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 LARKSPUR RESIDENTS: BEARPROOFING SAVES BEARS

 April 2020

It is that time of year again! Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is beginning to receive reports of bear activity in the area. Most of the reports CPW receives annually involve bears getting into bird feeders and trash, as well as entering open, occupied garages. These calls are a weekly occurrence, with the peak of calls typically coming on and around trash pickup day.

Bears can easily become habituated to human-provided food, bird feeders, and trash, and they become bolder in their interactions with people as a result. Habituated bears that grow accustomed to humans can pose a risk to public safety. These animals are rarely relocated successfully, as they can and will travel hundreds of miles to return to their home areas. These among other factors often lead to the destruction of bears that have been allowed access to human related food sources.

Larkspur and Perry Park, like much of Douglas County, are located in ideal bear habitat. CPW expects bears to occupy the habitat surrounding these communities. However, if human food sources were minimized, bears would merely move through the area and retain their natural instincts for finding wild food with little human conflict or interaction. CPW does not relocate bears from areas considered bear habitat.

Citizens should take an active role in keeping themselves, their neighbors, and their property safe. This can be achieved by bear proofing your homes, living responsibly in bear country, and encouraging your neighbors to do the same. The protection of people and bears in your community rest largely upon you. CPW encourages citizens to:

* Remove all birdfeeders from Easter through Thanksgiving. If you want to attract birds, try using native gardens, flower pots, bird baths and nest boxes. Information on native gardens can be found at: <https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/native/FrontRange.pdf>
* Put trash out only on the morning of pickup. Do NOT leave trash out overnight. Download the fact sheet “Bearproofing your trash” from <https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlifeWildBears.aspx>
* Haze bears away from your property using noisemakers, such as banging pots and pans or blowing an air horn from a safe distance.
* Keep garage doors closed when not in use.
* Close and lock all ground level windows and doors to prevent easy access to the home interior.

CPW provides a variety of materials that citizens can access on how to bear-proof your home including “Bearproofing your home.” Please check out this helpful information online at <https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlifeWildBears.aspx>

If you have difficulty navigating the internet or do not have internet access, please call Colorado Parks and Wildlife at 303-291-7227 for more information.