

More bear cubs captured in NJ residential area

(Vernon, New Jersey - WABC, June 7, 2007) - Six bear cubs are in the custody of wildlife experts in Hunterdon County after being captured in a residential area of Vernon Township, New Jersey.

State wildlife officials tell Eyewitness News that three of the cubs were spotted up a tree Friday morning and taken into custody. The cubs are believed to be the offspring of a bear shot late yesterday in the Highland Lakes section of Vernon Township.

Three other cubs, orphaned when a bear was shot Thursday morning, are already at the wildlife sanctuary.



Officials say it has been a busy two days for bear spotting in the area. One of the bears shot yesterday had ambled with her cubs through someone's house before being taken down.

Friday's incident happened in the area of Lakeside Drive and Amicalola Drive in Highland Lakes.

Animal control officials in Vernon Township say they send out bear awareness tips each year with the annual tax bills. This year's information will be sent out sometime before the end of July. The tips are in a letter from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The township's animal control officers also talk with residents during the town's annual animal census, reminding them to use bearproof trash containers and not to feed bears, which is illegal in the state.

Vernon Township health officer Gene Osias says no injuries due to bears have been reported to date in the township. State DEP officials say they are investigating reports that some residents may be deliberately feeding bears, which they say is a very dangerous things to do. Some retail businesses may also be making their dumpsters available daily to the bears.

DEP officials say it is a violation of state law to feed wild bears deliberately or unintentionally.