

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hunter Land Access

Hunters, it is your responsibility to know where you are, to know who owns the land, and to know what access restrictions apply.

Block Management

The Block Management Program is a public hunting access program in which FWP enters into contractual agreements with private landowners (and sometimes public land management agencies) about how free public hunting access will be permitted and managed on enrolled lands. Through the contractual agreement, a private landowner agrees to allow public hunting on enrolled lands under specified conditions, and FWP agrees to assist the landowner by enforcing the ranch rules adopted through the Block Management contract. FWP annually publishes a Hunting Access Guide by August 15th that lists the Block Management Areas (BMAs) enrolled for that year and explains how to gain access to them. For general information about the program, contact FWP at 406-444-2505.

Fishing Access Sites

Many of Montana's Fishing Access Sites (FAS) offer hunting opportunities, however certain restrictions may apply such as no-hunting safety zones and/or restrictions on the type of hunting weapon or firearm that may be used. Refer to the Fishing Access Site website at myfwp.mt.gov/fishMT/index for site specific information, opportunities and restrictions.

Montana State Parks

Some of Montana's State Parks provide hunting opportunities; however certain restrictions may apply such as no-hunting safety zones and/or restrictions on the type of hunting weapon or firearm that may be used. Contact the specific park and/or refer to the Montana State Park website at stateparks.mt.gov for site specific information regarding hunting opportunities and restrictions.

Private Land Access

Montana law requires permission for all hunting on private land. See page 31 for information on FWP's Block Management Program.

Public Land Access

- Public lands closed to hunting include:
 - National Parks and other areas administered by the National Park Service.
 - National Wildlife Refuge lands except those areas designated open to public hunting.
- For hunting opportunities on federal lands such as U.S. Forest Service or U.S. Bureau of Land Management, inquire at the local federal office.

- It is unlawful to post, place signs or mark state or federal land other than that done by a state or federal land agency.

Railroad Access

Railroads and railroad right-of-ways are **private** property and may not be hunted without permission, nor should they be used as access to other lands (private or public) without explicit permission from the railroad.

Reservation Lands

Please contact the appropriate Tribal Government for information.

State Game Preserves

State Game Preserves may or may not be open to hunting. See Restricted Area Descriptions, see pages 28-30.

State School Trust Lands

- A Conservation License provides hunters, anglers and trappers access to lawfully accessible State School Trust lands.
- Overnight (2 night) camping is allowed within 200 feet of a lawful access point.
- Motorized travel is only allowed on public roads or on roads designated as open.
- Firearms may not be discharged within one-quarter mile of inhabited dwellings or outbuildings on state trust lands without permission of the inhabitant.
- Game retrieval is by foot or horse only.
- No open fires are allowed except in designated campground fire pits.
- Additional information is available from FWP or contact DNRC at (406) 444-2074.

Other State Lands

Obtain permission from the appropriate land management agency.

State Wildlife Management Areas (WMA)

FWP's Wildlife Management Areas are generally open to hunting during the game animals hunting season. WMAs with game animal winter range are closed to public entry, unless otherwise posted, from the day following the end of the general deer-elk season or December 1, whichever is later, to noon on May 15 each year, as posted.

Exception: There are several exceptions to these guidelines. For WMA specific information, please call the Regional office (see page 114) for contact numbers) or visit the FWP website at: fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/wma/

Stream Access Law

The Stream Access Law does not allow for the hunting of game animals between the ordinary high water marks of streams and rivers without landowner permission.

Other Information

12-hour Closure

- In Administrative Region 4, elk HD 424 and HD 442 may be subject to a 12-hour closure for the antlerless portion of the general brow-tined bull or antlerless elk season.
- If the elk quota is reached, the general season will revert to only the brow-tined bull regulation until the end of the general season.
- Contact Region 4 Headquarters or the Augusta Check Station for updates (406-562-3467).

Donate Hunting License to Disabled Military Service Member or Veteran (MCA 87-2-815)

Residents and nonresidents can donate their Montana hunting license to a disabled military veteran or disabled active duty service member who is working with an organization that uses hunting as part of the rehabilitation process. The disabled person who receives the license will be a Purple Heart recipient and have a 70 percent or greater disability rating. Visit the website for more information: fwp.mt.gov/hunting/licenses/buyApply/donateLicense.html

Game Damage Hunt Roster Rules

- The game damage hunt roster is a randomized list of hunters' names. If FWP identifies a need to implement a game damage hunt, the game damage hunt roster will be used to select hunters. Selected hunters will be contacted by FWP.
- Sign-up for the game damage hunt roster is from June 15–July 15, 2019, and only on the FWP website through MyFWP.

Harvest Survey

Montana FWP conducts an annual telephone survey to gather hunting and harvest information from Montana hunters. Telephone interviewers call mid-week evenings and weekends to speak to hunters one-on-one to get the most accurate information possible. Wildlife managers use the results to evaluate hunting seasons and set quotas, season dates and other regulations.

Hunters Against Hunger

When you purchase a Montana hunting license you'll have an opportunity to make a donation of \$1 or more to Hunters Against Hunger. Contributions help pay for butchering and distribution of processed game donated to food banks.

Weed Control and Weed-Free Hay

Montana requires use of certified weed-free hay, grain, straw, mulch, cubes, and pelleted feed on state and federal lands. For further information, contact the Department of Agriculture at 406-444-3144.

Be Bear Aware!

Black bear hunters must be able to tell the difference between a grizzly and a black bear because grizzly bears cannot be lawfully hunted in Montana.

Three simple rules will help you make the right decision:

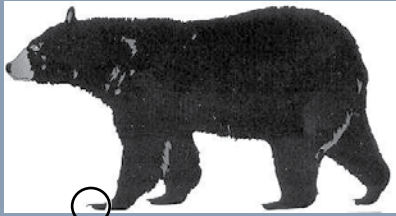
1. Learn how to identify bears.
2. Be absolutely sure of your target.
3. If in doubt, don't shoot.

Look for a combination of characteristics.

Their color and body size can be misleading!

Tall pointed ears No shoulder hump

Straight face profile

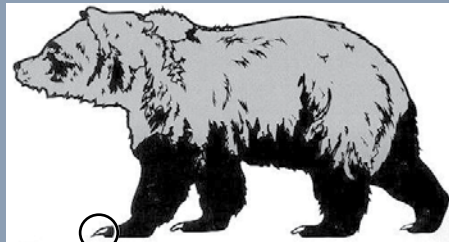


Short claws

BLACK BEAR

Short, rounded ears Shoulder hump

Dished face profile



Long claws

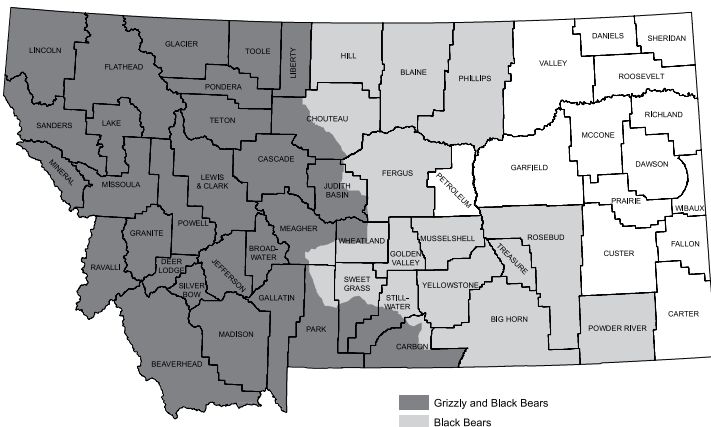
GRIZZLY BEAR

Mandatory bear identification testing is required to purchase a black bear license. Check FWP's website: fwp.mt.gov

Carry Bear Spray and Know How To Use It!

- Hunting puts you at risk of encountering a bear. Calling game and using scents may attract bears.
- If you hunt alone, let someone know about your plans. If you feel uneasy hunting alone, hunt with a partner.
- Pay attention to fresh bear sign. Communicate with others and let them know when bears have been seen and/or fresh sign observed.
- Some bears may move in the direction of a gunshot because they learned to associate the sound with a gut pile or carcass.
- The golden rule is "get the game animal out of the area as quickly as possible." The longer a carcass remains lying on the ground, hung up in camp, or stored in the back of a truck, the more likely it will be discovered by a bear.
- Carcasses left for a period of time require special care. Carry a colored, lightweight tarp or space blanket. Put the guts on the tarp and drag them a few hundred feet away from the carcass.
- Locate an observation point 200 yards (if possible) away from the carcass with a clear line of sight.
 - When returning, approach the observation point carefully. Yell or whistle repeatedly. With binoculars study the scene from the observation point and scan the area for the carcass and any movement. If a bear is at the site and refuses to leave or the meat has been covered up with debris by a bear, report the incident to FWP.
 - Do not attempt to frighten away or haze a bear, especially a grizzly.
- Bears are opportunists and change their behavior to take advantage of new food sources. Always assume that grizzlies are in the area and make sure your camps, cabins, and homes are bear proof, and that bear attractants are unavailable or contained.
- Mentally rehearse a worst-case scenario with encountering a bear. "If the mind has never been there before, the body does not know how to respond." The following is a list of recommended responses to minimize the likelihood of attack or chances of human injury:
 - Make certain you have bear spray at the ready and know how to use it. In sudden grizzly encounters, bear spray has proven effective. Bears sprayed in the face at close range often stop attacking.
 - Always maintain a safe distance from bears.
 - Stay calm.
 - Immediately pick up small children and stay in a group.
 - Behave in a non-threatening manner.
 - Speak softly.
 - Throw an object (like a hat or gloves) on the ground as you move away to distract the animal's attention.
 - Slowly back away, if possible. Keep a distance of at least 100 yards.
 - Do not run from a bear. Running may trigger a natural predator-prey attack response, and a bear can easily outrun the world's fastest human.
 - Don't climb a tree unless you are sure you can get at least 10' from the ground before the bear reaches you. Many experts recommend against climbing trees in most situations.
- Report encounters with Grizzly Bears to FWP at 1-800-TIP-MONT, U.S. Forest Service, or one of the nearest FWP bear management specialists listed below:
 - Kevin Frey, Bozeman, MT 406-994-3553
 - Mike Madel, Choteau, MT 406-466-5100
 - Wesley Sarmento, Conrad, MT 406-450-1097
 - Tim Manley, Kalispell, MT 406-250-1265
 - Kim Annis, Libby, MT 406-293-4161 x207
 - James Jonkel, Missoula, MT 406-542-5508
 - In an actual emergency, phone 9-1-1. Seeing a grizzly is not necessarily a reportable encounter or an emergency. Report encounters where the bear displayed aggressive or defensive behavior toward people, livestock or pets.

General Distribution of Bears in Montana



For more information visit:

fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/livingWithWildlife/beBearAware/

Recognizing A Wolf

Coyote



- 1.5 feet tall
- 4 feet long
- 30-40 pounds
- Narrow snout
- Pointed ears
- Color light gray to brown
- Track 2.5 inches wide, 2 to 2.5 inches long
- Claws evident

Wolf



- 2.5 feet tall
- 5-6 feet long
- 70-120 pounds
- Broad snout
- Round ears
- Color light gray to black
- Long, low howl
- Track 4.5 inches wide, 5 to 5.5 inches long
- Claws evident

What Should I Know About Wolves in Montana?

For the latest information about wolves and their management, go to FWP's website at: fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/wolf.

Wolves and Game Animals

- Wolves eat deer, elk, and other animals. In Montana, elk numbers in some areas have declined and so has hunter opportunity, due in part to wolf activity. Yet in other areas where wolves and elk interact, elk numbers are stable or increasing.
- When wolves are in an area, deer and elk use their habitats differently, often seeking greater cover. Hunters may need to adjust their strategies.
- FWP is increasing monitoring and research efforts to learn more about how wolves and animals interact in different places, and what that means for hunters.

Montana Wolf Basics

- Pack territories can cover 200 square miles or more.
- Packs range from two to 14 animals, averaging about 6.
- Wolves often travel separately or in smaller groups.
- Wolves travel widely throughout their territory in the fall.
- Wolves travel on roads and trails regularly.

Hunters Can Help FWP Monitor Wolves

Information provided by hunters during the annual harvest survey will help in the management of wolves. Your information helps FWP know more about wolf numbers and distribution in Montana.

To Report a Dead Wolf or Possible Unlawful Activity, Contact:

- Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:
1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)