

Yosemite bears eating like it's 1915

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

Black bears in Yosemite National Park aren't snacking as much on human food as they did decades ago, according to new research that traces changes in the diet of Yosemite bears over the last century.

Researchers analyzed samples of bear bones from museums and bear hair collected from the field to determine the ratio of human-to-wild-food that Yosemite bears consumed as far back as 1915.

Not surprisingly, they found that the proportion of human food rose significantly after the park started feeding bears in 1923 to keep the animals away from developed areas. Lighted feeding platforms were even used to entertain park visitors until 1940.

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