



NORTH SHORE BLACK BEAR SOCIETY

2019 Year-End Report

Prepared by
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Introduction

The mandate of the North Shore Black Bear Society is to reduce human-bear encounters through education, cooperation and community support.

The Society focuses on:

- Reducing the accessibility of unnatural food sources to wildlife in residential areas;
- Forming and maintaining working relationships with staff of the three North Shore municipalities, organizations that work to reduce wildlife attractants in the community or protect and enhance natural wildlife habitat, groups who work or recreate in or close to wildlife habitat, and the Conservation Officers Service;
- Preventing the unnecessary deaths of bears which can result from bears accessing unnatural food sources in residential areas and spending too much time near houses and roadways; and
- Promoting and fostering the public's understanding and awareness of, and participation in, the respect and preservation of wildlife.

This report covers the work that was completed between November 1, 2018 and October 31, 2019.

2019 in Review

Wildlife sighting reports

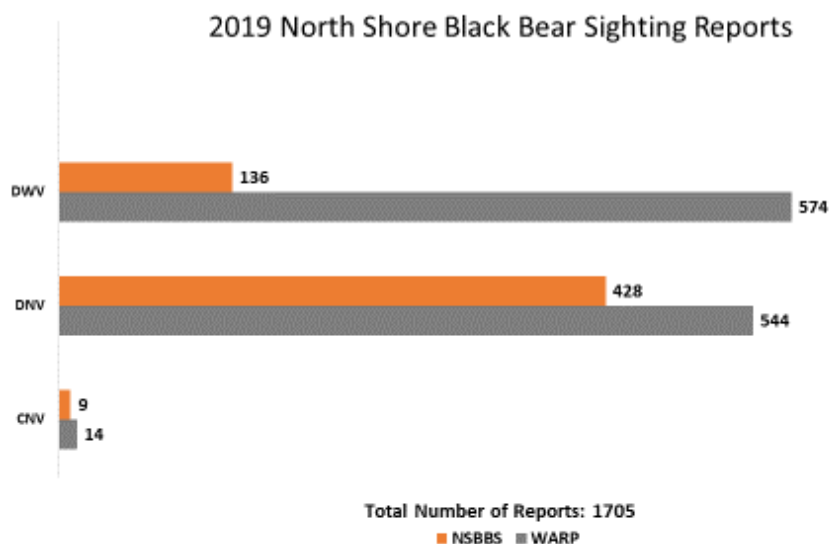
North Shore residents and visitors have several options for reporting sightings and encounters with wildlife. They can make the report to the:

- **Conservation Officer Service (COS)** through the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line in Victoria (1-877-952-7277) or the Bearline (604-990-BEAR, press 1). These calls are shown on the Wildlife Alert Reporting Program (WARP) map – available on the WildSafeBC website.
- **North Shore Black Bear Society (Society)** through the Bearline (604-990-BEAR, press 2), cell phone (604-317-4911), Facebook Messenger, website (northshorebears.com) or email account (nsbbsociety@gmail.com). Residents contact the Society to:
 - Report a wildlife sighting
 - Request signage
 - Report attractants in their neighbourhood
 - Request neighbourhood canvassing
 - Obtain Information or support with wildlife challenges

The following statistics summarize the reports received between January 1 and October 31, 2019.

A. Black Bears

The Society compiled the following data by maintaining a spreadsheet of the reports made to the Society and to the COS as shown on the WARP map.



B. Coyotes

Reports of coyotes were:

- District of North Vancouver 41
- District of West Vancouver 82
- City of North Vancouver 11

C. Cougars

Cougar reports were:

- District of North Vancouver 48
- District of West Vancouver 25
- City of North Vancouver 7

D. Other Species

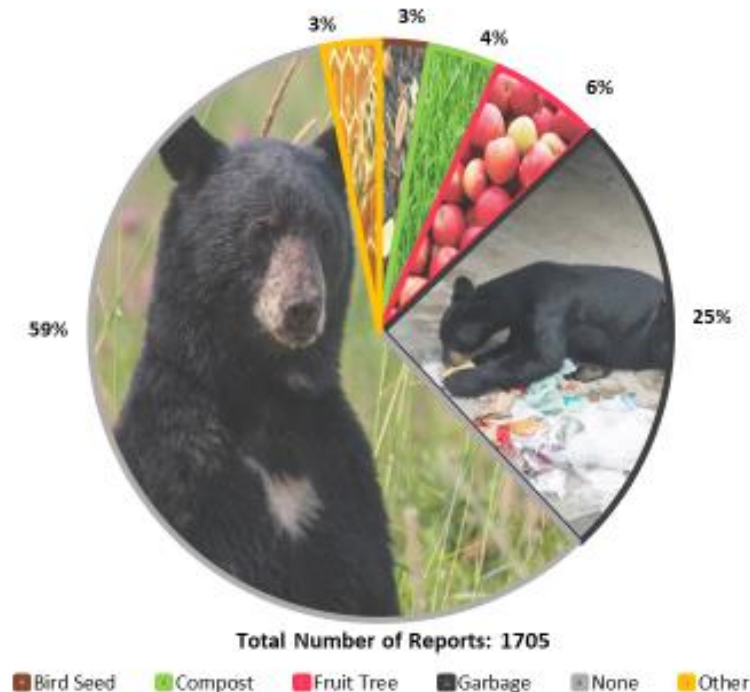
- District of North Vancouver 34
 - Bobcats 10
 - Deer 16
 - Raptor 2
 - Raccoon 1
 - Skunk 1
 - Other 1
 - Unknown 3
- District of West Vancouver 32
 - Bobcats 18
 - Deer 1
 - Raptor 3
 - Raccoon -
 - Skunk 1
 - Other 5
 - Unknown 1
- City of North Vancouver 6
 - Bobcats 1
 - Deer 4
 - Raptor -
 - Raccoon -
 - Skunk 1
 - Other 1
 - Unknown -

Black bears remain the focus of the Society's presentations to groups, but information about cougars, coyotes and bobcats is now included. Occasionally a request was received for a different focus; for example, coyotes in West Vancouver. Information packages about the four species were updated and circulated as needed throughout the year.

Attractant management

When residents report a bear sighting to the COS or Society, most “self-report” about what attracted the bear to their property. As you can see from the graphic below, the majority of reports (59%) were reports of a bear passing through. This is good to have a porous community as we have creeks and green spaces throughout the North Shore. However, often bears stop to eat. The biggest attractant in residential areas continues to be garbage (25%) and fruit trees (6%). Compost and bird seed came in at 4% and 3%. The “other” category includes playground equipment, toys, and fish ponds.

2019 North Shore Black Bear Attractant Reports



We worked closely with the District of North Vancouver’s Solid Waste staff to help residents to accept that the lockable carts are not bear-proof and need to be kept clean and stored securely. The consistent message is that people who store their carts outdoors need to freeze odorous food scraps to prevent attracting wildlife and having the locked carts damaged.

Canvassing

Canvassing continued to be a big project in 2019 for Luci Cadman and the volunteers who worked with her. A combination of door hangers and letters (and Green Can card in some District of North Vancouver areas) were distributed. The “hot spot areas” were locations where a large number of bear sightings had been reported in the previous year. A breakdown of the homes that were canvassed follow.

Hotspot canvassing

DNV: 1037

WV: 92

Bear-in-area hangers

DNV: 1468

WV: 488

Letters to residents

DNV: 711

WV: 408

When the Society learns of bear activity, there is a coordinated approach to education with signs and door-to-door canvassing and/or email distribution to Block Watch.

Bear-in-area signs

	
	Bear-in-area signs: CNV: 9 DNV: 135 DWV: 77 (managed by DWV Parks)

Community events

CNV

4 events; 635 visitors

DNV

11 events; 2015 visitors

DWV

5 events; 805 visitors

OTHER

2 events; 1600 visitors

- Critter Care Open House
- Science World



The North Shore Black Bear Society organized and hosted the **5th Annual Bear Day** with Raincoast Conservation Foundation and Capilano University in September at the Pipe Shop, Lower Lonsdale. It was a family event with entertainment, face painting, educational presentations and displays.



MLA Jane Thornthwaite and Christine Miller at the Society's display at Bear Day.

Presentations



Luci Cadman made presentations that cover many important topics about North Shore black bears. On the left, she is discussing natural bear foods, and on the right, the slide identifies the locations of all the bear-in-area signs placed in response to bear sighting reports in 2019.

School presentations

CNV: 2 schools- 79 students

DNV: 10 schools- 3650 students

DWV: 3 schools- 478 students

Other presentations

MOSAIC adult classes, seniors groups, preschools, day camps, libraries

CNV: 305 people

DNV: 242 people

DWV: 193 people

Coquitlam

200 people



The ongoing education programs provide age-appropriate presentations for audiences of different ages.

Media

Social Media – The Society maintains a website, Facebook page, and Instagram & Twitter accounts. In 2019, the increases in the numbers of followers were:

- Facebook by **1780**
- Instagram by **1274**

Traditional media – Interviews by reporters provide opportunities for the Society to reinforce the messages about attractant management and safety. Media provided these opportunities:

- **TV: 9** – Global BC, Breakfast TV Vancouver, CTV Morning Live Vancouver, CTV Vancouver
- **Radio/podcast: 3** – Fur-Bearers Defender radio, News1130
- **Print:** Featured in at least 7 print/internet articles – North Shore News, Daily Hive, CTV, Global



Outreach to new homeowners

New homeowners on the North Shore were mailed a welcome note from the North Shore Black Bear Society along with a Society rack card about attractant management.

NORTH SHORE HOUSE SALES			
Municipality	Nov 1 – Dec 31 2018	Jan 1 2019 – Oct 31 2019	TOTAL
DNV and CNV	69	523	592
DWV	34	311	345
TOTAL SALES			937

Bear management and community partnerships

Eleven bears were killed by the COS in 2019 – 6 in the District of North Vancouver and 5 in the District of West Vancouver – and at least one bear was hit and killed by a motor vehicle.

Most of these bears were killed because they found readily accessible unnatural food sources in residential areas. The Society will continue to inform North Shore residents about how to effectively reduce attractants. The partnerships with Engineering, Solid Waste, Bylaws, Communications and Parks Departments in the North Shore municipalities and the Conservation Officer Service are important to provide consistent messaging about the responsibilities of living in bear country.

One way to maintain and strengthen community partnerships is through the **North Shore Working Group** (NSWG) that was formed in 2018. The NSWG includes staff from the three municipalities and representatives from the RCMP, West Vancouver Police Department and Conservation Officer Service and representatives of the Society. These partners can work collaboratively to reduce unnecessary bear deaths.

A Special Honour



Living City Award for Environmental Sustainability

The City of North Vancouver acknowledged the North Shore Black Bear Society and the commitment of Christine Miller and Luci Cadman ‘to environmental education and awareness’ with a “Living City Award for Environmental Sustainability”.

Plans for 2020

The North Shore Black Bear Society will look closely at the locations of the 2019 bear sighting reports and bear deaths, identify “hot spots” for bear activity, and target our proactive education in these areas.

In addition, the Society plans to continue with a new project to encourage the provincial government ministries to assess and update its wildlife management policies and practices.

Other plans are for the Society to study the successful practises used in other Canadian and American communities to find other ways to educate North Shore residents and visitors in order to reduce the number of bear deaths.

The Society will continue with its present education outreach programs that are outlined in this report and modify them for different audiences and the changing needs of the communities. In addition, we will continue to work to increase residents’ knowledge and understanding of wildlife to support their need to feel safe living and recreating in bear country.

Acknowledgements

Funding Partners

- District of West Vancouver
- District of North Vancouver
- City of North Vancouver

Educational Outreach Partners

- Engineering and Solid Waste Departments, Districts of North and West Vancouver
- Parks Departments, Districts of North and West Vancouver, City of North Vancouver
- Engineering, Parks and Environment, City of North Vancouver
- Bylaws Officer Service, Districts of North and West Vancouver, City of North Vancouver
- Communications Department, Districts of North and West Vancouver, City of North Vancouver
- North Shore Multicultural Society
- Block Watch Coordinators, North and West Vancouver
- North Shore Fruit Tree Project

Special Appreciation

The Society is grateful to the **District of North Vancouver** for providing spaces for our Board Meetings and Annual General Meeting. In addition, we appreciate the District Bear Line [604-990-BEAR (2327)] which makes it easy for North Shore residents to report bear or attractant sightings and to request information or support with their attractant management challenges.

The Society appreciates the working relationships with **Parks, Engineering, Solid Waste and Bylaw Officer Service Departments** in the three municipalities.

Volunteers

As with every other year, volunteers contributed to the success of the Society's education programs. The Society is fortunate to have committed people who contributed in a variety of ways; in particular, placing and removing bear-in-area signs, canvassing, doing night-time checks, and working at community events. In 2019, the work of volunteers assisted with the prevention of human-bear encounters on the North Shore.