

# COEXISTENCE WITH BEARS

The brown bear is the largest carnivore in Europe and an important element of a well-preserved environment. It has an important role in nature, especially as a scavenger and a spreader of fruit bearing plant seeds. It is also one of the key species as, with the protection of the brown bear, we also preserve other animal and plant species, and the environment in which it lives. With the construction of roads, railways and settlements we are fragmenting and reducing the bear's habitat. This leads to an increased number of traffic accidents and more frequent encounters with humans. As a result of the latter and the food the bear finds in the vicinity of houses, it can lose its fear of humans. This kind of bear is deemed as problematic and should therefore be removed from nature.

## How can we contribute to a better coexistence of humans and bears?

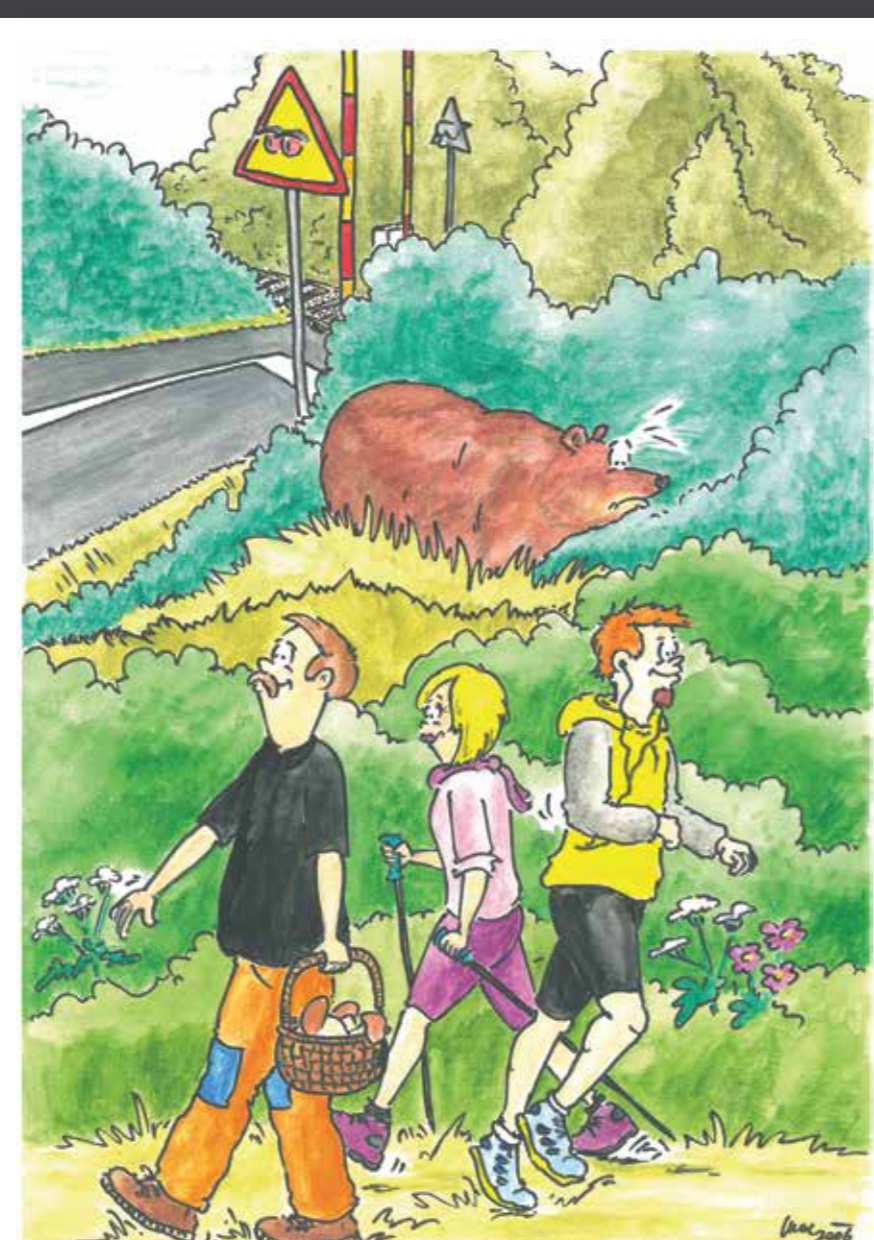
We must ensure that our actions do not lead to habituation of bears to human presence, and that we do not disturb them in their natural habitat.



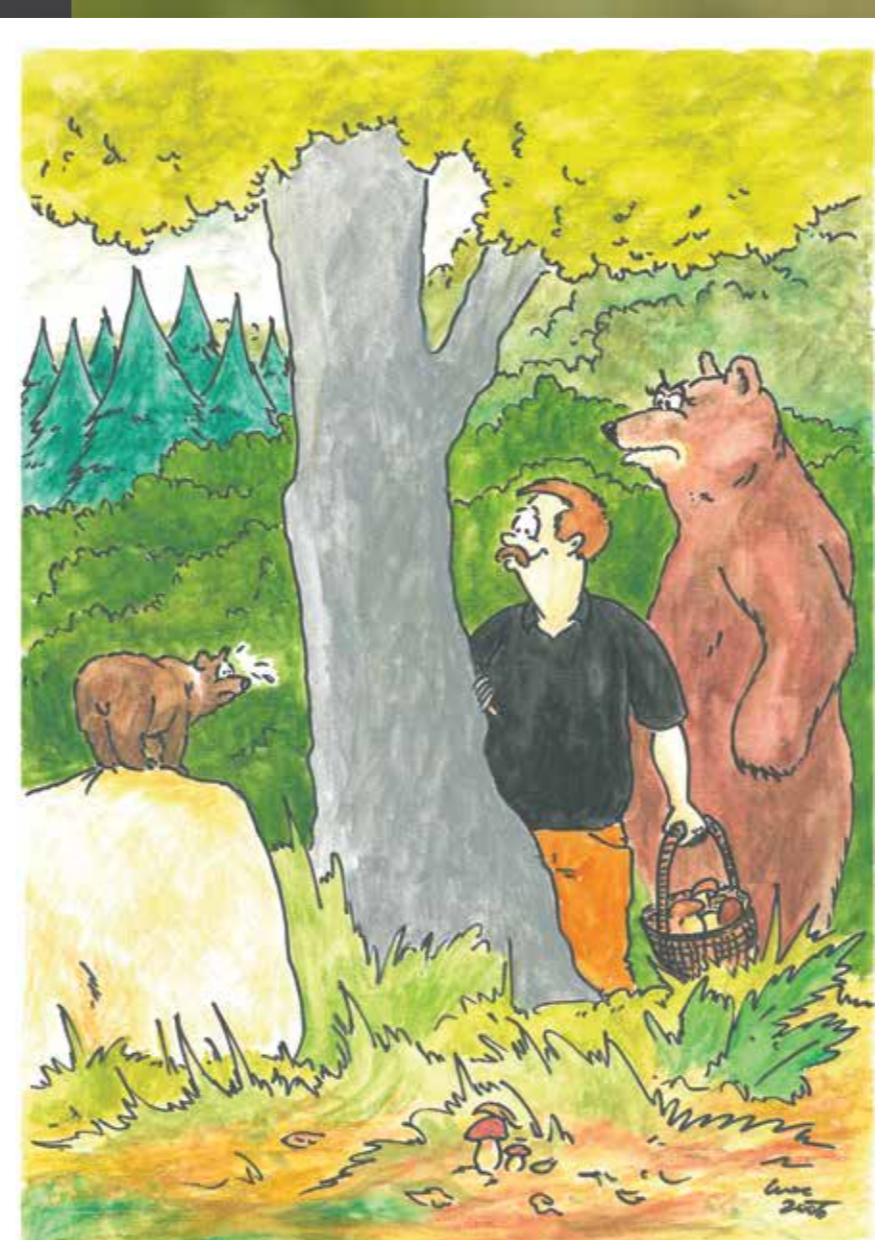
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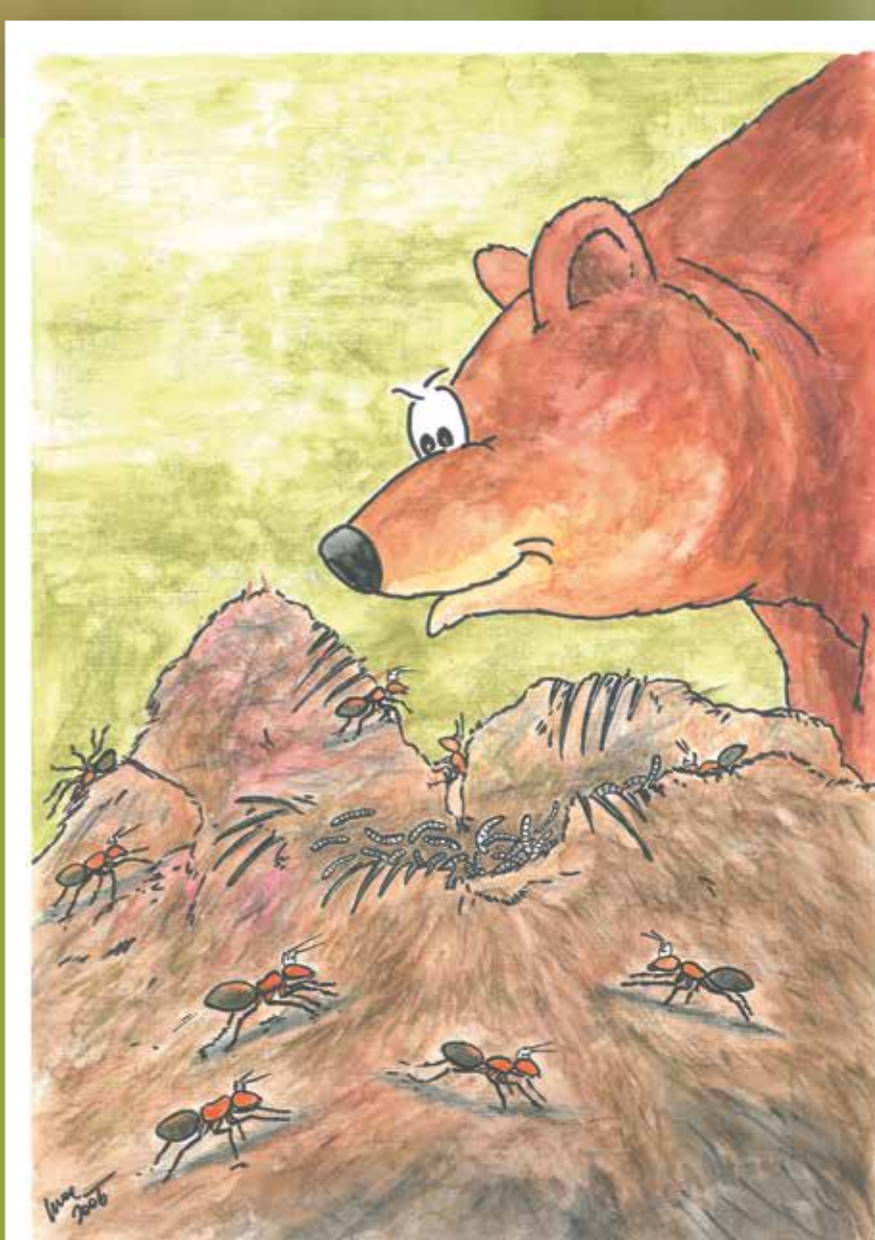
**Do not leave any organic waste** (left-over food and slaughter remains) **in the vicinity of settlements, roads and hiking destinations**, as it attracts the bear. Garbage has to be deposited at sites provided for waste disposal, preferable in bear-proof garbage containers, if available.



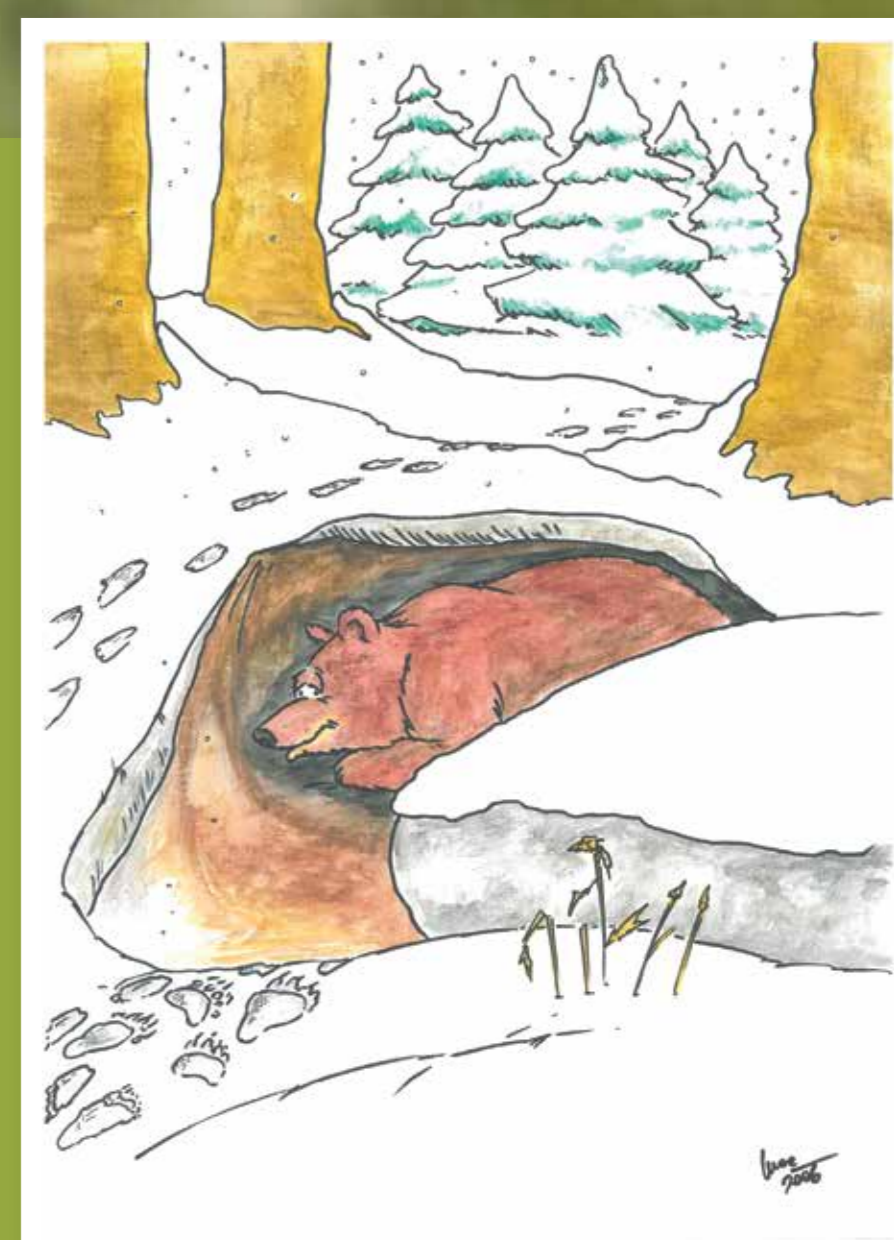
**In the forest, make yourselves noticeable (e.g. by talking)**, especially while passing through dense vegetation or in low visibility areas. **Keep your dog on a leash**. If the dog encounters a bear and provokes it, he will seek protection and thus lead the bear directly to you.



**Do not approach bear cubs** because the mother bear is most likely somewhere nearby, and as an attentive mother it will defend them against humans. **Also, stay away from an adult bear** feeding on an animal carcass or slaughter remains.



**Never feed the bears**, even if they look friendly and curious. When we feed them, we accustom them to associate humans with food and consequently encourage the loss of their fear of humans.



**Do not enter the vicinity of or crawl into a bear den**, especially between October and May when bears are denning, as it can be life-threatening.



Population level management and conservation of brown bears in northern Dinaric Mountains and the Alps

The transboundary project **Population level management and conservation of brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) in Northern Dinaric Mountains and the Alps - LIFE DINALP BEAR** (LIFE13 NAT/SI/000550), the purpose of which is to spread knowledge about brown bears as well as to improve the coexistence of humans and bears, started on 1st of July 2014 and will last until the 30th of June 2019. The project's main objectives are population level monitoring of the brown bear, its management and conservation in Northern Dinaric Mountains and in the south-western area of Alps, the mitigation of human-bear conflicts, and the promotion of coexistence and natural expansion of brown bear population from the Dinaric Mountains into the Alps. All of the abovementioned is achieved through bear population level coordination and cross-border cooperation of organizations from Croatia, Slovenia, Italy and Austria. The project is co-financed by the programme LIFE-Nature and Biodiversity, which is intended for co-financing of projects that contribute to halting the loss of biodiversity within the European Community. For more information about the project, visit the project website [www.dinalpbear.eu](http://www.dinalpbear.eu).



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