and hearing, about equal to a human being, she said.

during warm summer weather, to avoid other predators.

elk and pronghorns available, the potential for trouble can cause them to gain weight for winter hibernation. Bears will put their “bear brains” on, the time when encounters are most likely to happen.

Grizzly natural history

Grizzlies are an endangered species.

Some bears, especially grizzlies, and black bears.

Black bears are quite numerous and are often mistaken for grizzlies, due to the color variations in the fur of all bears.

Black bears can range from a cinnamon and almost black coat to coal black. Oyler pointed to the two moonlight black bears behind her, noting that the coloration of the two, a 125 pound female, was a three-year-old with the classic black coat, the larger, cinnamon-colored bear, was a mix of 235 pounds.

Grizzlies also range in colors from brown to “grizzled,” brown bear with black tips.

The best ways to differentiate grizzly from black bears is to focus on three traits.

• Size – Grizzlies are usually larger than black bears. The mounted grizzly behind Oyler weighed 560 pounds, she said. But that isn’t always so.

• Humped shoulder blades – Grizzlies have distinctive hump behind their shoulder blades, black bears don’t.

• Dished face – Black bear tend to have elongated eyes and pointed ears.

The annual cycle of a grizzly’s life begins when an egg is fertilized. In a female grizzly, the fertilized egg begins its journey toward the uterus, but may not implant.

A fertilized egg in a female grizzly may not implant if the bear is in poor health, the egg will not implant and she will bear young; if not, the egg doesn’t implant. This is one of many factors to consider when deciding if a grizzly is pregnant.

It’s not until the bear enters hibernation again – usually in March in the Yellowstone ecosystem, Oyler said.

Bear encounters

Both of Montana’s bears can cause problems for people. Yet according to Primm, the likelihood of being killed by a grizzly is really quite rare.

Bear aware

Far less common is the predatory bear; it views a human as prey. This bear is locked on to you, it will stalk you, circle around, follow.

Avoiding bear encounters is a matter of being aware and pro-active thinking, Oyler said.

• Location – Think bear in areas that have water, berries, and a place to cool down.

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• Make noise – Loud human voices and clapping cans filled with stream pebbles can be rattled to produce noise, too.

• Stay alert – Be in tune with the environment.

• Location – Think bear in areas that have water, berries, and a place to cool down.

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• Travel in groups – Oyler recommended three or more people in a group. In Yellowstone National Park, 91 percent of bear attacks happened to people or more people in a group. In Yellowstone National Park, 91 percent of bear attacks happened to people.

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Avoid summer Repair and Paving Scams

- Arrive in a vehicle that does not have company name, ad, or phone number on it.
- Check their work history; a nearby and helpful member of law enforcement can do your job for a discount.
- How much has the "start immoderately" on your project.
- Know they are a contractor, remember to:
  - Research similar projects.
  - Learn the best way to complete it and how much it should cost.
  - Ask for license and permits are required for the project.
  - Demand in writing who will be responsible for obtaining the licenses and permits.
  - Contact local, reputable contractors.
  - Get at least three written bids.
  - Don't feel comfortable with a bid, don't be afraid to say no.
  - Check references.
  - Contact the Montana Office of Consumer Protection to see if any formal complaints have been filed against your potential contractor.

- Don't believe what you read in a contractor's ad. Check for yourself to make sure he has a license, insurance, and bonding.
- Ensure the contractor is registered to do business in the state by checking online at www.consumerprotection.mt.gov or by calling the Montana Department of Labor at (406) 444-7774.
- Avoid payments of advance fees. Demand a written contract that includes dates, expected completion, and an upfront deposit.
- Payment schedules, a list of materials, quality grade, and color, any guarantees or warranties, and dated about the project.

To report an apparent scam, call the local consumer事务局 or the Montana Department of Labor at (406) 444-7774.

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HILLTOP – Home repair and improvement scams flourish in warm weather or in the fall. Avoid leaving natural disasters.

The Montana Department of Justice’s Office of Consumer Protection warns Montanans when selecting a contractor to do paving, roofing, or unneeded projects.

“Scammers use well-informed consumers,” Attorney General Tim Fox said. “We urge all contractors, vendors, and storm chasers, learn more about the high-pressure sales tactics contractors typically use. To help learn some helpful tips from my Office of Consumer Protection can help you avoid being taken advantage of by scammers.” Attorney General Fox added.

Tips for fly-by-night paving or storm-chasing repair avoiders include individuals who:

- Use high-pressure sales tactics.
- arrive in a vehicle that does not have company name, ad, or phone number on it.
- Have the ability to “start immediately” on your project.
- Know they are a contractor, remember to:
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