

MOUNTAIN BIKING IN BEAR COUNTRY



Mountain biking in bear country brings added risks for surprise encounters with not only bears, but cougars, moose, and rattlesnakes. In Montana, a bicyclist was mauled and killed by a grizzly bear. In Colorado, an individual woman was mauled by a black bear; and several bicyclists have been mauled in Alberta and Washington state when black bears chased them down from behind. Fortunately, other people nearby were able to come to their rescue.

Mountain Biking Bear Safety Tips: Travelling quickly on trails puts you at high risk of surprising a bear, cougar, moose, and even a rattlesnake. Please balance speed with caution.

- 1) Carry your own can of bear spray. Keep it on your person instead of attached to your bicycle. (Do not wear it in a chest holster, people have been seriously injured doing so when they fell over their handle bars and landed on their chest.)
- 2) Try to ride in groups and stay together so you can help each other if something happens.
- 3) Ride after sunrise and before sunset.
- 4) Bicycle lights in the back country do not give sufficient illumination to see a bear in the bushes or at a distance.
- 5) Wearing ear buds obstructs your ability to hear natural noises.
- 6) Call out when travelling near or through thick brush or around blind corners.
- 7) Be on the lookout for bear signs such as scat, claw marks on trees, rocks and logs rolled over and foul odors from carrion or a bear that has rolled in it.
- 8) Stop and use all your senses: nose, eyes, ears, and call out “hey bear” when visibility is obstructed or when you are near a noisy stream.
- 9) If you encounter a bear, stop, get off your bike and leave it between you and the bear, get your bear spray out and follow bear encounter protocol.
- 10) Have fun and stay safe!



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