

Road accident with a large predator or a wild boar

In the event of a road accident with a large predator or a wild boar, do not get out of the vehicle but inform the emergency centre and follow their instructions. An injured animal, especially a bear or a wild boar, is always dangerous. A wounded animal can also act unpredictably. If you have to leave the site of the accident, mark the place clearly if possible in terms of safety. This helps the Finnish big game assistance (SRVA) personnel to locate the site as quickly as possible so that they can begin their investigation of the issue. Make a note of the animal species, size, number and direction in which they fled. Attempt to observe the animal and its behaviour from your vehicle.

- do not leave the vehicle
- call 112
- report any human injuries
- act according to the instructions provided by the emergency centre
- if you have to leave before the arrival of the authorities, mark the location clearly to help the SRVA personnel find the site and begin their investigation of the situation

Wolf

Wolves avoid people. As the wolf population spreads out to new territory, encounters with people are becoming more frequent. Despite the increase in wolf and human encounters, wolves have not attacked people in Finland since the turn of the 19th and 20th century, as far as is known. It is more likely you will be attacked by a dog than a wolf. If you detect an animal that may be a wolf, observe its tail. A wolf does not carry its tail over its back; instead, the tail is **straight** and points downwards or is between the legs. A wolf's ears are relatively short and far from each other.

Wolverine and lynx

Usually, the wolverine and lynx are not dangerous to people. There is no recorded evidence of a healthy wolverine or lynx attacking a human in Finland.

More information on large predators

www.suurpedot.fi
www.riista.fi/riistaweb



A bear's daytime resting place

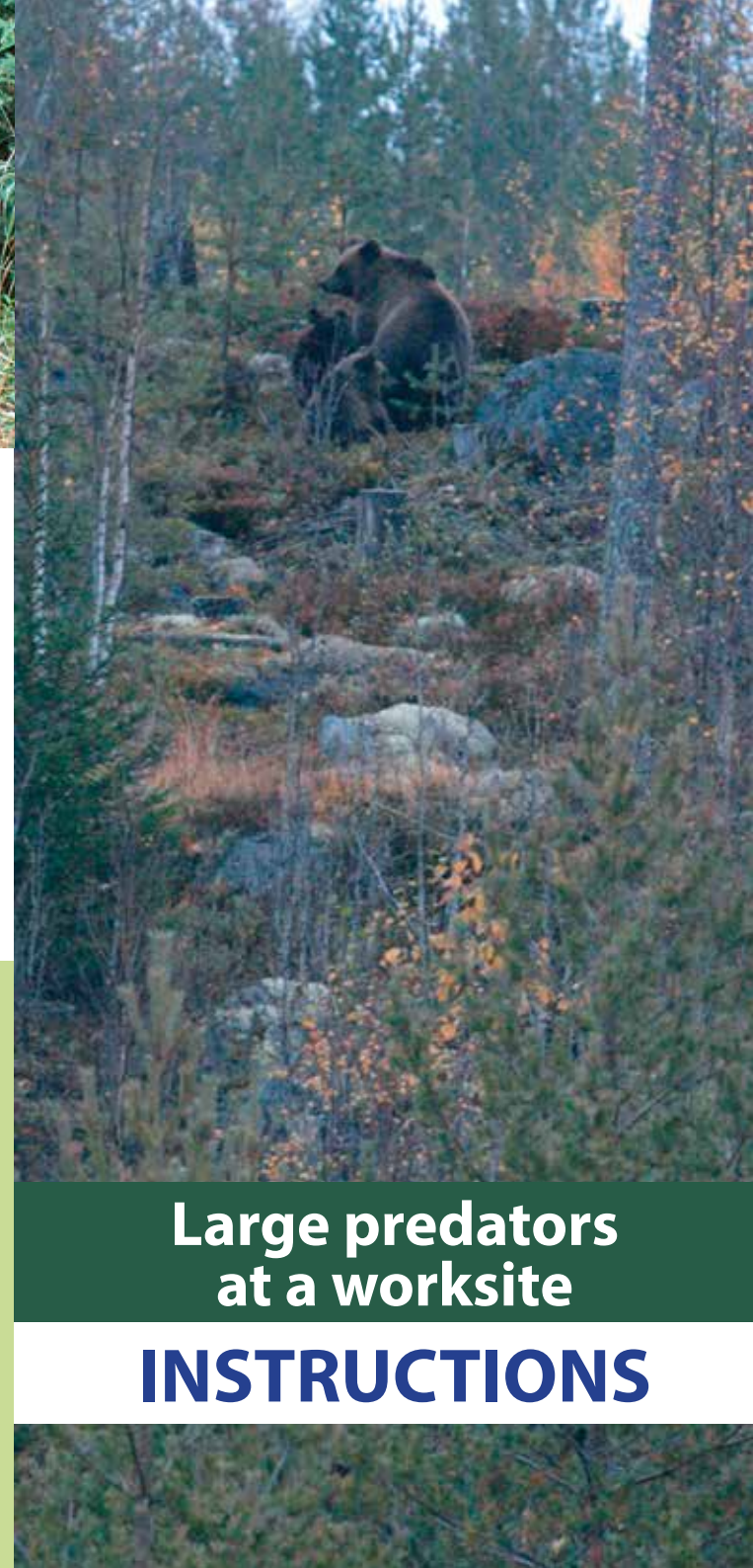
Report contact with a large predator

Report to your employer or closest supervisor if you encounter an aggressive large predator or a predator that could pose a threat to working at the site or you detect signs of the presence of a large predator at the worksite. It is also advisable to notify others working at the site or visiting the site.

It is also advisable to report sightings of large predators to the predator contact person of the local hunters' association. Find their contact information online: www.riista.fi/riistaweb

These instructions were made to dispel the fear caused by large predators and provide instructions on how to act in conflict situations. These instructions are primarily directed at those working in nature and their employers. According to the Finnish Occupational Safety and Health Act, an employer must identify any adverse and risk factors caused by the work, working times, workspace, other working environment and working conditions and act either to remove them or to reduce the effects.

Koneyrittäjien liitto ry, Maa- ja metsätaloustuottajain Keskusliitto MTK ry, Meto - Forestry Experts' Association, The Wood and Allied Workers' Union, the Finnish Wildlife Agency and Yksityismetsätalouden Työnantajat ry were involved in the drafting of these instructions. Metsämiesten Säätiö supported the making of the instructions. Instruction images: Yrjö Eronen



Large predators at a worksite

INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

Bear, wolf, lynx and wolverine, the large predators of Finland, have spread out almost everywhere in Finland. Large predators make people afraid and concerned about their safety or property. Fear is most common in those new areas where people are not used to the presence of large predators or the damage they may cause.

Usually, large predators avoid encounters with people. There is no recorded evidence of a wolverine, lynx or a wolf attacking a human in Finland in the 20th or 21st centuries. A few bear attacks have been recorded in recent years. A mother bear with cubs mauled a jogger in Southeast Finland and an adult bear attacked a jogger in North Karelia. In both cases, the bear was caught by surprise. In the North Karelia incident, it was not concluded whether the bear had cubs. As far as is known, the other incidents of bears attacking humans have occurred in dog-training or hunting situations where the bear has been disturbed or wounded.

The risk of being the subject of a large predator attack at a worksite is very small, although possible. It is not possible to guarantee that a large predator will be harmless.

General

Of the large predators in Finland, wolf, lynx and wolverine are usually harmless to people when they are healthy. The bear is the most likely of the large predators to cause a dangerous situation. Possible dangerous situations:

- the bear is caught by surprise
- the sow is protecting its cubs
- the bear is guarding a scavenger it has killed or
- the bear is disturbed while in its den
- during the mating season, a male bear can act aggressively

A sick or wounded large predator may act unpredictably.

In general, animals are not afraid of the sound of a machine. That is why people working outdoors with machines may come across large predators more often than other people moving around in nature.

When moving around in nature, make sounds—for instance, by talking. A large predator will avoid people if they hear human sounds, but the animal may quickly investigate a traveller when downwind.

Bear mother and cubs

A bear can view a human as a danger to its cubs. Usually, the female makes false attacks to drive the danger away. If you encounter a bear who rises to its hind legs, flails its paws and roars, it is protecting something. If this occurs, calmly leave in the direction from which you came and talk quietly. Do not shout or run.

If you detect a bear cub, the mother is likely to be near. If this occurs, calmly leave in the direction from which you came and talk quietly.

In the autumn, a bear cub is the size of a Finnish Spitz and weighs about 20–25 kg. A bear cub follows its mother for over a year and the mother may still nurse it.



Prey killed by a bear

If you encounter a carcass of an animal killed by a bear, the bear may still be near. If this occurs, calmly leave in the direction from which you came. Usually the bear rests and guards its kill downwind a couple of hundred of metres away. The bear does not consider berry spots or carcasses left by humans as its own but avoids people and utilises such locations in harmony with humans.

Bear den

A bear will retire to its winter den in September–November. If you spot a bear's breathing hole in the snow, do not disturb a hibernating bear.



The bear may have to leave its winter nest if it is located in a logging area. If this occurs, the bear will find a new den. If you detect a bear or an abandoned winter den in a logging area, do not get out of the machine to inspect it. The bear is not afraid of the sound caused by the machine and will move elsewhere or return to the den when the disturbance has gone. If you get out of the machine, the bear may consider you the reason for the disturbance and attack.

Bear mating season

The bear mating season takes place in early June. During mating season, male bears may fight for females. During mating season, male bears move through a wide area in search of females ready for mating and may be unpredictable, hungry or wounded from battles. After mating season, males tolerate each other and can be seen together.

If a bear attacks you

Throw yourself to the ground, face down, protect your head and neck with your arms and stay still, i.e. play dead. It is not advisable to run as the bear will always outrun you.