



# Observations from the Mendenhall Glacier

February 19, 2009

## Upcoming ... Fireside lectures

Friday, February 20 \* 6:30 & 8pm  
**Black Bears for Neighbors**

Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologist Ryan Scott and his associates have radio-collared several Juneau black bears over the past five years. Dig into the behavior and habits of our urban black bear neighbors with data collected from the radio collars. See how this information will be used in the future management of Juneau's black bears.

Friday, February 27 \* 6:30pm & 8pm  
**Giant Pacific Octopus:  
The Elusive Cephalopod**

Sherry Tamone and her colleagues at the University of Alaska have marked and recaptured giant Pacific octopus in Kachemak Bay. Sherry will share details about the population of these marine super cephalopods and their migrations in the Gulf of Alaska.

Friday, March 6 \* 6:30pm & 8pm  
**Mendenhall's Black  
Bears**

Join visitor center rangers Doug Jones and Laurie Craig for a 2008 update of the glacier area's wild black bears. Get acquainted with this year's 13 bears through stories and photos.

**\*\* We'll have a special booksigning, on March 6, too!** Mark Kelley and Nick Jans will autograph copies of their 2008 book **Black Bears of Alaska's Mendenhall Glacier.**

More at [www.mendenhallglacier.org](http://www.mendenhallglacier.org)

Fireside lectures are free and occur on Friday nights in January, February and March. Visitor center doors open at 5:45pm with the first lecture at 6:30pm and repeat at 8pm.



Alaska Department of Fish and Game area biologist Ryan Scott installing a bear hair snare

The sound of your garbage can crashing onto the deck startles you awake from a sound sleep. You grab a flashlight and creep toward the door, wondering if a burglar is trying to break into your home. Instead of a two-legged intruder you find a four-legged one tackling the trash can. It's a black bear. Now what?

Your call to the police gets forwarded to the wildlife officials at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. You'll probably be talking soon to Ryan Scott, Juneau's area biologist for ADF&G.

This scenario is still common in Juneau despite the city and borough's more strict regulations about caring for our garbage.

Sometimes even careful handling by homeowners of their refuse containers results in a marauding episode by the local neighborhood bear. What else can we do to prevent problem bears?

By studying the bears' movements we can learn more about how to live with our wild neighbors.

# Black bears for neighbors

One helpful research tool is a GPS radio collar. Tracking devices help biologists learn where bears feed, rest, travel, and den.

Ryan Scott and his colleagues have affixed tracking collars to three bears in the past couple of years. Each bear's movements have been plotted on maps that reveal the story of the bear's life while wearing its collar.

Learn the full story at Friday's Fireside lecture at 6:30pm and repeat at 8pm on February 20.



GPS collar for tracking wildlife and tranquilizing dart

# Photo Page



*Ice climbers practice their skills near Nugget Falls*

Many interesting things occur at the visitor center during the quiet winter months. We have the opportunity to observe events through the large observatory windows. Also, we have the chance to learn from the landscape as well as from the people who visit. Above and below are two examples.

To the right is a new improvement to the center. It really works!



*New efficient hand dryers recently installed in the visitor center restrooms*



*A romantic gentleman creates a valentine in the snow for his sweetheart on February 14*