

Yearling Black Bear, *Ursus americanus*, Gives Right-of-Way to Adult Coyote, *Canis latrans*

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In July 1993, we observed a yearling Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) giving the right of way to an adult Coyote (*Canis latrans*), 20 m away. There is no evidence in the literature that yearling Black Bears should fear adult Coyotes.

Key Words: Black Bear, *Ursus americanus*, Coyote, *Canis latrans*, Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, Alberta.

Accounts of Wolf (*Canis lupus*) and Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) interactions have been reported during recent years (Rogers and Mech 1981; Horejsi et al. 1984; Paquet and Carbyn 1986). However, published records of interactions between Black Bears and Coyotes (*Canis latrans*) are scarce. Cahalane (1961: 251) reported seeing a Coyote sauntering behind a bear that was after rodents. Sometimes, the Coyote nipped at the bear; when the bear dropped its food to turn around and charge, the Coyote stole the prey and ran away. Bowen (1981) reported, without interpretation, the presence of Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) remains in eight Coyotes' summer feces. Cahalane (1961: 250) also reported Black Bear hair in the fall stomach contents of three Coyotes in Yellowstone. He concluded that this was the result of scavenging. Conversely, Coyote remains were found in four late summer Black Bear scats in Alberta (Holcroft and Herrero 1991).

On 2 July 1993, we were hiking along the eastern shore of the Lower Kananaskis Lake, in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, Alberta. At 10:00 h, we observed a Black Bear about the size of a yearling ambling on the west shore of the lake, approximately 0.5 km away from us. The bear headed south and we followed its regular but leisurely pace for > 200 m. Suddenly, the bear ran toward the forest cover with its head turned toward an adult Coyote. The Coyote was approximately 20 m away from the bear and was slowly moving north. The Coyote then investigated grass patches along the shore, about 20 m north of where the bear had fled. Approximately 1 km to the south, the bear reappeared on the shore to continue south. Our observation suggests that the Black Bear fled from the Coyote. Knowing that single Wolves tend to flee from bears (Rogers and Mech 1981), the bear's reaction may appear strange.

However, at the time of our observation, this yearling bear had probably recently broken up from its family (Rogers 1987; Schwartz and Franzmann 1992) and its get-away may be indicative of some level of temporal insecurity.

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