

HOW TO GET EATEN BY A BEAR

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living things – that fascination that provided the framework for their choice of career is forced to “search and destroy,” ending their day in sorrow.

The lesson to be learned is that those of us who enjoy nature, and especially observing black bears in the wild, have a responsibility to keep them wild and avoid situations whereby we influence their behavior in such a manner that will lead to their destruction. While it is very tempting to do things, such as toss food to a curious bear or leave out birdfeeders or pet food in hope of luring animals for a “closer look,” eventually these actions lead to negative consequences for all involved.

Considering the extreme loss of habitat for large mammals within the past century, coupled with an exponential rise in human population throughout much of the eastern part of the country, it is essential that we coexist in a manner that allows both bears and humans to share the same resources and territories. Many regions are experiencing an increase in bear sightings and these animals have adjusted remarkably well to our encroachment on their range.

They will continue to thrive and bring us joy and excitement with every sighting but only if we respect them as wild creatures keeping our food sources secure and our distance from them in such a manner as not to become threatening.

For many of us there is no greater exhilaration at a day’s ending than with vivid memories of seeing a bear, having a few blurry pictures to share our encounter with others and to know that they are “out there!” So, grab your gear, take along a lunch and that new digital point-andshoot and seek the greatest symbol of the wild, but do it with safety in mind for both you and the bear so that future generations may also experience that same thrill and excitement.

Joel G. Zachry is a retired community college biology professor, former ABR president and author of Bears We’ve Met – Short Stories of Close Encounters.



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WELCOME, BOSTON BEAR!

Late Breaking News!!! As this newsletter goes to press, we’ve just admitted our fourth orphaned black bear cub of 2013. Boston Bear comes from Johnson County, Tennessee, and weighs 3½ pounds. He’s currently in the Cub Nursery, being fed apple flavored Pedialyte every three hours. He seems to be in good health, and when he’s big enough, we’ll introduce him to Bennie, Jerry and Carrie. With your help, we’ll make Boston a “chubby cubby”.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

“HELP MAKE THIS CUBBY CHUBBY”

You can help our many hungry cubs by donating on-line to our “Chubby Cubby” Campaign. Every dollar donated via the Townsend IGA (Village Market) goes to Appalachian Bear Rescue in the form of GIFT CARDS that we then use to purchase fresh food for orphaned cubs and bears.

“ADOPT-A-CUBBY”

Participants who adopt one of our current cubs will receive an adoption package in the mail from ABR that includes an adorable stuffed bear, a signed Certificate of Adoption, a photo of your adopted cub, and bear information sheets including the informative BEAR SAFE brochure from the WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals). The Adoption fee per cub is \$50.00.

To make a donation or to adopt a cub, visit our website at www.abrtn.org/campaigns_abr.htm and follow the links.

– SAVE THE DATE –

Join us in Townsend for
Bear Necessities 2013

Friday, September 13th
A Very Lucky Day for Cubs!

THREE LITTLE BEARS

By Coy Blair, Curator

Once upon a time, there were three little bears found orphaned on the side of an Oconee County, South Carolina road in a cardboard box. All of a sudden, a brave fireman discovered the box and decided to stop and see what was inside. “Puppies,” he thought. “No, they sound like piglets,” he then exclaimed. “Bear cubs!” he shouted after getting a better look inside. The great fireman did the right thing and delivered them to wildlife officials, who then called upon the great Appalachian Bear Rescue in Townsend, Tennessee for help. In just three weeks’ time, all three cubs would be together, happily, cuddling one another, and playing little cubby games all the day long at the Appalachian Bear Rescue...

On March 1 of this year, we were delighted to receive our first cubs of the 2013 year. Two male cubs came to the Appalachian Bear Rescue from Oconee County, South Carolina. I can still remember pulling over to take the call in the bank parking lot. It was a wildlife biologist from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR). She asked if we would be willing to take in two bear cubs at our facility. I believe my words were, “Yes, 100%!” Of course we would have to clear this with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) first. With TWRA’s



Appalachian Bear Rescue ©2013

permission, a couple of very excited curators drove halfway to meet the South Carolina DNR and pick up ABR Bear #’s 187 and 188, or as everyone knows them, Bennie and Jerry Bear. We were told that the third cub was a female and was very lethargic and not in the best of health. She was sent to Charles Towne Landing in South Carolina rather than risking the ride over to Tennessee in her current state of health. But she would soon be reunited with her brothers at the Appalachian Bear Rescue.

We began our journey by making sure we had everything we needed for the trip. Pet carrier...check. Bottles and formula...check, check. Ice packs for formula...check. Towels to keep them warm...check. Cloths to help stimulate bowl movements and urination...ughh, check! And so on and so on. The Appalachian Bear Rescue is always thinking from every angle.

Upon meeting the South Carolina DNR, we shook hands and filled out our paper work. Then we discussed the cubs’ health, eating patterns and such, and loaded the little guys up. They were very small, as they were just one month old, but both cubs appeared healthy. A member with the

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APPALACHIAN BEAR RESCUE
P.O. BOX 364
TOWNSEND, TN 37882

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. Any donation, large or small, helps ABR to continue helping the orphaned bear cubs. Thank you so much for all your generous support.

www.abrTN.org/donations.htm

THREE LITTLE BEARS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

South Carolina DNR had been feeding these little cubs and keeping them content until we were able to bring them to the Appalachian Bear Rescue.

We were on the road back to Townsend, Tennessee, but had to stop just past the Tennessee line. Our cubs were already telling us they were hungry. Again, the Appalachian Bear Rescue is always thinking way far ahead, and we had previously stopped to get some hot water to warm their bottles in the event they wanted to eat on the ride back. Their bottles warm and ready, Rick and I each took a cub and began our work. I thought, "This is just surreal."

As you may recall, Bennie had trouble taking the bottle at first. I had to feed him formula through a needle-less syringe. Jerry, on the other hand, was taking the bottle well. After both cubs had their fill and had been wiped with a warm cloth, we continued our journey home.

Bennie and Jerry were placed in our Cub Nursery and weighed the very next day. Their weights were 2 lbs. 11.75 oz. and 2 lbs. 12.625 oz., respectively. They were fed every three hours around the clock. This was exhausting work, but it was extremely rewarding to see these tiny bears having a second chance at life.

That following Monday, Dr. Ramsay and some students from the University of Tennessee Veterinarian School paid Bennie and Jerry a visit. After close examination, it was determined that both cubs were in good health. This was great news.

Within only a couple of weeks, Bennie and Jerry were well over 3 pounds. They were eating great and spending a good deal of time playing with one another. They were content and doing well. Bennie and Jerry were fortunate to



have one another to play with. We wondered about their sister and how she was doing.

On March 22, 2013, ABR Bear #189 arrived at the Appalachian Bear Rescue. You now know her as Carrie Bear, Bennie and Jerry's sister. Charles Towne Landing in South Carolina had got her to a healthy weight, and she could now make the trip to Tennessee. We immediately took her inside and fed her. She was noticeably stronger, and her face appeared to be a little darker in coloration. She completed our "three little bears" story. Getting to witness Bennie and Jerry reuniting with their sister was priceless. We watched as Carrie approached Bennie and Jerry, all three cubs' noses gently sniffing at one another.

On March 25, 2013, the University of Tennessee Veterinarian School came back to check on our cubs. Again, all of our cubs, Carrie included this time, appeared healthy. Great news!

It was no time at all before Bennie, Jerry, and Carrie were all over 6 pounds! They were all eating well and playing together for a while after each feeding. They would usually wear themselves out it seemed in about half an hour or so, and they would quickly fall asleep, usually on top of one another until the next feeding; then they would wake up ready to do it all again! At approximately 8 pounds, all three cubs were weaned from the bottle in order to get them down to a larger pen inside the donut area at the wild enclosure.

This larger pen would accommodate their rapid growth and allow them to hone in on new skills such as climbing. At the same time, it would allow more separation between curators and cubs in an effort to prevent habituation. In the wild, cubs would continue feeding on milk from



the sow for a longer duration than this, but we do not want human contact to interfere with their development as wild bears. They are still receiving formula at this pen, but in a blend of rice cereal and grapes. We will call this formula/grape/rice cereal blend "Cubby Porridge" to enhance our three little bears story. We are also supplementing our cubs with fresh fruits such as grapes, blackberries, and blueberries and vegetables such as Romaine leaf lettuce to help expose them to greenery, which they would be finding in the wild after coming out of their den. Add some thick and creamy yogurt to this mix of fresh fruits and, voila, you have what we will call "Curator's Cobbler" to even further enhance our three little bears story.

There is no doubt that all three cubs exhibit differing behaviors. That is, they each have their own, individual personalities. Allow me to anthropomorphize briefly (I tend not to do this as a biologist). When it was just Bennie and Jerry, Bennie was an instigator. After feeding, Bennie would go up to Jerry and "swat" at him. This would usually lead to them wrestling around for some time. Bennie would lie on his back, waiting for Jerry to come near, and then "swat" him again. Jerry was more gentle-natured and would, every now and again, give a little "swat" back, but would mainly just try and lie on top of Bennie. As we would be bottle-feeding, Jerry would give your arm a little bear hug as he ate; meanwhile, Bennie would take his paws and move them in the air as if swimming, sometimes catching your arm and knocking the nipple out of his mouth. And if this happened, he was quick to let you know he was not happy. Bennie would scream and root his head around until the nipple was back into his mouth. Bennie appeared to be the rebel cub.

Their behaviors changed once Carrie arrived. As mentioned earlier, she was noticeably stronger than the two males. She began pushing Bennie around. He was not used to this response because Jerry had always been easy-going. It was not long until Carrie became the dominant force in the nursery. She was the first to pounce, the first to bluff charge, and the first to blow like adult bears do. It is almost like kids growing up. Girls usually mature faster than boys and sometimes can beat the boys up. This was the case with Carrie. Carrie did have a sweet side, but



Curator mixing formula



Cubs eating "Cubby Porridge."

exemplified an almost perfect combination of Bennie's and Jerry's behaviors.

Nevertheless, their behaviors changed again after being moved down to the pen in the donut area at the wild enclosure. There, they had more space to run and play around and most importantly, space to climb, which is a skill they will definitely need in the wild. We noticed after feeding one day that Jerry was now the cub in charge. The once laidback cub was pushing the other two rambunctious cubs around. He decided which dish he wanted to eat from rather than wait for an opening. At one point, Jerry went as far as lying across a food dish to prevent Carrie and Bennie from taking it over.

Indeed, the three little bears are growing up fast. They will soon make their journey to the acclimation pen, just inside the wild enclosure. There, they will have even more room to accommodate their larger sizes and more, taller structures to climb. After that, they will be released into the wild enclosure, where they will learn to forage for their own food as in the wild. Once they reach a healthy weight and South Carolina and Tennessee work out a release date, they will make their way back to their real home in South Carolina.

Thanks to TWRA and the South Carolina DNR for giving these cubs a chance at rehabilitation. And thanks to Charles Towne Landing for getting Carrie back to good health so that she could tolerate the ride over to Tennessee. And many thanks to all the supporters of the Appalachian Bear Rescue and our mission, for it is you who provided the means necessary to give our three little bears a second chance at life. Thank you. ...And the three little bears lived happily ever after. The end.



THREE LITTLE BEARS

by Ben Seven

Three little bears in a bright blue boat
planned to sail *The Seven Seas*,
off to see the great wide world
outside the Nursery.

"I am the captain," Carrie said,
and none could disagree,
"I've been as far as Charles Towne,
as far as far can be."

"How far is that?" Jerry asked,
looking at her timorously,
"The counter's far; it's way up there!
How much farther can the world be?"

Carrie sat, and cocked her head,
dodging Bennie's swat,
"Twice as far, and twice again,
we'll sail there in our bright blue yacht."

Bennie aimed at his sister's head,
swatting wildly,
"Carrie, you talk too much,
and you're not the boss of me!"

Carrie lowered her furry crown,
and fixed him in her sights,
she pounced on him, and so began
another cubby fight!

They rolled around in a fuzzy ball,
chortling with glee,
it looked like fun, so who joined in?
Their brother, sweet Jerry!

"When we go," Bennie gasped,
throwing one last smack,
"Can we take a furless bear
to give us yummy snacks?"

Carrie stopped, and looked around,
pondering his request,
"Our boat's too small for furless bears,
we'll take their glove instead."



Jenny Bear



Bennie Bear



Carrie Bear

"How many snacks should we take?"
whined Jerry Bear in fear.
"As many as," his sister said,
"we have paws and ears."

Jerry sobbed, "You're brave, Carrie,
you've traveled far and wide,
and you're so strong, Bennie Bear,
you'll be fine outside."

"But," he said, and he sighed
thinking of *The Seven Seas*,
"The world out there is far too big
for a little cub like me."

All three bears began to cry,
a flood of cubby wails!
The thought of leaving one behind
grieved them to their stubby tails.

"Whose idea was this scheme?"
sobbed sister Carrie Bear,
"I can't go if Jerry won't,
and Bennie... don't you dare!"

"I'm not going," Bennie cried,
sitting on her head,
"Let's have a snack, and sleep on it,
we think better when we're fed."

On this plan, they could agree,
and overturned their bowl
of mushy grapes and applesauce,
their favorite food, I'm told.

Bennie and Jerry Bear,
with Carrie underneath,
made cubby purrs and cubby snores,
and soon were fast asleep.

To the Land of Cubby Dreams
travelled our sailors three,
happy and together,
sailing *The Seven Seas*.

SPRINGTIME FOR BEARS

Kathy Sherrard, M.Ed

Although bears in the far north remain in dens until May or even June, our bears in the Southern Appalachians often appear in late March or early April.

Females that have given birth to cubs during the winter will be bringing their two and one-half to three-month-old cubs for their first look at the outside world. One of the first things a mother teaches her cubs is to climb a tree at her command. For a cub, the top of a tree generally represents safety from potential danger.

What else does a mother bear teach her cubs? After safety and avoidance of danger, the most important lessons are about foods. She introduces them to natural foods in each season of the year. This begins in the spring, although there is not much food available for bears. They look for squawroot, a parasitic plant that some biologists regard as an "Ex-Lax" for bears, helping them to expel the fecal plug. Since the favorite soft mast foods (berries and other fruits) are not yet available, bears dine on tender leaves and grasses, buds, ferns, and, most important to their springtime nutritional needs, insects that are becoming active. Although the primary nutrition for cubs is still the mother's rich milk, she models for them the foods they will eat in future years, by having them taste the unfamiliar foods and smell her breath, so they know that she eats them herself. She will follow the same teaching process as each new food appears – berries in summer, persimmons, apples, and pears in early fall, and finally the hard mast (acorns and other nuts) in late fall. As the year unfolds, the cubs will nurse less and eat more. In all probability the cubs will be weaned by late summer.

The cubs spend a lot of time with their mother as they learn how to forage for food and develop basic survival skills. However, much to the surprise of many people, the mother bear frequently travels by herself during her daily routine. This is particularly true when she investigates new food sources and/or unfamiliar territory or a potentially dangerous situation. She will send her cubs up a tree and leave them there, often for hours at a time, as she combs the woods. Nursing and producing milk is extremely demanding on the system of a female bear that has not eaten during her winter sleep, and she must eat often. Upon her return, she gives a few guttural grunts to call her cubs down from the treetop. The well-disciplined cubs usually respond immediately to their mother's summons and scurry down for a meal.

It is important for people who visit the bears' habitat to be aware of this. Often a cub will be seen in a tree, with no

mother in sight, and observers will jump to the conclusion that the cub has been abandoned. The wildlife officers who rescue orphaned cubs and bring them to Appalachian Bear Rescue receive these reports and follow up by monitoring the cub for a period of time, usually a couple of days. If the mother has not returned to her cub for 2 or more days, the wildlife officer will very likely intervene and rescue the cub.

If you see a bear cub in a tree at this time of year, you should watch it carefully. Very likely, the mother will come back for it, typically during the night if it is in a residential area, and by the next morning the cub will be gone. If, however, the cub remains in the tree and shows signs of distress, a report should be made to your local wildlife officers.

Those of us who are avid wildlife-watchers look forward to this time of year, when bears are on the move and we may, if we are fortunate, catch a glimpse of one. Just remember to be respectful, and enjoy seeing these magnificent creatures from an appropriate distance.

INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST CURATOR, JANET DALTON

Since the cubs at Appalachian Bear Rescue must have care 24/7, we decided to hire another, part-time curator to give Coy and Rick the weekends off. Janet Dalton had been a volunteer for several years and had received Bearkeeper training in Minnesota, so she was an obvious choice. Janet is a school principal at Liberty Elementary in Morristown, but she jumped at the chance to be our weekend curator. She started her new job in early March, just after the arrival of Bennie and Jerry Bear.



Janet enjoys her weekends at ABR, and considers her curator time as a welcome break from her demanding job as principal. We are fortunate to have her as a member of our curator team.

WE ♥ OUR VOLUNTEERS!

BEN & JERRY'S AND ABR – A WINNING COMBINATION!



For the second year, the Ben & Jerry's ice cream store in Gatlinburg invited Appalachian Bear Rescue to participate in Free Cone Day on April 9th. A dozen volunteers, including 5 firsttimers, turned out to help publicize the event and raise funds for ABR. It was a festive day. One of our board members dressed up in a bear costume and strolled along the street, inviting tourists to come to Ben&Jerry's for their free ice cream. He was very popular, and posed for photographs with children and adults.

Julie Williams, the owner of the store, offered guests the opportunity upgrade to a waffle cone if they donated \$1 to Appalachian Bear Rescue. In addition, a table was set up to showcase Bennie and Jerry Bear by showing a video of the two little cubs and offering adoption packages and ABR T-shirts for donations. The total amount raised during the eight-hour event was \$1,660! It was a successful day for ABR and for Ben&Jerry's, and we thank Julie for inviting us to participate. We will look forward to another Free Cone Day next year. The event is definitely a win-win for Ben & Jerry's and for ABR!

A big "thank you" to Julie Williams and her enthusiastic "Scoopers," and to our ABR volunteers, all of whom contributed to the success of Free Cone Day.



ABR VOLUNTEERS ARE NOW "BETTY'S BEARS!"

By DiAnne Wilson, Volunteer Coordinator

A big announcement was made at our first volunteer get-together of the year held on April 13, 2013. Our wonderful ABR volunteer group will now be called "Betty's Bears." This name commemorates Betty Jones, a beloved friend of ABR, who passed away in November 2012. Betty was committed to helping further ABR's mission to care for black bear cubs in need and she was known for her tirelessness, her organizational skills and her ability to "get the job done." Above all, she loved the bears. Her legacy will be honored and will continue through the work of all of "Betty's Bears!"

We were pleased to have sixteen volunteers at the meeting, with seven brand new to ABR. Also present were Education/Outreach Coordinator Kathy Sherrard; ABR President Dana Dodd and newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator DiAnne Wilson (me).

We were very encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment displayed by all. Attendees were given an overview of ABR, some volunteer training guidelines and the opportunity to become involved in upcoming events and programs. Each participant received a packet of volunteer materials to take home and read.

Dana Dodd gave an informative introduction to our very important Bear Necessities event coming up in September. This is the perfect opportunity for Betty's Bears to shine. With the dedication of our talented volunteers, this special night can be a huge success on behalf of ABR in its mission to save black bear cubs!

When asked for ideas to make Betty's Bears a better volunteer experience, the group consensus was that the biggest improvement needed is communication. We came away with

HOW TO GET EATEN BY A BEAR – COMPLACENCY, AMONG OTHER THINGS...

By Joel G. Zachry, M.S.

"Joel, STOP! Bear...right!"

This is not what you want to hear in an urgent whisper from your spouse hiking behind you in grizzly country.

We were deep in Alaska's Wrangell St. Elias National Park outside the old Kennicott mining district on a trail that parallels the Kennicott Glacier. To add to this anxious moment we had stepped over at least three immense piles of fresh berry-laden bear droppings, certain to be black bears if not grizzlies, in our mile-long journey through dense overhanging alders.

We had entered the downward side of an avalanche shoot, one of the tundra's richest habitat sites providing lush feeding opportunities for bruin, both black and brown. Experienced and knowledgeable about bears and our Alaskan surroundings, still we had for a moment become complacent, and thus, inexcusably careless while traveling in bear country.

In an instant the bear had made the decision from its grazing point about forty yards away, that we were not a threat and certainly of no value worth pursuing for nourishment. As our vital signs began returning to normal the bear simply moved up the bank away from us and Kathy urged our departure despite my lingering and eagerness for pictures of the retreat.

Had this been a lone grizzly or mother bear with cubs, black or brown, the outcome could have been much worse. Mother bears will fiercely defend their offspring from any perceived threat.

The four situations whereby hikers generally have unfavorable encounters with large mammals, and let's not

limit it to bears, for elk can be just as foreboding, are: a.) a mother with her young, b.) surprise, c.) crowding and d.) issues with food. Most hikers already know this, however becoming complacent and assuming that "it won't happen to me" is what most often gets us into trouble outside the comforts of home.

Yet, it is more than just about "us" as we enjoy the great outdoors. It is about acting responsibly so that we do not cause the demise of these magnificent animals that draw us to the wilderness from our computers, hot tubs and big screen televisions. Very often when we have a dangerous encounter with a large mammal, such as a black bear, we are the intruder and the animal suffers the consequences of our poor choices or bad behavior.

When carelessness on our part causes a bear to become threatening, especially when the individual bites or mauls the perpetrator, the overseeing agency has no choice but to capture and euthanize the animal. Society demands it and all involved lose in this scenario.

Wildlife biologists, officers and rangers prepare for their careers focusing on biology – the study of living things. Therefore, they take no pleasure in having to euthanize a lone animal or a mother and her cubs because a careless hiker gets too close and is injured as a result of the animal simply defending its space or young.

Certainly, the individual who may have required fifty stitches in their scalp lost but their behavior also resulted in the loss of one or more animals simply reacting from instinct. Finally, the individual whose admiration for

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several interesting ideas and immediately went to work to find ways to not only improve the communication methods we currently use, and to help Betty's Bears become a more cohesive group. Betty's Bears plan to meet again in June.

Our volunteers have been very active during April, and have participated in several events. There are more planned for May and beyond.

This is an exciting time to be involved with ABR and we would like to invite you to become involved in Betty's Bears. There is something for everyone. We truly have a great time working together for ABR's Bennie, Jerry, and Carrie Bear and for all of the cubs to come.

If you would like more information on becoming a volunteer, please go to ABRTN.org and click on "Volunteer."

