



Bear Tips for Dollar Point

By Ann Bryant, BEAR League

The neighborhoods in Dollar Point are some of the most amazing of any residential area around Tahoe. The views, the natural wilderness, the Lake, the wildlife..... oh, and speaking of wildlife... the bears. So you can probably tell where this is going.... It will be a good idea to read through, whether you like them or not, because they are not going away and hopefully you aren't either, so we all have to understand how best to get along.

We humans, supposedly the smarter of the two species, absolutely must let the bears know the rules. It is important to tell them where they can be and what is off limits. We cannot block their way to the Lake, they 'own' it as much as we do. But they should **not** be hanging out in our yards, under our decks, on our porches and in our kitchens. For them to understand this 'rule', we must tell them. Since they don't speak English (or French or Spanish) you have to tell them in a language they can understand and the best way to do that is with your actions.

If you see a bear on your deck or in your yard tell him he's not welcome by yelling at him and angrily throwing a pine cone at his rump. Make a big deal out of it, scare him, be ferocious, be aggressive, be territorial. **DON'T** run into the house and hide under the bed or in the closet. If you are submissive and meek he will think he can move right into your house Do you really want him on your couch watching the evening news with you?? Probably not. Then tell him!

Something to remember, while you process all of this: The bears in Tahoe are all Black Bears. There are no more Grizzly bears here. It is the Grizzly who graces our state flag, but we killed the last one back in 1922. They were a completely different beast than the far less dangerous Black Bear. But too many people do not realize the Grizzlies are long gone and they confuse the two, erroneously giving Grizzly attributes to Black Bears. We humans need to step into the long vacated, huge paw prints of the Grizzly and let the Black Bears know who's Boss. We are! And here's another undeniable fact we all should keep in mind: No Black Bear has ever killed a person in all of California, Nevada or Oregon... at any time in written history. They honestly and truly are **not** dangerous man-eating monsters.

Unlike other residential areas around Tahoe, garbage is rarely an issue at Dollar Point. This is good. However, we do have reports of bird feeders in yards here and there (the biological name for these is actually 'Bear Feeders'). If you have bird feeders in your yard, you are feeding the bears.... remember that. And keep in mind, if you have bird feeders the bears are convinced the food is for them... and that you willingly **gave** it to them.

It is also important to think ahead and seriously secure any crawl space openings leading under your home or cabin before the bears discover it and decide to claim that space for their winter den-site. This happens several times each and every winter. The BEAR League will come and get them out but then you will have to electrify the opening, so they don't go right back inside as soon as we drive away. If, however, you do not notice the bear is under there until January and you have a Mother Bear who is about to give birth, well.... then you must allow her to stay until April or May when the cubs are big enough to venture safely out into the world. It is illegal to

harass a Mother Bear during birthing and while the cubs are very tiny. So, again, best to make sure no bears can get under your house BEFORE they discover that option. We can help you with all of this.

We feel it is important for everyone to understand another problem we have in Bear Country. This one is not a 'Bear Problem', it is a human problem and it starts when people think it's fun to feed the bears. This is illegal, unethical, immoral and a crime against Nature. If you know of anyone who is doing this, please report them. If convicted they face a \$1,000 fine and a year in jail. If you rent your home out to non-locals or share it with family, please tell them Not to Feed the Bears. We have literature, posters, stickers etc we can give you for your informational bulletin board, just call us.

There is not a single bear in Tahoe who doesn't know how to open unlocked doors or windows on homes or cars. They will cruise around day or night and check for a chance to get into a car or a house just in case they might score a snack. So be sure and keep everything closed and locked when you aren't right there, and especially at night. And hopefully you understand screens work great to keep mosquitoes out but they do nothing to stop bears from coming inside. If you have a vacation home and are not living there all the time we strongly encourage you to think about getting your doors and windows electrified. This technique is so advanced now you can hardly see it and it's extremely user-friendly. Bears cannot pass through the electrical barrier so you never have to worry about them getting inside your house again. This is called 'Peace of Mind'. Call Bear Busters at 530-592-9844 OR Tahoe Bear Fences at 510-883-3503.

Our website is www.savebears.org and we have a plethora of information therein if you have time to look around. If you have questions or concerns or are having any trouble with anything bear related please call us. We are here to help, in any way we possibly can.

One more take-away fact we'd like to leave you with: There is No Bear Relocation in the state of California. This is **NOT** an option if you are having problems. It will be best for you to understand as much as you can about bears in order to avoid inadvertently creating problems in the first place. You can do this. And we can help you. Call us at 530-525-7297 or email us at bearsnsquirrels@sbcglobal.net