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Weather



TODAY:
SUNNY

HIGH OF 26
LOW OF 10



TUESDAY:
SUNNY

HIGH OF 28
LOW OF 19



WEDNESDAY:
60% CHANCE OF
SHOWERS

HIGH OF 28
LOW OF 17



THURSDAY:
MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUDS

HIGH OF 31
LOW OF 18



FRIDAY:
MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUDS

HIGH OF 31
LOW OF 18

Lion? Tigers? Bears! "Oh my!"



THE SCOOP MABLE HASTINGS

Our family has resided in the same place in the Eastern Townships just 3km from the US/Canada border for over fifteen years now. Surrounded by forest and less than a kilometre from the Missisquoi River, we have been fortunate enough to see many forms of wildlife while residing where we do: deer, fox, moose (in the yard) and more...

The following is comparable to a scene from the movie "Great Outdoors" starring the late John Candy with my son playing his role in the film....

Last week while exiting his car to go and fetch the mail down the road, my son heard a noise across the road in the neighbour's yard a few feet from our home. Being mid afternoon he looked up expecting to see a stray cat or even a raccoon rummaging in the garbage left by renters beside the neighbour's small garage. To his surprise, a black bear sat up on its hind legs to see who was watching him. While my son was shocked to see the visitor, we'd never seem a bear in mid day so close to the house, the bear continued eating the leftovers of the barbecue he'd managed to retrieve from the small garbage can. Sizing him up, he didn't seem to think my son was much of a threat and he continued as if he were alone.

With three small pigs in our backyard, my son decided to abandon getting the mail and instead got into his car and honked the horn to startle the bear and send him back into the woods. Not more than an hour later, a resident living a kilometre from us posted on Facebook photos of a black bear within feet of her Mom's porch comfortably searching for scraps under their bird feeder.

According to research, there are more than 60,000 black bear in Quebec and multiple reports of black bear sightings have surfaced in places where



PHOTOS: ETHAN BALL



they are known to inhabit but have rarely been seen; especially during the day only feet from people's homes. While black bear can be found in nearly every corner of Quebec, wildlife experts tell us that encounters are rare. Until last week, my son would likely have agreed but it seems that something is changing...

If you see a black bear experts suggest that you back away slowly. When at a safe distance, make noise to alert the bear of your presence and likely it will retreat into the woods. Leaving left over food and garbage in an easily assessable container or location is probably not the best idea! While I do not believe that a bear would attack if not provoked, I would suggest that startling the bear in person or approaching it would be a very bad idea. Respecting it as the wild animal it is and finding away to safely encourage it to move along would be the best course of action.

With so many people choosing camping as an option this year in hoping to



physically distance and still enjoy the wonders of summer and a break from it all I felt it important to alert readers to this personal experience and that of our neighbours. Wildlife is a beautiful thing and something to be marvelled at however, it is best to be smart and vigilant as we mix in with them in their surroundings...or in this case, when they mix into ours.

Ben by Daniel Shelton

