

IDNR Monitoring Reports Of Black Bear Sightings

by Submitted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources
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SPRINGFIELD – Wildlife biologists and conservation police from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) are monitoring reports of black bear sightings in Lake County.

The most recent sighting occurred in a backyard in Antioch during the weekend. The bear's current location is unknown at this time, and IDNR has received no further reports of sightings since early Sunday morning near Antioch.

Wildlife biologists believe the Antioch bear is likely the same black bear that was seen in Gurnee last week. Bears are known to travel long distances. This particular bear has not caused any problems, and IDNR encourages people to let it continue its movement without interference.

Should anyone see a bear, IDNR encourages them to report it online at <https://bit.ly/IDNRwildlifereport>. IDNR further recommends that people who live in the vicinity of a confirmed bear sighting secure their garbage cans and barbecue grills indoors and stop feeding birds for a few days.

In the event of a bear encounter:

- Do not run.
- Do not surprise the bear. Make noise to ensure it's aware of your presence. A black bear is not likely to attack a person unless it feels trapped or provoked.
- Respect the bear's space, and do not approach the animal.
- If the bear sees you, stand your ground; look as large as possible by standing up straight and putting your arms up in the air and slowly back away.
- If possible, go inside a building or get into a vehicle. Black bears display two types of behavior—defensive and offensive.
 - A bear may swat at the ground or surrounding vegetation, lunge toward you, vocalize, blow air out of its mouth, or pop its jaws. These defensive behaviors are used to warn you to move away. Slowly back away from the bear.
 - With offensive behavior, the bear will move toward you quickly. If you have food with you, drop the food, and keep moving away from the bear.
 - If a black bear makes contact with you, always try to fight it off. **Do not play dead.**

For more information about black bears, visit:

IDNR's Wildlife Illinois page: <https://bit.ly/IDNRblackbearinfo>

The Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies' BearWise page at <https://bearwise.org>.