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Campus-Visiting Bear Cubs Relocated to Tracy Arm, Fish & Game Officials Fear Mother Bear May Have Been Killed

By Kile Clabaugh
Whalesong Staff

There aren't that many college campuses that have bear warning signs on the way to student housing. The reason for those signs became abundantly clear recently as a mother black bear and two cubs have become frequent visitors to the campus this fall. The two cubs were relocated to Tracy Arm last week after their mother was apparently killed.

The two cubs were found near campus housing the week of October 7 without a mother. A gunshot was reported at around 11 p.m. one night that week on the Back Loop Road and the cubs showed up the next day in a report to the police about a high-pitched crying noise.

According to Neil Barten, a wildlife biologist at the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game, the two cubs were captured while biologists had tried to find out where the mother was. A week had gone by with no sign of the mother so the ADF&G decided to haul the cubs by boat to Tracy Arm, south of Juneau.

"Our prognosis isn't the best because they are so young, but we are hoping for the best," said Barten on the cubs chances for survival without their mother.

The bear family had become frequent campus visitors. They had apparently figured out how to unlock the doors of the trash at campus housing and were spotted digging through it a week prior to the report of the missing mother.

"We ended up changing the locks and the bears disappeared shortly after," said student housing director Amanda Knerr. "The last time I had saw them was October 3 when the two cubs were hanging in the trees."

Bear safety is a serious issue for the UAS campus community. A video on bear safety can be checked out from the Mendenhall Library and additional information and brochures can be picked up at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office and also on their main website at <http://www.state.ak.us/adfg/adfghome.htm>.

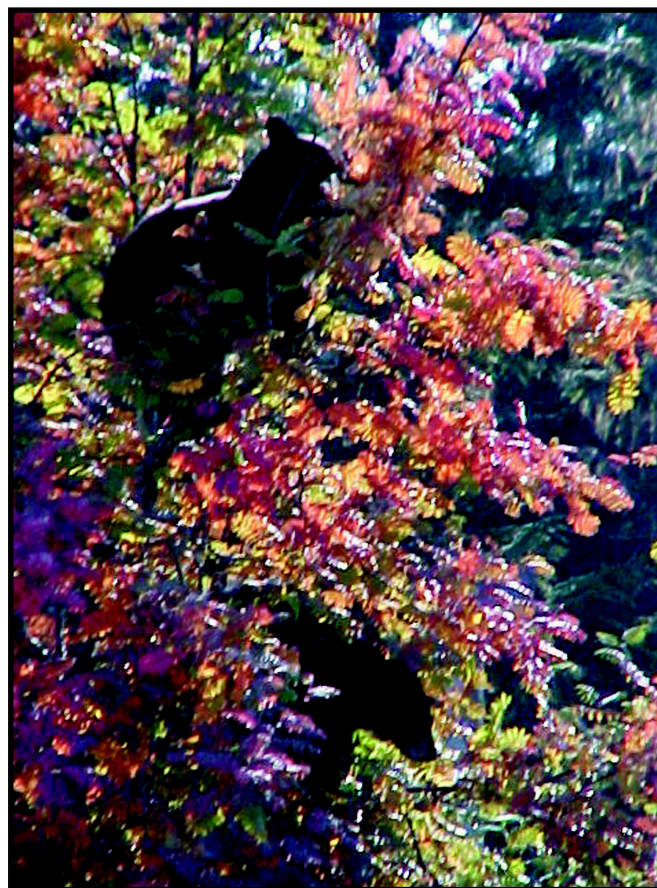


Photo by Laura Miko

Bear cubs climbing in a tree on student housing

Sorority Group Mulls UAS Chapter

By Virginia Arrigucci
Whalesong Staff

The sorority group Beta Sigma Phi is interested in starting a chapter at UAS. With enough interest, UAS may see a chapter form this fall or next spring.

A friendship and service organization, Beta Sigma Phi is the largest women's organization of its kind in the world. While sororities are usually thought of as

Bear Safety Tips

For the most part, bears tend to avoid humans, but sometimes the curious bear stumbles on a human, and vice versa. If you ever do find yourself in this position there are some helpful hints that may keep you from getting in a potentially harmful moment.

1. Identify yourself as a human. Wave your arms around and talk to the bear in a normal voice. Sometimes if the bear cannot tell what you are it may come closer and stand on its hind legs to get a better look or smell. A standing bear is usually not threatening.

2. Do not run. You cannot outrun a bear, they have been clocked at speeds up to 35 mph, and like dogs they will chase fleeing animals. Bears often make bluff charges sometimes within 10 feet of their adversary, without making contact. If the bear gets too close raise your voice and be more aggressive. Bang pots and pans or use noisemakers, but never imitate bear sounds or make a high pitched squeal.

3. If attacked and the bear actually makes contact, surrender. Fall to the ground and play dead. Lie flat on your stomach or curl up in a ball with your hands behind your neck. Typically, a bear will break off its attack once the threat is eliminated. In some cases, particularly with black bears, the attacking bear may perceive a person as food. If the bear continues to bite you long after you assume a defensive posture it is most likely a predatory attack and you should fight back as much as you can.

university groups, Beta Sigma Phi is open to all women over the age of 17 worldwide. In the four Juneau chapters, the members range from age 35 to age 80. The lack of young college age women is what interested Beta Sigma Phi in starting a chapter at UAS.

While the option of interested UAS students joining an existing chapter of Beta Sigma Phi exists, it is definitely possibly and advantageous for students to start their own new chapter at the university. A chapter would be considered a student club at UAS, with a member of another Beta Sigma Phi chapter being the club advisor. Whereas the sorority traditionally holds chapter meetings in member homes, a university chapter would have the benefit of using the university facilities

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