



BEAR IN DUMPSTER © DOW

UNWANTED AND DANGEROUS GUESTS

What's dinner for the neighborhood fox family is also a meal for other wild animals living near your home. Normally reclusive and wary, black bears will leave the woods and become accustomed to finding a meal in your backyard if you leave them something to eat. Feeding deer also can attract other large predators, such as mountain lions. Where there are lots of deer, there are also lots of mountain lions, prowling for prey.

Over time, predators such as bears and mountain lions become less wary and more emboldened. They're more apt to attack pets and people and, when that happens, it can spell death for bears and lions, which often must be destroyed to ensure public safety.

WHAT ABOUT BIRDS?

The DOW supports and encourages using backyard bird feeders to supplement natural food for song birds. Be sure that the food you provide song birds is fresh and clean. Also make sure you clean the feeder periodically.

Common bird foods include sunflower seed and millet. Some birds also are attracted by fresh fruit. In addition to your feeder, be sure to offer a source of water for your backyard birds, year-round if possible.

A word of caution, however. If you live in bear country, be aware that certain bird foods, particularly hummingbird nectar, are very attractive to bears. Put your bird food and hummingbird feeders away if you don't want to create potentially dangerous conflicts with our state's largest predator close to your home. For more information, contact your nearest DOW office.

FEEDING WILDLIFE IS AGAINST THE LAW

Anyone still not convinced that putting out food is bad for wildlife? Skeptics need to keep in mind that under Colorado law, intentionally feeding big-game animals is illegal. The prohibition applies to deer, elk, pronghorn, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, mountain lions and bears. Violators face a \$50 fine.

DOW HEADQUARTERS

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DOW SERVICE CENTERS

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(970) 842-6300

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Colorado Springs, CO
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DENVER:
6060 Broadway,
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(303) 291-7227

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Durango, CO 81301
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FORT COLLINS:
317 W. Prospect Road,
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GLENWOOD SPRINGS:
50633 Hwys. 6 & 24,
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81601; (970) 947-2920

GRAND JUNCTION:
711 Independent Ave.,
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GUNNISON:
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HOT SULPHUR SPRINGS:
346 Grand County Road
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Hot Sulphur Springs,
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LAMAR: 2500 S. Main St.,
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MEEKER: 73485 Hwy. 64,
Meeker, CO 81641
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MONTE VISTA:
0722 S. Road 1 East,
Monte Vista, CO 81144
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MONTROSE:
2300 S. Townsend Ave.,
Montrose, CO 81401
(970) 252-6000

PUEBLO:
600 Reservoir Road,
Pueblo, CO 81005
(719) 561-5300

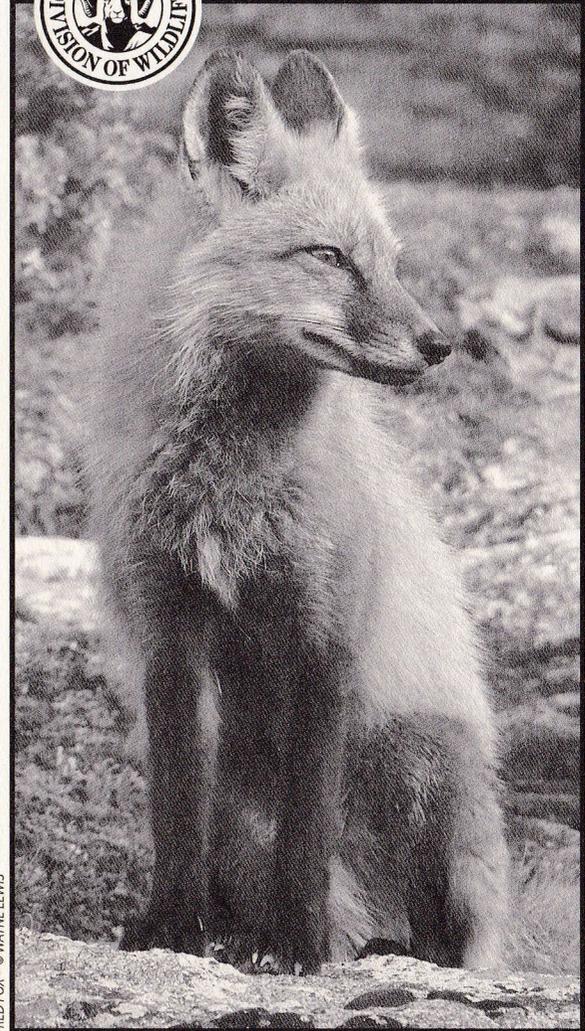
SALIDA: 7405 Hwy. 50,
Salida, CO 81201
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STEAMBOAT SPRINGS:
925 Weiss Drive,
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80477; (970) 870-2197

The Colorado Division of Wildlife is the state agency responsible for managing wildlife and its habitat, as well as providing wildlife-related recreation. The Division is funded through hunting and fishing license fees, federal grants and Colorado Lottery proceeds through Great Outdoors Colorado.

COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Don't Feed The Wildlife



RED FOX - © WAYNE LEWIS

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It seemed like such a harmless thing to do. What could be wrong with putting out a little food to help the foxes and deer make it through a hard winter? Besides, seeing wildlife in our backyard is one of the many benefits of living in Colorado. So thought a family that set out dog food, hamburger and grains for foxes and deer near their home in the wooded foothills just outside Denver.

Guess who else came to dinner? Tasty treats left in the family's yard lured hungry mountain lions to the neighborhood. Not only did the wild cats like the hamburger, they also had their eyes on one of their favorite prey — deer.

It didn't take long for real trouble to start. Residents' cats and dogs began disappearing from their yards. Fear and anger set in, and people began clamoring for officials to do something about the dangerous mountain lions.

What started as a well-meaning effort for deer and foxes ended in death for another of Colorado's wild animals. The mountain lion was snared and killed in a trap set out to make the neighborhood safe again.

This is just one example illustrating why the Colorado Division of Wildlife is warning people, "PLEASE DON'T FEED THE WILDLIFE."

THOUGH YOUR HEART'S IN THE RIGHT PLACE...

Colorado is blessed with a diversity of wildlife. Our elk population is larger than that of any other state or Canadian province. In addition, our state is home to an abundant, thriving deer population.

The DOW — whose mission is to protect and enhance the state's wild creatures — knows how much people love Colorado wildlife. They love to watch the animals, learn

about them, photograph them, hunt them and, even on occasion, feed them.

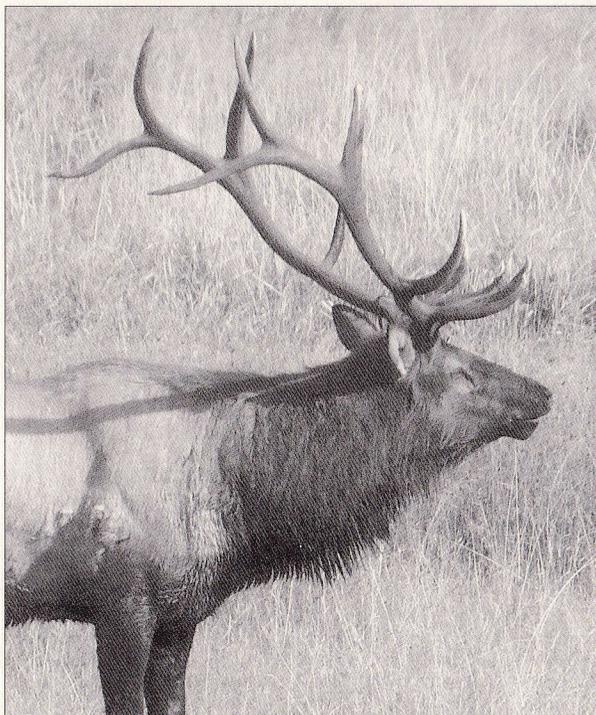
We know people mean well when they give tidbits to wildlife. But what many don't realize is that feeding big game is bad for the animals and dangerous for people. It's also against the law. There are lots of good reasons why.

PLEASE — ONLY OUR NATURAL FOODS!

Drive up the Mount Evans Road just about any summer weekend, and you'll see bighorn sheep — lambs and all — ready to romp onto the road as cars approach. The bighorns head straight for the car windows. These wild animals show no fear of vehicles or the people inside. The bighorns have learned they can get cookies, chips and other goodies from behind those car windows.

We all know junk food is bad for people, but it's even worse for wild animals. The complex digestive systems of wildlife have evolved over thousands of years. Deer, elk, pronghorn and sheep are ruminants. That means they have a four-chambered stomach that serves as a fermentation vat. They can eat lots of vegetation and digest it very thoroughly.

Unlike natural foods, treats from people often cannot be digested properly by big game. In fact, "human food"



can, in many cases, stop a wild animal's digestive system, cause the animal to get sick and die.

Big game depend entirely on native vegetation, such as grasses, forbs and shrubs. Those plants provide all the nutritional requirements the animals need to survive in Colorado, even through winter. Eating non-natural kinds of foods can result in nutritional problems for wildlife or possibly death.

CONFLICTS AND DISEASE

When people feed big game, the animals tend to concentrate where the food is set out. That increases the risk of spreading diseases through the herds. Diseases also can spread between wildlife and livestock, as well as to domestic animals and people.

The Division is most concerned about devastating diseases, such as brucellosis and tuberculosis, which can be transmitted to humans. Feeding also can dramatically change the natural distribution and migration of big-game animals.

You may delight in seeing a deer grazing in your yard. Your neighbor, however, may become irate seeing his rose bushes chomped to a stub. For farmers and ranchers, the losses can be costly from big game munching on crops or hay. Not only that, luring wildlife to your yard by putting out food could set the wild animals up for death if they have to cross highways to get to feeders or if they encounter harassment from domestic pets.

What's worse, once wildlife stop using their historic ranges, that land could end up developed and valuable habitat could be lost forever. Feeding big game is not a substitute for enhancing and protecting critical wintering areas.