

Bow hunter severely mauled by black bear in Riverside County

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A bow hunter is recovering after authorities say he was severely mauled by a black bear that he had wounded with an arrow in the Banning Canyon area of Riverside County.

Three people were hunting together Friday at about 7 p.m. when one of the hunters shot a bear with an arrow. When the man approached the wounded bear, it attacked him, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Capt. Patrick Foy said Tuesday.

The man suffered severe injuries to his upper torso, face and arms and was taken to a hospital for treatment.

While bear attacks on humans are extremely rare, Foy said, animals can become aggressive if they're wounded or feel threatened.

"It's something that we learn at the very beginning of hunter education: After you shoot an animal and approach it, you need to be very careful," he said. "They teach you to be prepared with a follow-up shot in case the animal runs or is suffering needlessly."

The bear died of its wounds and was taken to a lab to be studied. It was unclear how large the bear was, but experts say adult black bears can weigh between 100 and 500 pounds depending on the season and the animal's age and sex. Standing upright on their hind legs, black bears can approach 6 feet tall.

Archery bear hunting season in California runs from Aug. 18 through Sept. 9. Hunters are required to obtain a license and a bear tag. According to state rules, a maximum of 1,700 bears can be taken during hunting season in California. So far, 24 bears have been killed by hunters in California this year, according to Department of Fish and Wildlife data.