

# Canadian bears end long hibernation

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A black bear scavanging in California's Sequoia National Park in 2009. Bears in westernmost Canada have begun leaving their dens in search of food after hibernating for the winter, officials said Friday, reminding residents to put away tempting treats to avoid deadly encounters.

Bears in westernmost Canada have begun leaving their dens in search of food after hibernating for the winter, officials said Friday, reminding residents to put away tempting treats to avoid deadly encounters.

Between April 1 of last year and March 31, 2011, conservation officers responded to 2,827 incidents in the province in which bears were "acting aggressively or public safety was an issue," said a statement from the British Columbia environment ministry.

A total of 23,240 bear sightings were reported.

The brushes near cities and towns most often ended badly for the bears, with 675 killed and 125 relocated into the wilds. No data on human injuries was provided.

"Though there has been a downward trend over the last 15 years in the number of problem bears killed, last year's number was higher because of poor availability of natural foods, which meant bears were searching out other, non-natural food sources," the ministry said.

To avoid fresh conflicts with bears in [urban areas](#) residents were urged to put away garbage, bird seed and [compost](#). As well, they were asked to pick ripe and fallen fruit daily and to clean barbecue grills after each use.

"People should never approach a bear and should not run from it, as [bears](#) can move very quickly," the advisory concluded.

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