



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Polar Bear Viewing

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge



Polar bears share the land and water with us. This is their home. Let polar bears live here without disturbance. It's not only best practice, it's the law*.

When viewing polar bears, appreciate watching each bear's natural behavior. For example, if it's swimming, let it swim undisturbed towards its destination. If it's resting, let it rest peacefully.

Allow each bear to act as if you aren't there. If the bear stays calm and doesn't look at you, you know you're probably doing it right.

Some disturbances to avoid:

- Don't call a bear's attention to yourself or try to attract a bear closer to you (for example, by your movements, or with attractants such as food or objects).
- Don't cause a bear to stop feeding, resting, or swimming.
- Don't allow a bear to make contact with a vehicle, boat, or all-terrain vehicle.
- Don't separate mothers from their cubs.

* Marine Mammal Protection Act requirements to avoid Level A and B harassment.

Level A harassment "means any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild."

Level B harassment "means any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering."

