

Stephen Herrero. 1985. Bear Attacks: Their causes and avoidance. Nick Lyons Books, 31 West 21st St., New York, NY 10010. \$14.95

Many of our large wilderness parks support populations of grizzly and black bears. Maintaining these splendid creatures in a wild state – as free as possible from the influence of man – while at the same time providing for human safety, is a difficult challenge for resource managers. This new book should be required reading for park rangers and managers.

Herrero analyzes 414 interactions between people and black or grizzly bears, including 357 incidents involving injury or aggression from the bear. Interactions are classed as "sudden encounters," "provoked attacks," and "predation." This is a difficult data base to work from because, in many cases, the detailed circumstances leading up to an attack are unknown. Herrero recognizes these limitations. He offers circumspect generalizations where appropriate, and rightfully avoids them elsewhere.

Herrero uses this information, along with information on bear social behavior, food habits, and physiology, to show how to minimize people/bear conflict. The book deals with sensitive issues, such as possible vulnerability of menstruating women to bear predation, in a forthright manner. Some readers may be offended by the detailed accounts of individual attacks, which could allay or exacerbate the nightmares of the "bear-phobic." Nevertheless, Herrero uses these accounts effectively to document attack situations and to point out how they might have been avoided.

This book is much more than the title suggests. Herrero produces some thoughtful observations on bear management in parks as well as a sensitive rationale for maintaining populations of wild bears.

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