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Contact: Chris Cauble, 449-0200
ccauble@riverbendpublishing.com

Make noise to avoid a dangerous bear encounter

Want to hike safely in grizzly country? Then heed the advice of bear country expert Tim Rubbert of Whitefish, Montana.

“The one tactic that offers the greatest protection against a negative encounter with a grizzly is making noise,” Rubbert explains in his new book, *Hiking Safely in Grizzly Country: More Lessons Learned*.

“Making noise will not guarantee that you will not run into a grizzly, but it will lessen the risk that you will surprise one at close range,” he writes. “Most maulings occur because the person basically walks right into a grizzly without any warning. The hiker ends up scaring the daylight out of the bear and the grizzly reacts instinctively to protect itself or its cubs.”

Rubbert has hiked more than 40,000 miles in grizzly country and experienced more than 2,400 grizzly sightings. He describes numerous encounters, often accompanied by remarkable color photographs of the bears at key moments, to explain why and how the incidents safely took place.

These illustrated accounts of actual bear encounters may be the most valuable and best remembered “lessons learned” in the book. Many encounters took place on hiking trails in Glacier and Yellowstone national parks.

Rubbert also provides excellent advice about how to carry and use bear spray, the risks of hiking alone, the proper ways to camp in bear country, and how to react if you do see a bear. Hiking safely, he says, is important not only for hikers but for the bears too, since bears involved in attacks are often captured or killed.

Ten years ago Rubbert published his first book, *Hiking With Grizzlies: Lessons Learned*. His new book, *Hiking Safely in Grizzly Country*, sells for \$15 at bookstores and outdoor stores, and from Riverbend Publishing.

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