

is a very rare specimen. The biggest one I ever saw measured a trifle under eight feet from tip to tip. A bear with a long nose is generally a tough customer. Some bears are distinguished by a white spot on their breasts, and I have noticed that these have the best fur.

"The time of year when bears take to their dens depends on the food supply. If the beechnut crop is poor and grub scarce in general, they will commence to den in October. The usual time, however, is after the first snows, about the latter part of November. The old rangers stay out as long as they can find anything to eat. As a rule, if a captive bear is well supplied with food and shelter, he will show no signs of wanting to den in the winter. A bear will sometimes roam for weeks in search of a suitable place for his den. Then he will select a hollow log or tree, a leaning root, the edge of a cedar swamp, or even the shelter of a bush. When the weather gets soft he is liable to come out and ramble around, and perhaps change his quarters. In these rambles he will sometimes gather up new moss and bark for the purpose of repairing his bed. He greatly dislikes a wet bed and is apt to come out because he is flooded by rain or melting snow. As a rule he is very careful to select a dry site for his den.

"In early springs I have known bears to leave their dens as early as the 10th of April, but the latter part of the month is the usual time. They travel very little at first, sometimes picking out warm sunny places where they can take a sun-bath during the day, returning to their dens at night. When the bear comes out of the den in the spring he is fully as fat, if not fatter, than when he went in, but he loses from 20 to 50 pounds of flesh in the next week or two. The first drive he makes is for a spring hole or water course where he can fill himself up with mud and grass. I think he loafs around for as much as a fortnight before he tackles any solid food. I have never known a bear to touch a bait until he has been out of the den at least a fortnight.

"The cubs follow the mother about two years and I think mate in their third year. I am satisfied, after carefully examining the subject, that the old bears sometimes devour their cubs. I have opened the bears that had recently cubbed and found the hair of the cubs in their stomachs. The cubs might have died by accident, but that is unlikely. I have trapped a good many she bears in the spring that had lost their cubs somehow. The mother, of course, might have wandered off and left them. We know that partridge will often travel their young to death in wet weather, when the chicks are unable to follow from being chilled and tired out.

"The black bear is responsible for the death of a great many young moose and caribou. It is no doubt because of their fear of the bear that the cows of these animals, when bringing forth their young, retire to islands in the lakes and other secluded spots. Last spring when trapping bears on Bathurst waters I found plenty of signs, in the stomach and droppings, that the animals destroy the moose calves at that season. If the moose calf escapes until he is three or four years old he is too lively on his feet for the bear to catch him, and is one of the wariest animals to be found in our woods. A good sized moose will now and then fall a victim to a bear. Some years ago I heard a moose roaring and bellowing in a swamp. When I got there I found that a bear had broken the moose's back and had him down chewing away at his neck. This moose was a yearling bull. The bear was so busy he didn't notice my approach and I piled him on top of the moose with my rifle. Two of my assistants, Hughie McDermott and Dan Flynn, witnessed a big fight between a large bear and a three

year old bull moose, in which the bear killed the moose by jumping on his back. Unless a bull moose is taken off his guard, though, he is usually too much for the bear to handle.

"In all my hunting I have only shot 11 bears that were not fast in the trap. It is quite a common thing to find a loose bear in company with the one that has been trapped. The queerest experience I ever had with bears was in the year 1885, when I shot six bears on one trip in six shots. I have never shot a loose bear since and it don't seem to me as if I ever would.

"I was going up the Burnt Hill stream, taking in a man named Bill Patchell to look after the provisions in some lumber camps belonging to Guy, Bevan & Co. We went out from Stanley by the portage road to the Sou-west Miramichi. It was about the middle of the afternoon when we reached a camp called 'Hold the Fort,' ten miles up the stream. There I saw two bears in the dooryard, one feeding at the sink, and the other at a pile of old bones near the end of the camp. We found out later that they had been in the camp and mauled over the stuff considerably. I had a double-barrelled gun loaded with buck-shot. The bears were not more than 40 yards away. I keeled over the chap at the bone-pile, and then gave the gent at the sink the left barrel. Neither of them travelled over 30 feet. Both of these were male bears, weighing about 200 pounds each. Patchell at the time was a little ways back on the trail and arrived just in time to attend the funeral. We stopped there that night, skinned the bears, stretched the skins on poles and hung them up in the camp.

"The next morning we struck out for the camp at the head of Burnt Hill about seven miles away, reached there shortly before noon and found the supplies all right. We turned over the oats that afternoon and stayed all night. The following day I struck out for Clearwater alone, to have a look at Harry Turnbull's camp. It was eight miles across and I got there about noon. As I came around the corner of the camp I saw a big bear in the dooryard rolling around in the chips. I gave him a dose of lead in the bread-room and he clapped his paws to his head and doubled up with his feet in the air. As soon as I fired I heard a rumpus across the yard and saw another bear climbing out of the oat bin that was attached to the hovel. He jumped up on the wall, dropped down the other side and made off under full steam through the hay shed. I ran around to the other side of the hovel. When the bear came out on the road he stopped and looked around to see what the racket was, so I served another Habeas Corpus on him that minute. This was a yearling bear; the one in the dooryard weighed over 200 pounds. I stripped off the skins right away and lugged them back to the main depot camp, where Patchell, was that same afternoon.

"We stretched the skins on poles that evening and next morning started down stream, where I intended to join a salmon fishing party from Fredericton at the Burnt Hill pool. There was one more camp to examine about three miles from the main river. When I got about 20 rods from this camp I saw a bear at the sink. There was a small brook between us and I had to cross over a corduroy bridge to get close enough to shoot. Just before I stepped on the bridge I caught sight of a large she bear about fifteen feet above, rolling around, cooling herself in the brook. I tumbled this bear in the brook, and with that the bear at the sink sprung out in the middle of the dooryard and looked around to see where the noise came from. When I fired at him, he turned a complete somersault in the chips, came down on the palms of his feet and took down the portage road as if the devil had kicked him endways. He only ran about thirty rods. When I came up to him he undertook to