

# Kid's KOrner

## Common sense, respect needed in coping with wild animal attacks

WEST THUMB, Wyo. — High on a ridge in Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park, a hiker crosses the timberline and enters a subalpine meadow of waist-high grasses. Up ahead, something moves.

It's a grizzly bear about 100 feet away. The bear rises nine feet tall onto its hind legs, waves its nose in the air, drops onto four legs, and begins to run straight at the hiker. There is no tree to climb; nowhere to run, nowhere to hide, and the hiker has no gun. What should he do?

This desperate thought has run through the minds of many people.

"When I saw that bear come smoking down on me," says Montana hunting guide Bill Hill, "I didn't have any trouble deciding who was the endangered species."

### Sometimes Both Die

Every summer, from Wyoming to Alaska, humans and bears have fatal encounters. Sometimes the human dies, sometimes the bear, sometimes both.

Visits to U.S. national parks have nearly tripled in the last 10 years. More people are hiking the trails and meeting not just bears, but other potentially dangerous wildlife species.

A young boy trying to feed a deer in California's Yosemite National Park was suddenly gored and killed.

A photographer in Yellowstone was fatally attacked when he tried to pet a bison.

A moose trampled a sled-dog musher and his dogs when they surprised it on a snowy trail in central Alaska.

A well-meaning woman found an injured heron in Louisiana and, as she reached out to help the frightened bird, it whipped around its dagger-like beak and impaled her through the neck. She died instantly.

"I remember that fellow killed by the bison," says Yellowstone ranger Fred Hirschmann. "He was trying to pet it on the head. We don't go around patting each other on our heads, do we? Enough is enough."

Wildlife biologists contend that fatal and injurious encounters between people and wildlife result from human ignorance, not animal aggression.

"Bears aren't out there plotting murder," says Kathy Jope, resource-management specialist at Alaska's Katmai National Park. "They have better things to do. I've seen bears repeatedly charge and growl at photographers, fishermen, and campers. None of those charges was unprovoked. In every case the person either frightened or irritated the bear. It doesn't have to happen."

Jope believes that most people don't know how to avoid bear encounters or how to react once an encounter begins.

### Swift Predators

"Grizzly bears are predators," she says. "You can't outrun them unless there is a safe shelter nearby. An animal that runs probably evokes within the bear a predator response, so the bear gives chase."

Moose, on the other hand, are a prey species. A full-grown Alaska bull moose stands six feet tall at the shoulders and weighs 1,600 pounds. One kick can kill a man. A charging moose is as dangerous as a charging bear.

"Maybe more dangerous," adds Kathy Jope, "since bears often 'bluff charge,' turning around at the last moment, and moose do not."

Moose have a distinct territory within which any intruder is fiercely attacked, and outside of which he is tolerated. If the in-

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Dangerous competition for a hooked salmon threatens the tranquility of this scene on Alaska's Brooks River. Fisherman John Craighead, a dean of grizzly research, knew enough about the huge bears to break his line and avoid a potentially hazardous encounter. As visits to wilderness areas increase, people with less awareness about how bears, moose, deer, bison and even birds often react to human intrusion could be courting injury and death.

## COLOR THIS!

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. BLACK    | 6. PEACH      |
| 2. RED      | 7. GREEN      |
| 3. DK GREY  | 8. LT BROWN   |
| 4. LT. GREY | 9. LT. BLUE   |
| 5. BROWN    | 10. LT. GREEN |

CANOEING PROVIDES A DELIGHTFUL PASTIME ON LAKES AND RIVERS. USING SKILL IN PADDLING A CANOE MAKES THIS GRACEFUL BOAT A SAFE, SWIFT WAY OF TRANSPORTATION. CANOES USED AT SUMMER RESORTS AND CAMPS USUALLY HAVE A SLIGHTLY ROUNDED BOTTOM, AND CURVE UPWARD AT THE BOW AND STERN.

