

# Bear Facts

*Black Bears by nature tend to be wary of people. But should you encounter one, state wildlife staff offer these refreshers:*

- **Never Feed or approach a bear**
- **In an encounter or sighting, stay calm, make the bear aware you're there by speaking assertively or making other noises. Avoid direct eye contact and never run from a bear. Instead, slowly back away.**
- **Make sure the bear has an escape route. If a bear enters your home, give it escape routes by propping all doors open. To scare it away, make loud noises and make yourself look as big as possible by waving your arms. If you are with someone else, stand close together with your arms raised.**
- **If a bear huffs, makes popping sounds, and swats the ground, it means you're too close. Again, slowly back away, avoid direct eye contact and don't run. If a bear stands on its hind legs or moves closer, it may be trying to get a better idea of what it faces and isn't usually threatening to you. Attacks are extremely rare, but if it happens, fight back.**
- **Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" when feeling threatened or trying to steal food. Stand your ground, avoid direct eye contact, then slowly back away—don't run.**
- **If the bear does not leave, move to a secure area. Report bear damage or nuisance behavior to the Department of Environmental Protection's 24-hour, toll-free hotline at 1-877-WARN DEP (-877-927-6337).**
- **Families in black bear home territory should have a "Bear Plan" in place for children, with an escape route and planned use of loud noisemakers.**

*Source: N.J. Division of Fish and Wildlife, DEP.*