



APPALACHIAN BEAR RESCUE

Giving Bears a Second Chance
March 28, 2022

ABR MISSION STATEMENT



ABR cares for orphaned and injured black bear cubs and yearlings for return to their natural wild habitat; increases public awareness about coexisting with black bears; and studies all aspects of returning cubs and yearlings to the wild.

ABR BEAR FACILITY



- **65-acre facility**
 - Heavily forested
 - Mountainous terrain

- **Adjacent 78-acre county-owned undeveloped property adds buffer space**

ABR BEAR FACILITY



ABR BEAR FACILITY



MINIMIZE HUMAN CONTACT



- Force wean from bottles at 10 weeks
- Move to Cub House when weaned
- Minimize human contact when transferring to next level of care
- Use blind enclosures
- Throw food over fence in different areas and at different times of day
- Provide limited visibility overlook towers for Curators
- Allow only limited personnel at facility
- Use closed circuit cameras for visual access

PERMITTED BEARS



- Licensed for bears younger than 2 years of age
- Can keep individual bear for up to 1 year
- Bears returned to home states for release back to wild

YEARLINGS AT ABR



- Yearlings at ABR are usually injured, ill, or severely malnourished
- Yearlings are never housed with cubs of the year
- ABR must usually treat and repair injuries, treat illnesses, and treat yearlings for parasites so that they can thrive
- Yearlings stay only long enough to recover health and reach suitable release weight

YEARLINGS AT ABR



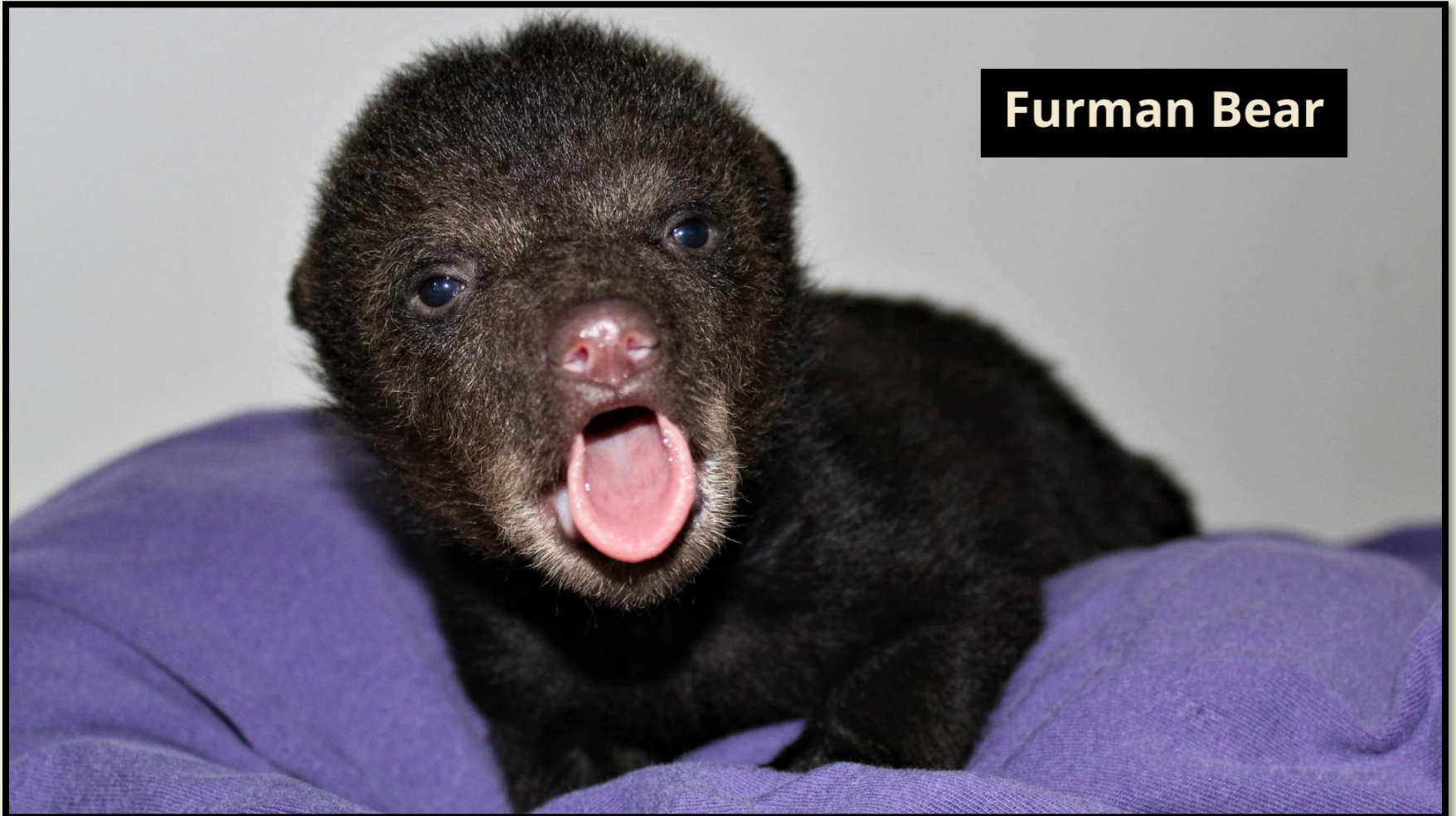
FOSTERING NEONATES



- Fostering cubs to a sow with other cubs is possible during denning season
- Denning season in our area ends by about mid-April
- Wildlife officials must know den locations of collared sows
- Dens must be checked during the winter to assess the health of the sow and number of cubs in the den
- ABR coordinates with wildlife agencies to foster as often as possible

On our best day, we don't compare to Mother Bear!

FOSTERING NEONATES



Furman Bear

CUBS AT ABR



**Neonates that arrive after
bear families leave their dens
make their first stop at the
ABR Cub Nursery...**

CUBS AT ABR – CUB NURSERY



- After foster season, cubs start their ABR stay in the Cub Nursery
- Climate controlled building with divided cages
- Cameras with sound provide Curators constant cub access without constant human contact
- Curators bottle feed cubs around the clock, stimulate to urinate and defecate
- Cubs have “stuffies”, heartbeat “stuffies”, cub caves and each other for comfort
- At 10 weeks of age, ABR Curators force wean the cubs from bottles and cubs learn to lap from bowls
- Cubs practice skills on small climbing structures

CUBS AT ABR – CUB NURSERY



CUBS AT ABR



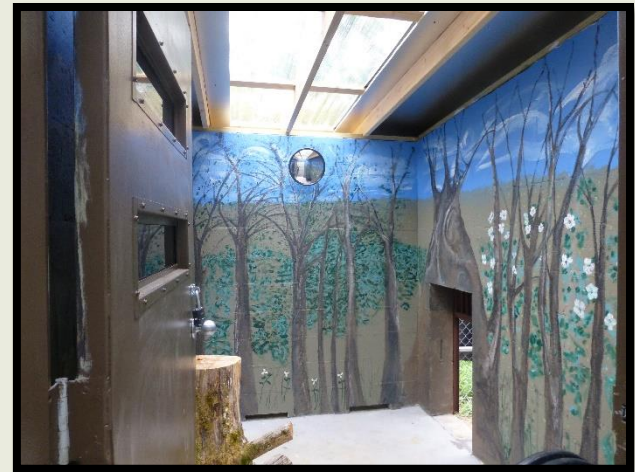
The Cub Nursery is soon too small and too close to humans. Time to move to an ABR Cub House...

CUBS AT ABR: CUB HOUSE



- Safe place to move cubs when they are weaned from bottle
- Temperature controlled
- Sanitary environment
- Easy monitoring with less human contact
- Larger space to encourage further development
- Cubs continue to practice their skills
- Easy and safe access for recapture, if necessary

CUBS AT ABR: CUB HOUSE



CUB HOUSE: HARTLEY HOUSE



CUBS AT ABR



**Time to move outdoors to the
ABR Wild Enclosures...**

WILD ENCLOSURES



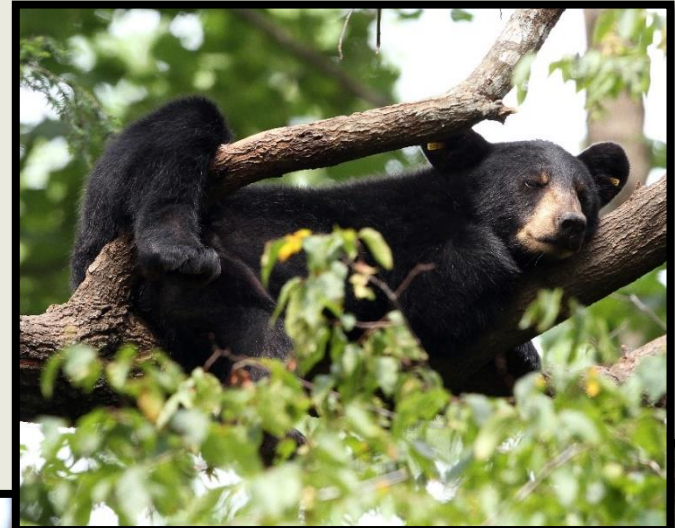
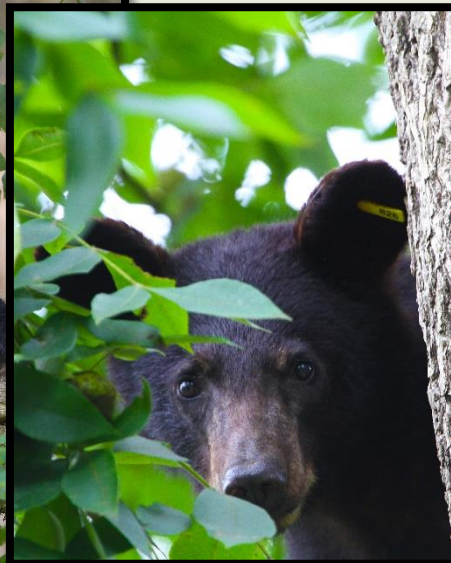
WILD ENCLOSURE FEATURES



WILD ENCLOSURE



- Four ½ acre enclosures
- Building 2-acre enclosure
- Pens with open top



WILD ENCLOSURE FEATURES



CUBS AT ABR - WILD ENCLOSURE



RELEASE DAY



- Releases coordinated with wildlife agencies
- Bears released as close as possible to their home territory
- Bears safely trapped into smaller enclosed pens for safety
- Bears immobilized for final checkup and markings
- Bears monitored throughout the immobilization process
- Bears leave ABR for release back to the wild where they belong

RELEASE DAY



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PUBLIC AWARENESS



- TWRA's BearWise Tennessee partner (BearWild Division)
- Host partner for International Human Bear Conflicts Workshop (2018 Gatlinburg & 2022 Lake Tahoe)
- Membership Education Series
- Visitor & Education Center in Townsend, TN
- Social Media Outreach (Over 200K Facebook Followers)
- Fund and install bear-resistant trash receptacles in our communities
- Volunteer Litter Task Force

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RESEARCH



- Graduate level research (Jay Clark, Coy Blair, Victoria Reibel, Katie Riese, Eliza Baker)
- Multiple research publications in Journal of Wildlife Management and Journal of Wildlife Diseases
- Ongoing UTCVM research partnership studying black bear health and disease
- Research partnerships with multiple state and federal agencies
- Extensive cub data organized in database

QUESTIONS?

