

Seeley Swan Pathfinder -

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Bear Fair shares preventative information

By [Jean Pocha](#)
of the Pathfinder



Jean Pocha, Pathfinder

Carnivore questions were answered by Aubrey LaBarre, seasonal black bear technician.

A full-body elk mount carrying panniers helped attract 200-250 people to the Bear Fair on the Little Bird lawn June 18. More than eight organizations hosted tables with displays and information for people to learn a bear smart lifestyle.

"The last Bear Fair in Seeley Lake was 21 years ago," said Patti Bartlett, organizer of the Bear Fair. "It was time to have another one with all the new people in the area so we can all be safer wherever we live."

There are about 100 food-conditioned black bears in the Seeley Lake area and up to 10 food-conditioned grizzlies, according to Jamie Jonkel, Region 2 Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Bear Management Specialist

Clearwater Valley Bear Smart raffled off 30 cans of bear spray donated by Defenders of Wildlife. Vicki Voegelin of Seeley Lake won a bear resistant garbage container donated by People and Carnivores of Bozeman.

"My objective is to start having community meetings to find out what can be done to help people deal with bears and address the issues people have," Bartlett said.

"Last year a black bear entered a tent in Seeley Lake that a person was in, with their food," Bartlett said. "Thankfully the bear left without any damage."

"A fed bear is often a dead bear," Jonkel said. "It's up to residents to keep their garbage and other attractants picked up and securely stored in bear proof containers so bears do not become food-conditioned from human resources."

If anyone sees a bear near their home, please call Montana FWP 1-406-542-5500.

Connect With Us

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