

Police report black bear sighted in north Caledon

Caledon OPP reports hearing from a citizen that a black bear had been seen on their property June 18.

The property is in the area of Airport Road, in the north end of town, and the report was received at about 10 p.m.

Police were out to patrol the area, but officers did not report seeing the bear themselves.

Police would like to remind people not to approach any bear they encounter, but to contact them or the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) if they observe a bear in a populated area.

MNRF is working collaboratively with OPP and police services to protect public safety and educate communities across Ontario about black bear behaviour. Police stated that black bears that come into a populated area aren't always necessarily a threat to public safety.

They urge residents to call 9-1-1 if a bear poses an immediate threat to personal safety by exhibiting threatening or aggressive behaviour, such as entering a school yard when school is in session, stalking people and lingering at the site, entering or trying to enter a residence, wandering into a public gathering or killing livestock or pets and is lingering at the site.

Police are the first responder for any emergency situation. At the request of police, during daylight hours, MNRF will respond to emergency situations to assist.

Call the toll-free Bear Wise reporting line at 1-866-514-2327 (TTY 705-945-7641) if a black bear is roaming around, checking garbage cans; breaking into a shed where garbage or food is stored; in a tree; pulling down a bird feeder or knocking over a barbecue; or moving through a backyard or field but is not lingering.

This line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week from April 1 until Nov. 30. Trained staff can provide advice about black bear behaviour, how to avoid human-bear conflicts and how to remove attractants from property.

Even if they're not causing a threat to public safety, black bears should be discouraged from staying in populated areas.

People can take steps on their property and in their neighbourhood to avoid attracting black bears into populated areas. Visit ontario.ca/bearwise for tips and to learn about bears.