
NWW Winter Newsletter

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IT'S BIRD FEEDING SEASON AGAIN!

Now's the time to buy a bird feeder or get out the ones you had stored away so you can brighten your short winter days with avian visitors. From now until sometime in March, there's little risk of bears crashing the party, destroying your feeders, and becoming a nuisance.



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Most Montana bears (including this grizzly photographed in the Tom Miner Basin by Charlie Janson) enter winter dormancy by December 1 and hibernate in their dens until March. Hibernation is often based on food availability. Once bears are using more energy than they can find, they enter their dens to hibernate. General deer and elk season ends on December 1 this year which means hunters will stop leaving behind gut piles, a welcome meal for bears. Bears are intelligent animals and have learned to seek out these calorie rich bonanzas by scent and some may even be attracted by gunshots, which indicate there could be a food reward left by a successful hunter. With hunting season over and snow storms becoming more frequent, most natural foods are gone and the bears nod off until awakened by spring.

So buy some sunflower seeds, thistle, or suet; fill the appropriate bird feeders, and hang them up outside your home. They will bring birds close to your kitchen or living room. Watching birds can be educational, but maybe more importantly, it is pretty much guaranteed to be fun. Winters tend to be monochromatic. Bird feeders invite color and activity—birds outside your window will brighten your winter world.

You can read more about living with bears and safely feeding birds on our website if you link to: <http://ninemilewildlife.org/how-to-keep-bears-out-of-your-yard.html>

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Thank you for your continued interest and support.

NINEMILE WILDLIFE WORKGROUP

Our mission: We work to promote knowledge and stewardship of local wildlife and habitats within the communities and public lands of the Ninemile, Huson, and Alberton region.

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