



Predator Instills Fear in Bears and Mountain Lions

Description

The wilderness of North America is home to formidable predators, including black and brown bears and mountain lions. Despite their strength, recent research reveals that these animals are more afraid of humans than previously thought. In fact, bear and mountain lion attacks on people are exceedingly rare, with a lower likelihood than being struck by lightning.

Bears in North America attack an average of around 11.4 humans yearly, while mountain lions are responsible for 4 to 6 attacks. For contrast, approximately 580 people are struck by lightning each year in the US and Canada. Researchers believe that these animals go to great lengths to avoid humans, changing their behaviours accordingly.

One study led by wildlife biologist Philip Manlick used motion-activated speakers to play different sounds near bears in Alaska. The bears showed a significant aversion to human voices, retreating almost ten times more often than when they heard other noises. This behaviour impacts the ecosystem, as bears play a role in fertilising forests with remnants from their feeding.

Similarly, a study of mountain lions in California found that they avoided areas of high human activity. The findings suggest that both bears and mountain lions perceive humans as a serious threat. As a result, they change their movements and habits to steer clear of encounters.

Moving forward, researchers suggest that humans should be mindful of their presence in these animals' habitats, aiming for a coexistence that reduces conflict. This involves understanding how human behaviour influences wildlife and ecosystems.

Vocabulary List:

1. **wilderness** /'wɪldərnəs/ (noun): large area of land with few people
2. **formidable** /'fɔrmɪdəbl/ (adjective): very strong or frightening to deal with
3. **predators** /'predətərz/ (noun): animals that kill other animals for food
4. **likelihood** /'laɪklihʊd/ (noun): the chance that something will happen
5. **aversion** /ə'veɜʒən/ (noun): strong dislike that makes people avoid something
6. **ecosystem** /'i:kəʊsɪstəm/ (noun): all living and nonliving things in one place

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What type of predators are found in the wilderness of North America?
Option: Wolves and foxes
Option: Black and brown bears and mountain lions
Option: Deer and elk
Option: Hawks and eagles

2. On average, how many human attacks do bears in North America cause yearly?
Option: 4 to 6
Option: 11.4
Option: 580
Option: 10

3. What did the study led by Philip Manlick use to play sounds near bears?
Option: Humanoid robots
Option: Motion-activated cameras
Option: Motion-activated speakers
Option: Human voices

4. How many people are struck by lightning each year in the US and Canada?
Option: 11.4
Option: 580
Option: 4 to 6
Option: 10

5. What did the findings regarding mountain lions in California suggest?
Option: They are not afraid of human activity
Option: They avoid areas of high human activity
Option: They have no specific behaviour towards humans
Option: They exhibit aggressive behaviour towards humans

6. What impact do bears have on forests?
Option: They destroy the forests
Option: They help in fertilising forests
Option: They have no impact on forests
Option: They cut down trees



True-False

7. Bear and mountain lion attacks on people are very common.
8. Bears show a significant aversion to human voices.
9. Mountain lions are never found in areas with high human activity.
10. Researchers believe that black bears and mountain lions are afraid of humans.
11. Humans should aim for a coexistence that increases conflict with wildlife.
12. The ecosystem is unaffected by the behaviour of bears.

Gap-Fill

13. The wilderness of North America is home to formidable predators, including black and brown bears and mountain lions, but bear attacks are exceedingly rare with an average of around _____ humans yearly.
14. Mountain lions are responsible for _____ to 6 attacks on humans each year.
15. One study revealed that bears retreated almost ten times more often when they heard _____ voices.
16. Researchers suggest that humans should be mindful of their presence in these animals' habitats to reduce _____ conflicts.
17. Bears play an important role in fertilising forests with _____ from their feeding.
18. Both bears and mountain lions perceive humans as a serious _____ and change their movements accordingly.



Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Black and brown bears and mountain lions 2. 11.4 3. Motion-activated speakers 4. 580
5. They avoid areas of high human activity 6. They help in fertilising forests

True-False: 7. False 8. True 9. False 10. True 11. False 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. 11.4 14. 4 15. human 16. human-wildlife 17. remnants 18. threat

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL4

POST TAG

1. B2
2. bears
3. ESL learning
4. esl news
5. Level 4
6. mountain lions
7. predator

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