

# Be Bear Aware: Take steps to avoid conflicts with black bears

FOR CITY TIMES

MADISON -- As the weather warms and people across the state begin spending more time outside, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages the public to be bear aware and take steps to prevent potential conflicts with black bears this spring.

Every spring, black bears emerge from their dens in search of food and potentially new territory. These explorations sometimes cause unexpected interactions between black bears and the public. Although black bears are much more common in the northern half of the state, southern Wisconsin has seen more black bear activity in recent years.

Bears are normally solitary forest animals, but their powerful sense of smell can lead them into urban areas in search of food, especially in the spring and fall.

To avoid potential conflicts, it's important to recognize what attracts black bears and take steps to reduce these attractants whenever possible. Black bears are known for returning to locations where they've found good food sources, so prevention is the best tactic.

Follow these steps at home to avoid attracting black bears:

Completely remove bird feeders, even during daytime hours – Bird feeders provide a high-density food source for black bears, so bears might frequent a bird feeder for several weeks to see if it is refilled. Areas around bird feeders also have accumulations of seeds that should be cleaned up when removing a feeder. Black bears are also active during throughout the day, so removing bird feeders only at night is not



To avoid potential conflicts, it's important to recognize what attracts black bears and take steps to reduce these attractants whenever possible. **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo**

sufficient.

Reduce smells from trash and recycling containers – Black bears have keen noses and are attracted to all types of food waste. Rinsing food cans and bottles before throwing them away, as well as storing meat scraps in the fridge or freezer until garbage day, can reduce the intensity of odors emanating from your garbage and recycling containers. Storing containers in a closed building can also reduce access to food waste. Commercial dumpsters should also be locked whenever possible.

Limit the amount of time pets and pet food are left outside unattended – Black

bears can be skittish, but they are highly food-motivated. They may also defend themselves or attack pets when provoked. Prevent potential conflicts by limiting how long pets are left alone outside or keep them on a leash when recreating. Pet food should not be left outside, as it may attract bears.

Be conscious of attractants in public spaces like grills and picnic tables – Barbeque grills and picnic tables often have leftover food scraps or residues on them that can attract black bears. Clean surfaces after use in public spaces to reduce negative human-bear interactions.

Avoid feeding or interacting with black bears – Never feed a bear, whether intentionally or not. The risk of unexpected interactions increases when bears begin to associate people with food. If bears find a consistent food source around people or people actively feed a bear, the bear will make a habit of visiting the area or approaching people.

## Know what to do if you encounter a bear

If a bear is near your home or cabin, from a safe location, try to scare the bear away by making loud noises (like clanging pots and pans together) or throwing objects in the bear's direction. Black bears tend to avoid interactions with people if escape is possible, so make sure it has a clear escape route – never corner a bear. Do not turn your back to a bear or run away.

If you encounter a bear while in the woods, stay calm and do not run. Wave your arms and make loud noises to scare it away. Back away slowly and seek a safe location from where you can wait for the bear to leave. Never approach a bear. For your safety, do not attempt to break up a fight between a pet and a bear.

If unable to resolve a recurring issue with a nuisance bear, contact the USDA Wildlife Services toll-free line at 1-800-433-0663 for properties in southern Wisconsin or at 1-800-228-1368 for properties in northern Wisconsin.

For more information about avoiding unexpected interactions with black bears, visit the DNR's Black Bear Management webpage.

# High Water coming soon

FOR CITY TIMES

PITTSVILLE -- Around these parts, April showers bring more than flowers, they bring bluegrass. For your enjoyment, Art Stevenson & High Water will be performing Saturday, May 11 at the Pittsville School Auditorium. This 7 p.m. show on Mother's Day weekend will be a great opportunity to treat someone special to a night out with the impressive acoustic sounds of the premier central Wisconsin blue grass ensemble.

The quartet features Bruce King on mandolin and his talented son, Bruce Royal, on the upright bass. The elder Bruce is a scholar of Bill Monroe's compositions and knows dozens of mandolin instrumentals. An excellent harmony singer, he often sings tenor in the vocal arrangements. The younger Bruce brings several years of experience after playing bass with other Wisconsin bluegrass groups. He joined High Water when Stephanie Stevenson retired from performing with



Art Stevenson & High Water will perform May 11 in Pittsville. **Submitted photo**

the demanding instrument. Along with his hard-driving bass groove, Bruce Royal sings lead and harmony in delightful vocal arrangements the band is so well known for.

The banjo is handled by the magical picking of award-winning Dale Reichert. He also sings baritone and bass vocals, and plays the Dobro. Dale is an absolute wonder to watch as he weaves through each arrangement. He has a long history of bluegrass work with groups in Ohio, Kentucky, and Minnesota and he now resides near Custer.

Guitarist, singer, and harmonicaist, Art Stevenson – who incidentally is a central Wisconsin local living near Babcock – has played in bluegrass bands since the late 1970s. He learned bluegrass guitar after attending the Mole Lake Bluegrass Festival in 1976, and he has played harmonica since early childhood. Art organized this group in 1993. He is a powerful lead singer on traditional bluegrass, early country, and western ballads, and plays a driving rhythm guitar. His harmonica renditions of fiddle tunes like Orange Blossom Special always bring the house down.

These impressive musicians are as fun to watch as they are fabulous to listen to. Don't miss Art Stevenson & High Water, a superbly-talented band - their repertoire will surprise and impress you and your Mother's Day date. This show is definitely fine family entertainment for all ages. Admission is \$12; special senior rate is \$10; student admission is only \$3. Tickets are always available at the door, but can be easily picked up in advance downtown Pittsville at Wisconsin Farm Business/Ortner Accounting during regular office hours. Take the short drive to Pittsville, and see you at the show.

## Registration open for Mid-State summer, fall terms

FOR CITY TIMES

WISCONSIN RAPIDS – Registration is now open for Mid-State Technical College's summer and fall terms, and each semester brings its own set of opportunities.

This summer, students can choose to start an associate degree, technical diploma or certificate with classes starting in May and June. Degree options include hospitality, university transfer and 20 business-related programs and certificates. Some programs can even be completed this summer, including Nursing Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician and Stainless Steel Welding.

In the fall, classes begin in August. Mid-State's Wayne H. Bushman Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship (AMETA™) Center is also set to open with the start of the fall semester. The Center will house 14 programs and apprenticeships, half of which have scholarship opportunities available, valuing up to \$5,000.

"Great opportunities are available this summer and fall for new and continuing students, members of the workforce looking to gain a new skill, transfer students and community members," said Jackie Esselman, dean of Recruitment and Admissions. "Summer is a great time to get ahead on coursework, and we're excited to open our highly anticipated, state-of-the-art AMETA Center this fall."

According to Esselman, registering early ensures the best course selection for those interested in enrolling at Mid-State. "Summer classes fill up fast and fall is our busiest time of year."

Learn more at [mstc.edu/perfectfit](http://mstc.edu/perfectfit).

**Closed Ascension Day, Thursday, May 9**

# Sunset Acres Greenhouse

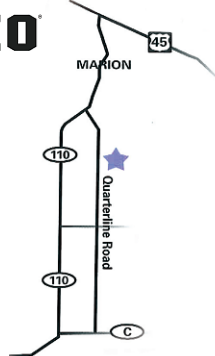
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MARION, WI 54950

### HOURS

- We Open the Last Sat. In April
- Monday - Sat. 8am-6pm
- Closed Ascension Day May 9
- Closed Good Friday
- Closed Sundays

### DIRECTIONS

- One Mile South of Marion on Quarterline Road



- LAWN & GARDEN DECOR**
- RUSTIC BIRDHOUSES
  - WIND SPINNERS
  - HYR BRIX FERTILIZER
  - FEATHER ROCKS
  - LARGE VARIETY OF FRUITS & BERRIES
  - SEED POTATOES
  - ONION SETS
  - GARDEN SEEDS
  - POTTED PLANTS
  - VEGETABLE PLANTS
  - POTTING SOIL
  - PLUS MANY UNIQUE ITEMS



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wirapidsoffice@mmclocal.com

**PUBLISHER**  
Patrick Wood

**GENERAL MANAGER**  
Ernie Neuenfeldt

**SALES MANAGER**  
Bob Oldenburg

**EDITOR**  
Mike Warren  
mwarren@mmclocal.com

**SALES EXECUTIVE**  
Gloria Stoflet  
gstoflet@mmclocal.com

**SALES ASSISTANT**  
Kelli Rogus  
krogus@mmclocal.com

**CIRCULATION**  
Lynn Schoohs

**CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL**

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