

YELLOWSTONE BEAR ATTACK RAISES WARNING FLAGS



Yellowstone National Park belongs to the top most-visited natural parks in the U.S. Its vast and raw natural beauty appeals to millions each year. However, recent bear attacks raise a warning flag.

Yellowstone National Park is a striking natural reserve with unrivalled sceneries and breathtaking mountain vistas. **2010 was a record-breaking year with some 3.6 million visitors, which is a 10% increase on previous year.** The hot geysers are a fantastic site, local green mountains feature some amazing hiking trails and a sizable grizzly bear population attracts wilderness enthusiasts.

With more hiking traffic, however, the odds are bound to change. The bears are not to be trifled with and while they usually keep their distance, recently, bear attacks and even killings were recorded.

A couple came across a female grizzly bear and her two cubs. While they followed all recommendations and began quietly to back out, the bear decided to chase after them. The 57-year-old man was killed in the attack while his wife, who pretended to be dead, survived without any harm.

Park rangers often recommend wearing bear bells on backpacks as well as carrying a useful pepper spray which saves lives. The couple had neither. On the other hand, meeting one of the estimated 600-1000 local grizzly bears is not uncommon but according to the park officials, the odds of a bear attack are usually 1 in 3 million.

In recent months, another attack was recorded in Montana, on the outskirts of Yellowstone, where three sleeping men were attacked at night, one killed. Such a case of raw aggression is unusual and the bear was captured and killed, to make sure the attack would not occur again.

For now, some backcountry trails are not accessible and as long as the rangers believe there is any danger, they will remain closed. However, with sufficient caution and protection, such a horrible event should not happen again this year.

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