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# Wildlife Awareness

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## CAGC INFORMATION ALERT

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## Information Alert

01-04

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The following information is not a definitive guide to government legislation and does not release users of this document from their responsibilities under applicable legislation.

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### **Bear**

While working or hiking near bear habitats, be alert and aware of your surroundings, look ahead, check on wind direction, and stop and listen every so often. Watch for bear signs such as tracks and diggings. Try to see the bear before it sees you. In prime bear habitats where trees or bushes obscure visibility, announce your presence by making noise, using your voice, bells, air horns, or whistles. If possible, avoid very dense vegetation especially if there is fresh sign or obvious bear foods. If you see a bear, enjoy it from a distance; give it time to leave, or detour around it. In the backcountry, store food and garbage in airtight containers. Use clean clothes that do not smell of food. Pack out your garbage and leftover food.

### **Elk**

Elk can be aggressive and attack without warning. During the fall mating season (Aug - Sept) male are particularly belligerent. During the spring calving season (May - June) female elk aggressively defend their young. DO NOT approach elk in any season, as they are DANGEROUS.

### **Deer**

Deer may aggressively seek food from campers and picnickers. They may lash out with their hooves when they feel either threatened or frustrated. Dogs seem to incite the wrath of female deer, and many attacks on pets and people have occurred. DO NOT feed or approach any animal.

### **Vehicle / Wildlife Collisions**

SLOW DOWN for wildlife. Each year hundreds of animals are killed on highways. Animals are unpredictable - be alert while driving, especially at dusk or dawn, and watch for wildlife warning signs. Give yourself time to react and don't overdrive your headlights - 70 km per hour is recommended for night driving. Report all collisions to the nearest park office or RCMP detachment.

### **Bison**

Bison are DANGEROUS and UNPREDICTABLE. They may charge without warning. Stay in your vehicle and DON'T approach bison by the roadside. Keep at least 50 meters (150 feet) away at all times. Never come between two animals, particularly a female and her calf. Bison can weigh 2,000 pounds and sprint at 50 km per hour, three times faster than you can run.

### ***Cougar***

Cougar attacks on people are rare. Children and crouching adults are most at risk. Avoid being alone on hiking trails at dusk or dawn. Do NOT stare into a cougar's eyes, run or crouch down. Back away slowly.

### ***Ticks and Stinging Insects***

Ticks are most active in spring and early summer particularly where ungulates congregate (valley bottoms and south facing slopes). Most ticks will be found before attachment occurs, by checking yourself and children daily. If a tick attaches itself to you, rashes or lesions form, or unexplained symptoms occur, consult your physician. Bees and wasps may be found at campgrounds and picnic sites. Ensure potential attractant foods such as sweet drinks and raw meat are left out as little as possible.

**Be sure to include wildlife awareness in your first day & site orientations!**