

Black bear illegally shot, killed in Squamish neighbourhood

Conservation officers are searching for the person responsible for illegally shooting a black bear and leaving it to die in a residential neighbourhood in Squamish last week.

An early riser on her way to work discovered the bear's carcass on a neighbour's lawn on Wednesday morning after she noticed a trail of blood crossing her driveway in the Garibaldi Highlands, according to Sgt. Simon Gravel of the Conservation Officer Service.

The animal, a 10-year-old male weighing about 400 pounds, had been known to visit the neighbourhood at night in search of food.

"We didn't have any report of the bear being aggressive or presenting a threat for a public safety concern," Gravel said.

Investigators have not been able to determine the motivation for killing the bear, but they believe the animal died between 12:30 a.m. and 4 a.m.

Gravel described the incident as a disturbing one for a community that values wildlife and the wilderness.

"We've been living with bears in our community for years and we want to keep it as harmonious as possible. We don't want people to take it on themselves to kill bears or to harass bears for personal concerns," he said.

He added that anyone who feels uncomfortable living close to bears and other animals should read up on local wildlife, suggesting the WildSafeBC website as a good place to start.

"If they do feel threatened or if they do have some public safety concerns with the bears, always call the RAPP (Report All Poachers and Polluters) line and do not take actions themselves. It's not safe ... for anyone," Gravel said.

Hunting is illegal in residential neighbourhoods, and anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the provincial RAPP line at 1-877-952-7277.