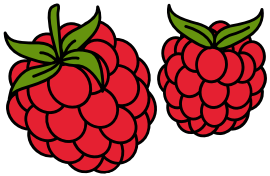


Get to know Black Bears



Some of Black Bear's Gifts

Black bears have so many gifts to share! One of them is their incredible sense of smell. They are able to smell food, a mate, their cubs or any danger from far away. Black bears are also incredibly strong climbers, swimmers and runners. These talents make this being a wonderful teacher, sharing knowledge on how we can use our unique abilities with strength, humility and courage.



Black Bear's Favourite Foods

Black bears are omnivores. During most of the year, black bears like to eat plants including their roots, leaves and berries. Black bears can also eat insects and any leftovers they are able to scavenge. But their favourite food is **SALMON!** During salmon season, they will catch fish as they jump out of the water or pounce on them as they swim by.



Bear's Nursery

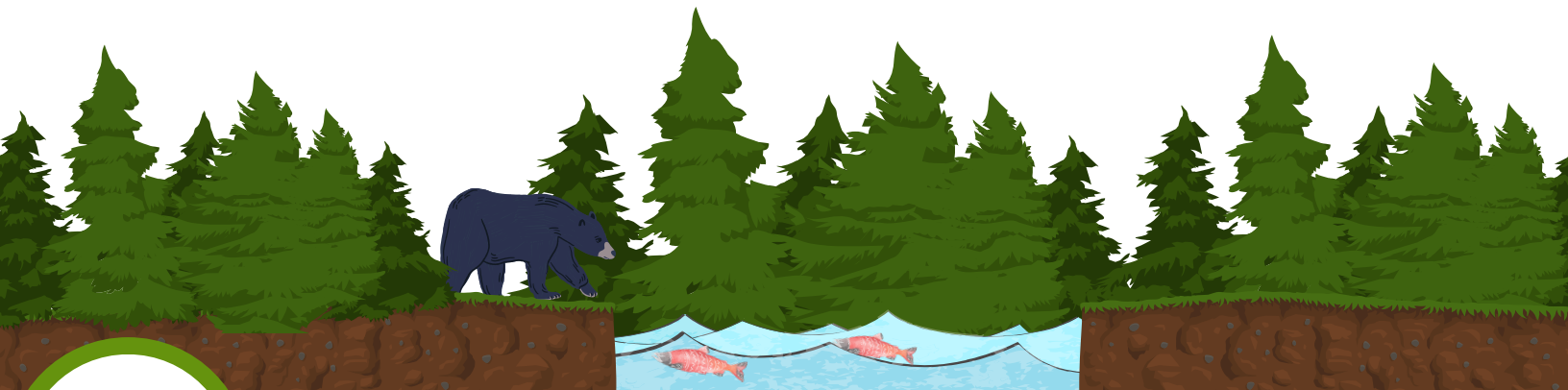
Expectant mothers will pick a cozy den to give birth during the cold winter months. The den acts as a nursery for the young cubs. The nursery keeps the family warm and dry – and out of sight from predators. Black bears on Vancouver Island especially love denning in the large, old, hollow trees found in intact forests. Right now, suitable bear denning sites are in decline across B.C. because of unsustainable logging practices. To learn more about this and take action, visit sierraclub.bc.ca/beardens/

Part of an interconnected forest community

Black bears are very important community members in coastal forests. Their place in the interconnected food web means that they play a key role in maintaining balance in their shared home. This includes helping feed their community by dispersing nutrients and seeds!

As black bears travel through the forest, eating their favourite berries, some of the seeds pass through their stomach and exit in their poop. These seeds are dropped far from the original parent plant and are ready to sprout in their new neighbourhood!

As black bears feed on salmon, leaving a huge number of carcasses behind, they introduce important marine nutrients, like nitrogen, to the forest. The trees in the forest are fed by these nutrients, helping them grow big and tall. In turn, the big and tall trees offer shade which regulates water temperatures of the forest streams. These cool streams are important nurseries for the next generations of salmon.



This next section includes website links for deeper learning. To explore these stories, please visit sierraclub.bc.ca/bear-worksheet

The gifts of stories

[qʷaasaahimtiič čims ʔaaniičiłʔiçat siṭa - Bear's Short Tail](#)

Shared by Kathy Robinson Sr from čišaaʔath (Tseshaht) First Nation

[Spe'uth 'i' spa'al - Bear and Raven](#)

Shared by Robert Rice (quyupleynuhw) from Stz'uminus First Nation

[kəʔkeʔtes tk speʔec he spiləxms- Three Bears Story](#)

Shared by Amelia Washington from Nlaka'pamux First Nation



Artwork by scientific illustrator Dr. Julius Csotonyi

Discussion questions & thoughts to consider

- We are all connected.
- What happens to black bears, happens to us.
- When something goes missing, who is going to take its place?
- How could you be a voice for black bears?
- Every being in black bear's connected community matters.
- What is your responsibility?
- What lessons can you learn from the gifts of black bear?
- How could you use your gifts to be a respectful neighbour to black bears?

Writing activity

Write down any thoughts that bloom
from the discussion questions

Art activity

Draw your own story of Black Bear and their interconnected forest community

Keep learning with us!

We wanted to express our sincere gratitude to all of the hands, minds and hearts whose publicly shared knowledge, teachings and contributions were a part of this learning resource.

To explore our resource list and additional learning materials, we invite you to visit sierraclub.bc.ca/bear-worksheet

