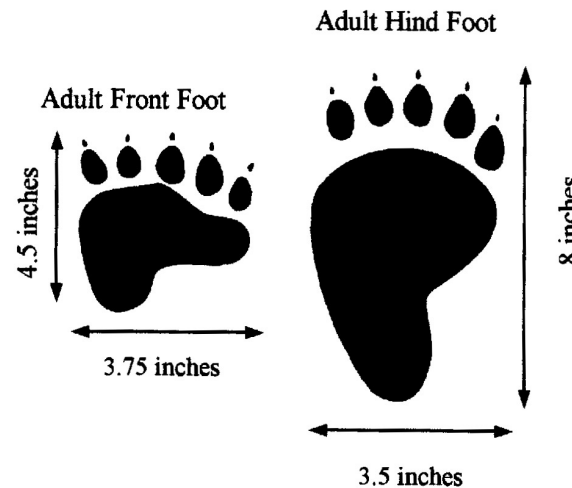
**Keep** a clean campsite.

**Hang food** and toiletries 10 feet high and 10 feet away from a tree trunk and 50 feet away from camp.

**Pack it in,** Pack it out.



Black bear are symbolic of the rich environment found on Mount Magazine. Abundant food, space, and den sites provide a very healthy habitat to support a dense population of bear and other wildlife.



Bears are an important part of the history on Mount Magazine. Native Americans and settlers encountered and hunted them. Learning to live with bears is fundamental to the quality of life in bear country.

Enjoy your visit to Mount Magazine. If you are lucky and alert, you will see a bear!



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# MOUNT MAGAZINE State Park



# BEAR *country* SAFETY

*... Tips for camping and  
hiking in bear country*

# CAMPING IN BEAR COUNTRY

Yes, there are bears on Mount Magazine. In fact, the Mount Magazine District of the Ozark National Forest has one of the highest bear populations in Arkansas.

Black bears rarely attack people but are potentially dangerous especially if they become habituated to human food and garbage. Feeding bears, intentionally or not, is illegal and increases the potential for human injury and private property damage. This can also result in the death of a bear. Ultimately, "A Fed Bear is a Dead Bear!"

The staff at Mount Magazine State Park is working to reduce and prevent problems without injuring bears. "Bear proof" trash cans have been installed. However, bears are very intelligent and a few have learned to open them. Rangers patrol the park and discourage nuisance bears. Interpretive programs about bears and other wildlife are available. However, bear safety depends on visitors. You can help the well being of bears by following these guidelines.

*...Bears habituated to human food or garbage, live only half as long as wild bears.*

**Never feed bears** or other animals in the park. They will return in search of another free meal after you have gone. Future visitors will have to deal with problems which others create.

**Do not** leave food out for pets.

**Dispose** of your trash in bear proof containers. Do not overfill or stack garbage outside containers. Be sure the latches engage after closing the door.

**Do not** dispose of grease or food scraps in a fire pit.

**Store all food** and ice chests in your vehicle with windows up.

**Keep your pet** on a leash or inside at all times.

**Never keep food**, toiletries, or scented items in a tent.

## Black Bear Attacks:

Black bears rarely attack humans. They sometimes "bluff charge" but usually back away. When they do attack, the encounter is rarely fatal. As of September 1, 2002, only 44 fatal black bear attacks have occurred in all of North America. There have been no fatalities in Arkansas, and only a few people have been injured by bears.

## If You Encounter A Bear...

**Do Not Run.** This may stimulate a bear's instinct to chase.

**If The Bear Has Not Seen You,** stay calm, back away slowly and give the bear room to escape.

**If The Bear Has Seen You,** speak softly and back away slowly while facing the bear. If you have small children with you, pick them up so they don't run or panic. Give the bear plenty of room to escape.

**Try To Show The Bear** that you may be dangerous to it. Make yourself appear larger by standing tall and opening a jacket or shirt. Make a lot of noise, yell, bang pots or pans.

**Fight Back If A Black Bear Attacks.** Use rocks, sticks, binoculars, or any object available. Use pepper spray.