



Black Bear

(*Ursus americanus*)

Order: Carnivora **Family:** Ursidae

SIZE: Average Weight in Arizona, 150-300 lbs.; height at shoulder, 3-3 ½ feet; length 4 ½ - 6 ¼ feet. Males much larger than females.

DESCRIPTION: Black bears have a variety of color phases: black, brown, cinnamon, blond, also a "blue" phase occurs in some areas. Snout tan or grizzled. Small, rounded ears. Small eyes set close together. Smaller in size than the grizzly bear.

LOCOMOTION: Has a shuffling, clumsy walk. Can trot up to 30 mph in short bursts. Powerful swimmer. Will climb trees for food or protection.

SENSES: Excellent sense of smell. Poor vision.

HABITS: Found in wooded mountains, forests and swamps. Primarily nocturnal, although it may be seen any time, day or night. Has a home range of 8-15 square miles. Solitary except during breeding season and when gathering to feed at dumps. Fattens up during the fall, then stops eating a few days prior to denning up for the winter. It then consumes roughage, such as pine needles, leaves, and hair which forms an anal plug that is passed when the bear emerges in the spring.

DIET: Berries, nuts, roots, fruit, twigs, buds, inner bark, leaves, insects, fish, small mammals and honey.

RANGE: Found throughout most of Canada, Alaska, south on West Coast through northern California, in Rocky Mountain states to Mexico, and parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New England, Florida, and Louisiana.

FAMILY LIFE: Black bears produce one litter every other year. Mating occurs in June or July. A litter of 1-5 cubs are born in January – early February while the female is denned up. Cubs are born with very little fur and are the size of rats. While the mother sleeps in the den, the cubs nestle into her fur and nurse.

NESTING: Makes den in a sheltered place, such as a cave, hollow tree or log, rocky crevice or the roots of a fallen tree.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

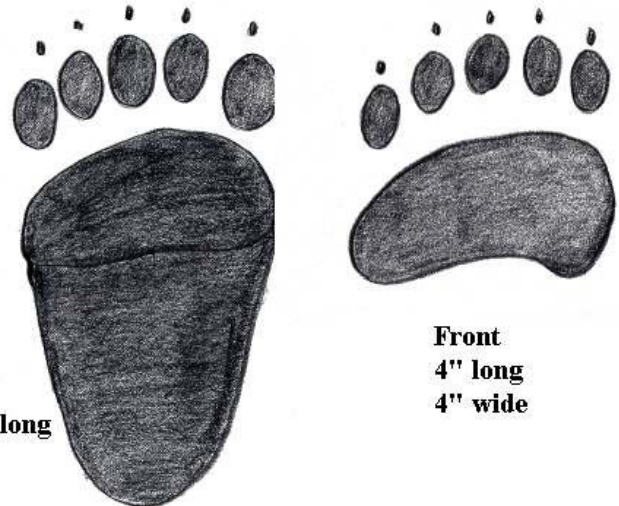
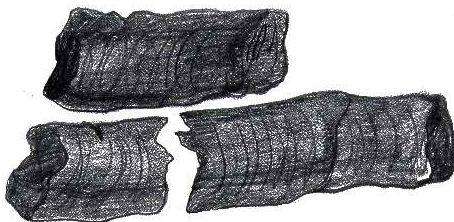
- Although Black bears become inactive and den up during the winter months, they do not go into a true "hibernation."
- Black bears in Arizona are sometimes active in winter
- Although classified as a carnivore, most of the Black bears diet consists of vegetation.

Track

Adult Black Bear

Front tracks about 4 in. long and 4 in. wide. There may be a small heel mark on the front as well, but it usually does not show.

Claws extend about 1 1/2 in. beyond toe tracks



Scat

Looks similar to domestic dog. When broken into segments it contains insects, leaves, berries, grass and other vegetable matter.

When berries are in season scat
will be loose like a cow dung



Range

Throughout the United States,
Southwestern Canada,
to Southern Mexico.