

north shore news

Second black bear killed in WV

Bruin euthanized in BPs after feasting on kitchen garbage

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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The Conservation Officer Service has killed a bear in West Vancouver after it became "extremely habituated," to surviving in human neighbourhoods - and human homes.

Last week, the bear pushed its way through a screen door on a home near Hollyburn Country Club, grabbed a bag of kitchen garbage and made its way out on its own.

"If a bear goes into an occupied residence, essentially, we don't have a lot of other options with that bear aside from destroying it," said Sgt. Peter Busink, conservation officer.

The Conservation Officer Service trapped the bear on Wednesday night and returned Thursday to confirm with the homeowner it was the same one that invaded the kitchen. Busink said he had no choice but to shoot the bear.

"I've been a (conservation officer) for 10 years - all in locations that are among the highest human/wildlife conflict areas in the province," he said. "I've got a lot of experience with habituated bears in traps and this was among the highest habituated bears I've ever seen. I thought, at one point, it was going to lick my hand."

This is presumptuous - cjk

Busink doesn't assign any blame to the family whose kitchen garbage was raided because the property was otherwise free of bear attractants. But the bear had clearly learned its bad habits with the assistance of people, he said.

This is the second time this year conservation officers have been tasked with killing a bear in West Vancouver. Officers shot a bear in Glenmore in June after it ripped a garage door off its hinges and invaded a home to get access to the freezer.

To stem the number of bears killed, Busink said the public needs to report bears before they become habituated and take responsibility for the bear's safety themselves. "Theoretically, if everyone properly secured their attractants at all times, there would never be a bear destroyed for conflict reasons. Bears will only stay in the neighbourhood if they're getting calories," he said. "The onus is really on the residents to make sure they're securing their attractants and that's for their family's safety, their neighbours' safety and the bears' safety."

The incident is puzzling for the North Shore Black Bear Society, said Christine Miller, society president.

"West Vancouver has very good enforceable bylaws and we work closely with the bylaw department and they do followup on attractant issues so you really wonder how this bear got to that point," she said.

More than just keeping their own homes free of garbage, fallen fruit, bird seed and other attractants, residents must be willing to contact the network if their neighbours need "educational support," Miller said.

The bear society can be reached at 604-990-BEAR (2327).