

You, Wildlife and How Best to Share the Woods

So you've found that perfect piece of wooded property — your own slice of unspoiled natural beauty. One of the first things you'll need to discover is what kind of wildlife also calls your acreage home.

The easiest way to do that is to call or visit the website of the [Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) or [the Department of Natural Resources in your state](#). Both organizations will have plenty of information about what kind of wildlife lives in your area, and how to maximize your enjoyment of natural beauty while minimizing harm to the creatures who share it with you.



A paddler comes upon a moose on Knife Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness east of Ely, MN. (Sam Cook photo)

Here are a few tips for safe and appropriate interaction:

- Once you know what kinds of wildlife share your property, take care to avoid damage to nests, dens or breeding areas. Part of the joy of owning property is to see these animals in their natural habitat.
- Don't attempt to feed the wildlife unless you plan to maintain a food plot for animals that can be hunted, like deer, turkey or ducks. Wild animals don't distinguish between natural and artificial food sources. A bear is just as likely to forage from an unsecured trashcan as from a rotting tree stump. Likewise, a deer will readily eat both wild spicebush and cultivated peach trees. Animals that are fed lose their natural fear of humans, along with their ability to forage on their own.
- Know which animals pose a threat to humans and their pets. Most wildlife is harmless if left undisturbed, but even innocuous creatures like deer or raccoons can react aggressively if they feel threatened so it's best to keep a safe distance from all wildlife. Wolves and coyotes can be troublesome if you plan to bring your pets out to your property.
- Planning ahead and knowing current and upcoming hunting seasons is also a great idea, so be sure to check [your state's Game/Fish/Wildlife website](#) for all the latest information.
- Be aware of your surroundings when visiting your property. Help prevent injury to animals by staying alert while driving, especially at dawn and dusk when wildlife is most active. Protect animals from accidental poisoning by carefully securing all chemicals. Antifreeze—which is extremely toxic—is especially attractive to animals, because it tastes sweet.

Humans and wildlife can and do coexist and following a few simple precautions will ensure peaceful cohabitation while enhancing your enjoyment of your property.

Want to learn more about the wildlife in your neck of the woods or on a piece of Potlatch property you're interested in? Contact one of our local real estate experts in the [Potlatch Preferred Network](#) today.