

KNOW THE BEAR FACTS FOR KIDS

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Black Bears in New Jersey Activity Guide





BLACK BEARS?

Black bears live in New Jersey. They were here long before people were. About 100 years ago, black bears were almost gone from the state because the forests in which they make their homes were being cut down for lumber, farming and towns. Today, there are more black bears and more people than ever before.

Black bears are now recognized as an important natural resource in New Jersey and part of the state's natural heritage. They have been sighted in each of New Jersey's 21 counties. People can see bears in forests when they are hiking and camping, and some people even see bears in their yards.

It is important to remember that black bears are large, wild animals. If you see a black bear, you should never go near it. Instead, watch it from far away. Never feed or try to pet a black bear. Black bears learn very quickly. If they learn to associate people with food, they may lose their fear of people, which can be dangerous. Treat black bears with respect.

This activity book contains valuable information that you can use to learn more about black bears. You will also learn what to do if you see a black bear, as well as things that you can do to help make sure black bears and people get along safely in New Jersey.

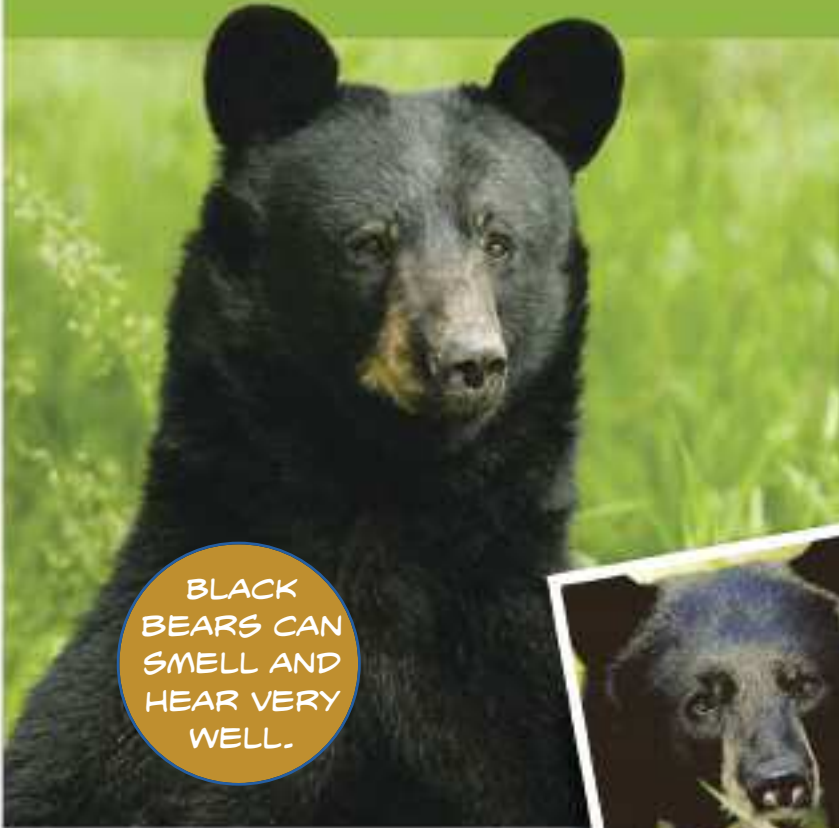




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THE FACTS ABOUT BLACK BEARS



BLACK BEARS CAN SMELL AND HEAR VERY WELL.

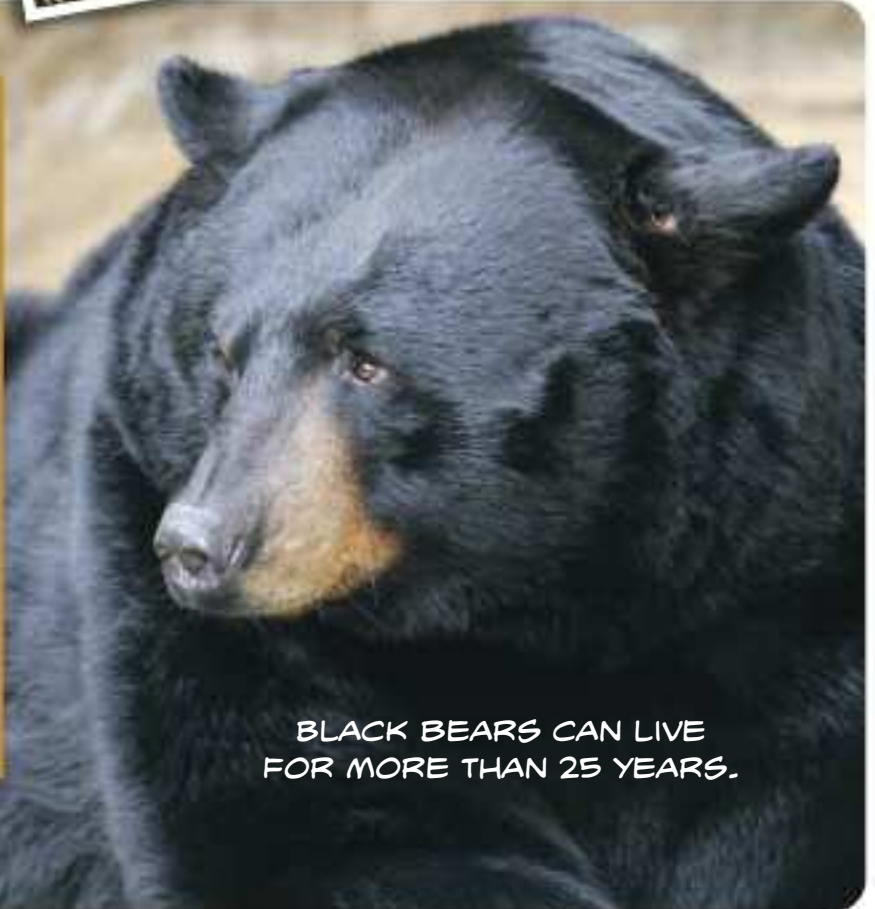


Black bears are the largest land mammal in New Jersey. Adult female bears, called sows, weigh about 175 pounds. Adult male bears, called boars, weigh around 400 pounds. Black bears are about 3 feet high when standing on all four feet and 5 feet to 7 feet tall when standing upright.

BEARS LIVE IN VARIOUS TYPES OF HABITAT, LIKE HARDWOOD FORESTS, DENSE SWAMPS AND FORESTED WETLANDS.

Black bears are omnivores. They eat plants like skunk cabbage, grasses, berries, acorns and nuts. They also eat bees, ants, termites, a variety of small to medium sized animals, and dead animals. Bears will also eat garbage.

Not all black bears have black fur. Some bears may be brown or cinnamon-colored and some have a white patch of hair on their chests called a chest blaze.



BLACK BEARS CAN LIVE FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS.



THEY CAN CLIMB TREES AND THEY ARE STRONG SWIMMERS.

Cubs grow very quickly and they weigh about 80 pounds by the time they are one year old. They remain with their mother for one and a half years and at this age, they are called yearlings. Once the yearlings leave their mother, they go to live in their own area, called a home range.



Black bears spend the winter in dens to avoid cold weather and the lack of food in forests. They make their dens in rock cavities, hollow trees, in nests on the ground and beneath branch piles. Inside of their dens, they go into a long winter's sleep, called torpor. They are not true hibernators, so they may wake up and leave their dens to search for food on mild winter days.

Adult females give birth in dens to baby bears called cubs. Cubs are born in January and weigh between 8 ounces and 16 ounces. They are born blind, covered with fine hair and they nurse on their mother's milk.



Female bears may give birth to 1 cub to 5 cubs at a time, but 3 is the average litter size in New Jersey.



LIVING WITH BLACK BEARS

COLOR IN THE PICTURES WHILE YOU LEARN ABOUT LIVING WITH BLACK BEARS.



Black bears and people live close together in parts of New Jersey. It is important for people to do what they can to make sure that black bears stay wild and that they do not get food from people. Bears can smell extremely well and their sense of smell may lead them into your yard in search of food. Black bears will try to eat your garbage, birdseed or pet food if it is available in your yard. People should never feed black bears either on purpose or by accident. It is against the law, and it is dangerous!



Black bears will try to eat your garbage if it is available to them. At home, you and your family should keep your garbage in certified bear-resistant containers. Otherwise, keep your garbage in a secure location where bears are unlikely to see or smell it, and only put it outside on the morning of garbage collection. Help your family wash the garbage cans once a week with disinfectant solution to make sure they do not smell and attract bears.



Bears will also eat pet food if it is available in your yard. If you have pets, try not to feed them outside. If you do, feed them only during the day and clean up any food that they do not eat. Bring the food bowl inside after your pet is done eating. Pets that stay outside need to be kept safe from bears. Protect them by bringing them inside at night or having your parents secure their pen. Also make sure you walk your dog on a leash.



Birdseed also attracts bears so you should not feed the birds if you live around black bears. If your family does feed the birds, only feed them in the winter when bears are in their dens. Hang your birdfeeder at least 10 feet off the ground and at least 10 feet away from the tree branches so that the bear will not be able to get it. Every day you should pick up any seeds that spill on the ground.



When you go camping in areas with black bears, make sure you keep a clean campsite. Do not keep food or things that smell like food in or near your tent, sleeping bag or backpack. Store your food items and other sweet-smelling items such as toothpaste in the trunk of your car. If you go hiking, make noises by singing or talking to alert bears to your presence. Keep your pets on a leash and be on the lookout for bears.

IF YOU SEE A BLACK BEAR...



Bears can make a lot of noise, so they may huff, snap their jaws and slap the ground if they think you are too close. Back away slowly.

A bear that stands on its back legs probably just wants to see and smell you better. Do not be afraid. Let a bear know you are there by waving your arms and talking to it.

If a bear comes toward you,
DO NOT RUN!
Back away slowly and get to a safe area.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS THAT YOU SHOULD FOLLOW IF YOU SEE A BEAR:

IF A BEAR COMES INTO YOUR YARD OR YOU SEE ONE WHILE CAMPING, DO NOT BE AFRAID, BUT REMEMBER THAT BEARS ARE NOT TAME ANIMALS. THEY ARE WILD CREATURES.

- Do not get scared and do not run.
- Do not go near the black bear.
- Never feed the bear!
- Talk to the bear to let it know you are there.
- Do not look directly into the bear's eyes.
- Make sure the bear can get out of your yard or campground easily if it wants to leave. Do not stand in front of the exit!
- Make lots of noise. It could scare the bear away.
- If you are playing with friends, get in a big group. Talk and wave your arms. You will look really big and the bear might leave.
- Always tell your parents if you see a bear!

PUZZLES AND GAMES

BEAR ATTRACTANTS

CIRCLE THE
BLACK BEAR
ATTRACTANTS
IN THIS
PICTURE!



HOW DO YOU COMPARE TO A BLACK BEAR?

The average height of an adult male black bear standing upright:		Your height:	
The weight of an adult male black bear:		Your weight:	
The average weight of a 1-year-old male black bear:		Your weight at 1 year of age:	
The average birth weight of a black bear cub:		Your birth weight:	
The average number of cubs that a black bear has per litter:		Average number of babies your mom had at one time:	
The length of time a cub stays with its mother:		Number of years you will probably stay at home:	
The range of a black bear's life span:		Average person's life span:	

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BLACK BEAR WORD SEARCH

E I N C F S X Y C Y A E A K X
 R Z U U N C E F T P T E O T T
 E B A R I A W I V R T R K S F
 S G O L R S V O E N R T M I T
 T C A L B A A E S H A W S T A
 A O I B C T C N H K C O O B T
 P N R K R L S Q C B T L M O I
 G S C P I A Y E X E A L N A B
 J O Q M O V G P H Y N O I R A
 R Q B H I R M X T C T H V B H
 S E I R R E B C Z G S U O P U
 R E D E E F D R I B C P R K R
 B L A C K B E A R N E D E T D
 M A M M A L O C A A Z Z L U V
 D W X O A K D R N N C D J M B

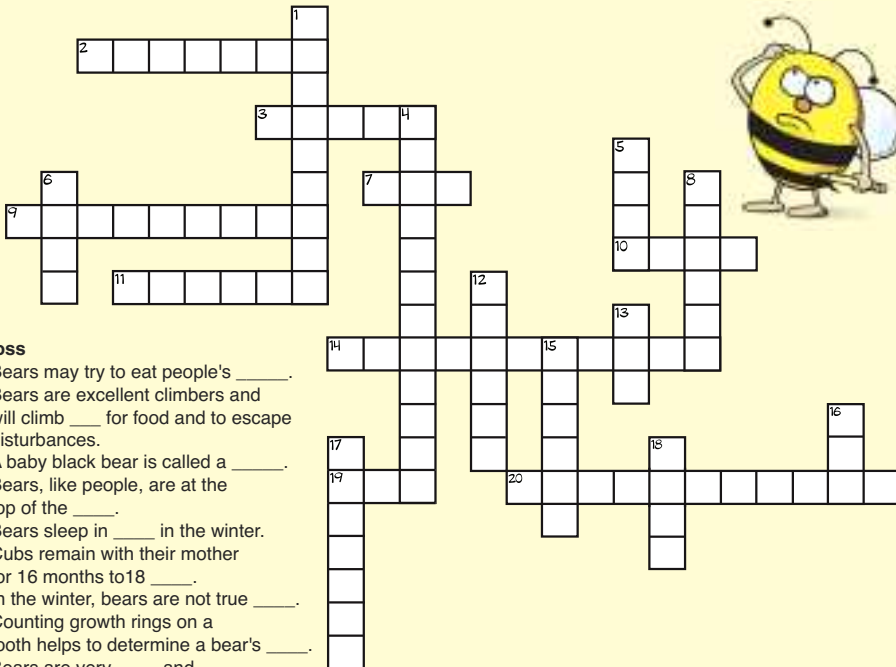
ACORNS
 BOAR
 HABITAT
 ROCK CAVITY
 ATTRACTANTS
 CHEST BLAZE
 HOLLOW TREE
 SOW
 BERRIES
 CUBS
 MAMMAL
 TORPOR
 BIRDFEEDER
 DEN
 NUISANCE
 TREE CLIMBER
 BLACK BEAR
 OMNIVORE

DEN MAZE

HELP
 THE SLEEPY
 BEAR FIND
 ITS DEN



BLACK BEAR CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

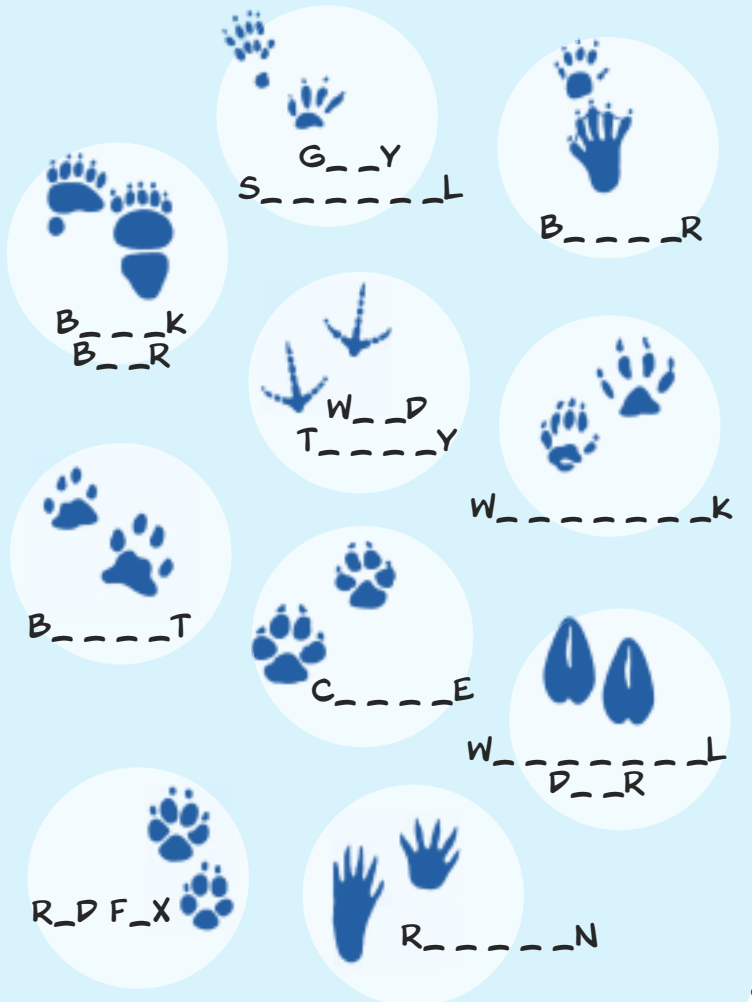
- 2 Bears may try to eat people's _____.
- 3 Bears are excellent climbers and will climb _____ for food and to escape disturbances.
- 7 A baby black bear is called a _____.
- 9 Bears, like people, are at the top of the _____.
- 10 Bears sleep in _____ in the winter.
- 11 Cubs remain with their mother for 16 months to 18 _____.
- 14 In the winter, bears are not true _____.
- 19 Counting growth rings on a tooth helps to determine a bear's _____.
- 20 Bears are very _____ and problem-solve to get food.

Down

- 1 _____ are bears between 12 and 18 months old.
- 4 In spring, _____ is a major food source for bears.
- 5 Never _____ a black bear or any wild animal.
- 6 An adult male black bear is called a _____.
- 8 Cubs weigh 8 ounces to 16 _____ at birth.
- 12 In winter, bears go into a state of _____ to fend off hunger.
- 13 An adult female black bear is called a _____.
- 15 In fall, _____ are an important food source for bears.
- 16 Always back away from a bear. Do not _____.
- 17 Mother bears give birth to baby bears during the month of _____.
- 18 _____ marks can be found on telephone poles.

ANIMAL TRACKS

WHAT WILDLIFE FOUND IN NEW JERSEY MADE THESE TRACKS?



BLACK BEAR MATCHING



Rock Cavity Den Bear Attractant Ground Nest Curious Bear

GLOSSARY

ATTRACTANTS-Items that may attract black bears to your yard or campsite because of their smell.

BOAR-An adult male black bear.

CUB-A young black bear that is less than one year old.

DEN-A home for wild animals. Black bears sleep in dens during the cold months of the year.

HABITAT-The area where black bears naturally live, grow and reproduce. Black bear habitat provides the animal with adequate food, water, shelter and living space.

HOME RANGE-The area an animal uses to meet its normal requirements for food, water and cover.

LITTER-The young born at the same time to a female black bear.

MAMMAL-A warm-blooded animal with a backbone and fur or hair that feeds its young with the mother's milk.

NATURAL RESOURCE-Something that is found in nature that is valuable to people.

OMNIVORE-An animal that eats both plants and other animals.

SOW-An adult female black bear.

TORPOR-The state of inactivity that some animals, like black bears, fall into during the colder months of the year.

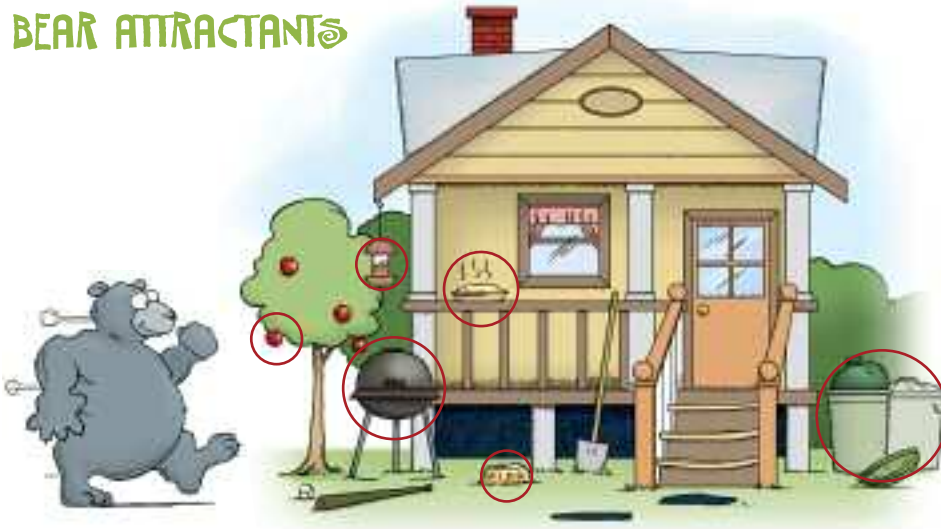
YEARLING-A black bear that is between one and two years old.



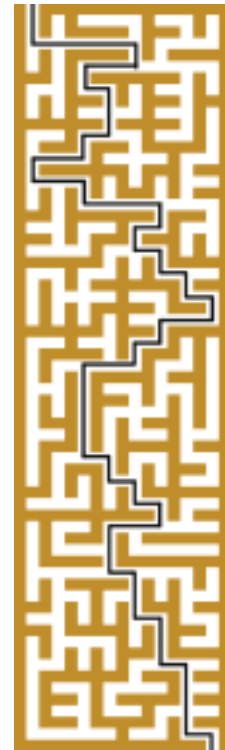
ANSWERS TO PUZZLES AND GAMES



BEAR ATTRACTANTS



DEN MAZE



BLACK BEAR CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 2 Bears may try to eat people's **garbage**.
- 3 Bears are excellent climbers and will climb **trees** for food and to escape disturbances.
- 7 A baby black bear is called a **cub**.
- 9 Bears, like people, are at the top of the **foodchain**.
- 10 Bears sleep in **dens** in the winter.
- 11 Cubs remain with their mother for 16 months to 18 **months**.
- 14 In the winter, bears are not true **hibernators**.
- 19 Counting growth rings on a tooth helps to determine a bear's **age**.
- 20 Bears are very **intelligent** and problem-solve to get food.

Down

- 1 **Yearlings** are bears between 12 and 18 months old.
- 4 In spring, **skunk cabbage** is a major food source for bears.
- 5 Never **feed** a black bear or any wild animal.
- 6 An adult male black bear is called a **boar**.
- 8 Cubs weigh 8 ounces to 16 **ounces** at birth.
- 12 In winter, bears go into a state of **torpor** to fend off hunger.
- 13 An adult female black bear is called a **sow**.
- 15 In fall, **acorns** are an important food source for bears.
- 16 Always back away from a bear. Do not **run**.
- 17 Mother bears give birth to baby bears during the month of **January**.
- 18 **Claw** marks can be found on telephone poles.

BLACK BEAR WORD SEARCH



ANIMAL TRACKS

From left to right

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| BLACK BEAR | BOBCAT |
| GRAY SQUIRREL | COYOTE |
| BEAVER | WHITETAIL DEER |
| WILD TURKEY | RED FOX |
| WOODCHUCK | RACCOON |

BLACK BEAR MATCHING



Curious Bear



Ground Nest

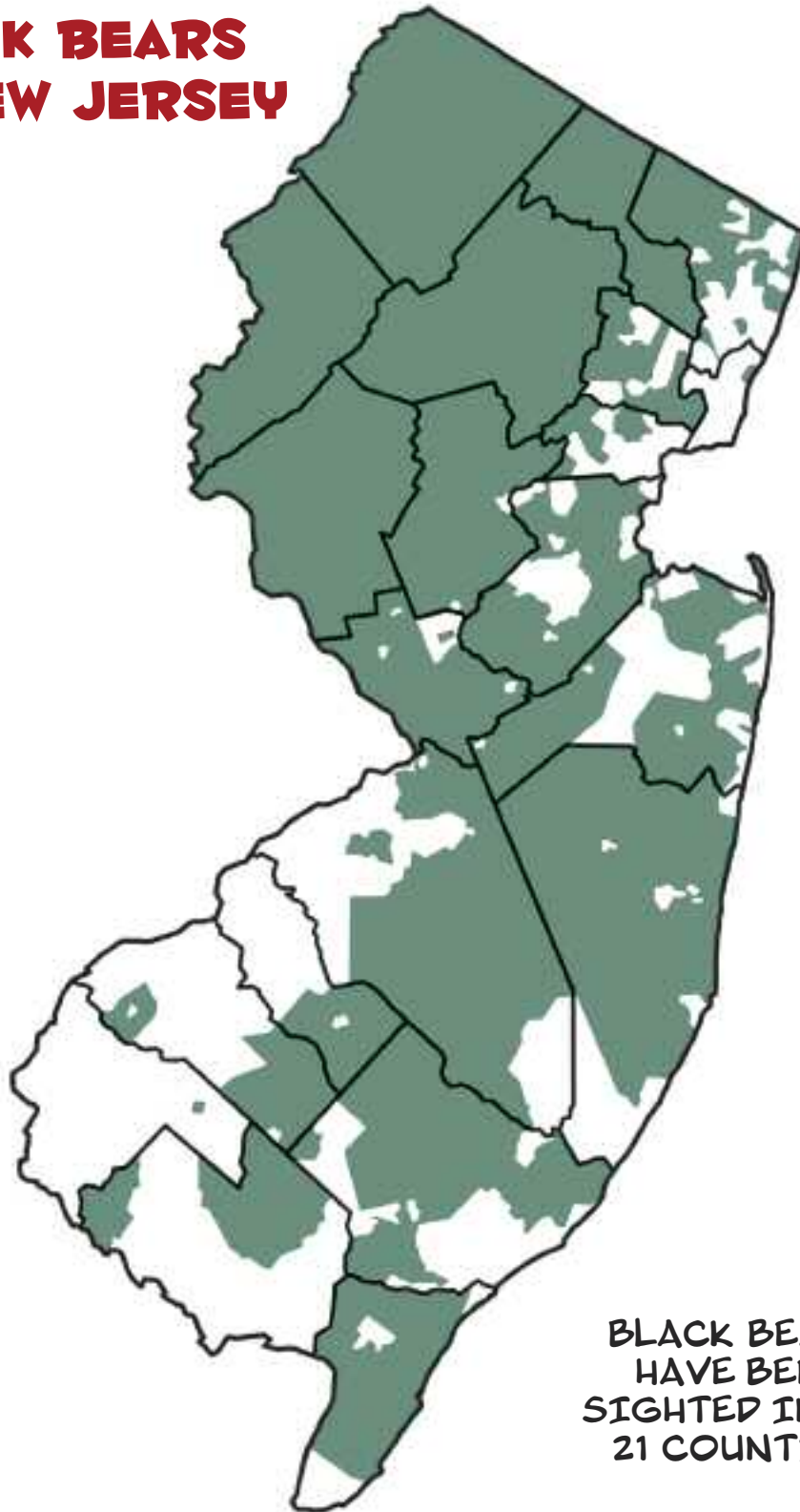


Bear Attractant



Rock Cavity Den

BLACK BEARS IN NEW JERSEY



**BLACK BEARS
HAVE BEEN
SIGHTED IN ALL
21 COUNTIES**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NEW JERSEY'S BLACK BEARS, VISIT
WWW.NJFISHANDWILDLIFE.COM