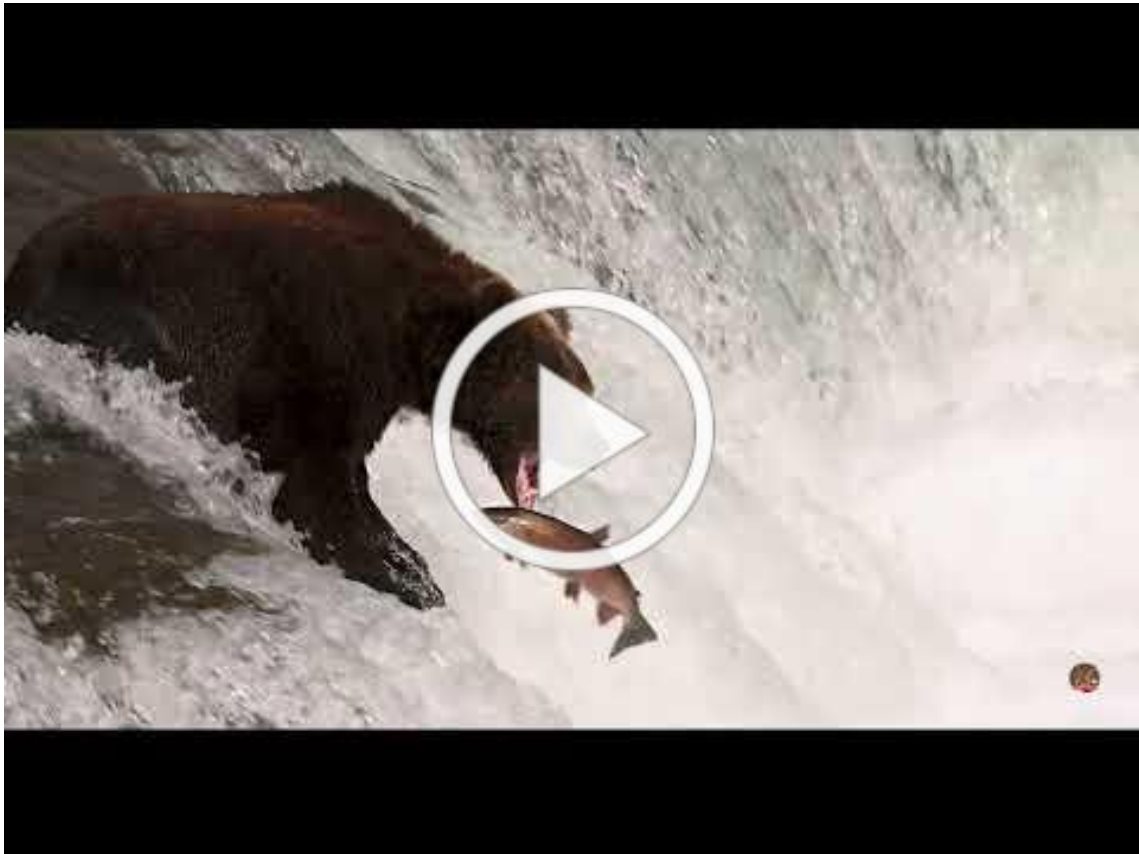




KATMAI CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

Be a Part of Something Wild - Join Us!



This year's cool, wet spring seems to have delayed expected arrivals by a couple of weeks, leaving some worried about the well being of Katmai's bears and salmon.

Rest assured, though we're seeing fewer salmon than witnessed during the historic 2022 salmon run, current counts are well within a normal range. Katmai's brown bear population, estimated at around 2,200 animals, appears to be doing well also.

We at Katmai Conservancy are dedicated to the conservation of Katmai National Park and Preserve, its amazing wildlife, and unique ecosystems. We understand how crucial it is to keep a close eye on Katmai as we continue to experience environmental changes on a global scale, and we're proud to be able to provide funding for wildlife and environmental research that helps Katmai National Park to remain vigilant. These are a few of the research projects that we currently support:

Bear Abundance Research:

The Park continues to compile a long-term dataset using aerial surveys to count bears congregating on various salmon spawning streams. The surveys now span five decades and serve as an index of timing and abundance of bears and salmon.

Volcano Mercury Emission Study:

This important study aims to define the relationship between volcanoes and mercury levels found in the waterways of the Katmai ecosystem.

Coastal Wolf and Bear Genetic Research:

Katmai's coastal ecosystems are experiencing increasing visitation, changing ocean conditions, and expanding commercial and industrial development that may impact

species reliant on the nearshore environment. This study uses noninvasive DNA metabarcoding to track the movements, diets, and population density of wolves and bears on the Park's coastline.

These important research projects can only be supported by Katmai Conservancy due to the donations received from generous individuals just like you!

Show your support for the Park we know and love by donating to Katmai Conservancy and becoming a Friend today. Together we can and will continue to make a difference for Katmai and its incredible inhabitants. Thank you!

Be a part of something wild - join us today!

Bear #480 "Otis" Returns to Brooks!



"Has anyone seen Otis yet???" The question must've been posed hundreds of times daily online this year until, on July 26th, he was finally spotted by faithful bear cam viewers. To everyone's delight, he soon settled into his usual "office" at the falls and began fishing.

Who is this guy? Bear #480, "Otis", is a medium-large adult male with a blocky muzzle and a floppy right ear. He has light brown fur in early summer. By autumn, his coat becomes grizzled brown and he sports a patch of blonder fur on his left shoulder.

Otis was four to six years old when he was first identified in 2001, and he's now one of the older male bears at Brooks River. Otis remains a large bear, but he faces strong competition from younger adult males for preferred fishing spots. He is more likely to be displaced by these bears than he is to displace them. Like many older bears, Otis must also persevere through the poor condition of his



teeth. He is missing two canine teeth and many of his other teeth are greatly worn.

Otis is an especially skilled angler and has a well-deserved reputation for patience. He rarely chases salmon. Instead, he takes advantage of opportunity while expending little energy. At his preferred fishing spots, Otis waits for salmon to come to him. He once was observed to eat 42 salmon in one sitting by employing this strategy. Despite the difficulties and rigors of old age, Otis uses his adaptability, skill, and patience to find success. He has won more Fat Bear titles than any

other bear. He was the inaugural Fat Bear Tuesday champion in 2014 and Fat Bear Week champion in 2016, 2017, and 2021.

We're looking forward to the next chapter in the continuing saga of the incredible bear #480, long live King Otis!

Notes from the Park

Updates from Katmai National Park & Preserve Staff



Brooks Camp Update

by Jennette Jurado, Acting Interpretation & Education Program Manager

2023 is a year when everything has been about two weeks behind. It took a while for snow to melt, trees to bud, leaves to come out, and salmon to arrive. Salmon finally started jumping at the falls in mid-July, and our online community was thrilled to see Otis return in late

July.

With a late salmon run, particularly in late June and early July, there were very few bears around camp but people were still coming! With this high demand to see bears and very few bears around to see, we saw some unfortunate human behavior, causing rangers to adjust strategies towards even stronger messaging, and media and interpretation rangers shifting their schedules to manage crowds in concert with bear techs who were managing bears.

While it is too early to tell what the overall impacts of this late salmon arrival will mean, this will be a year to watch as our biologists continue to gather data on bears, salmon, water quality, and more.

Media Ranger Update

by Felicia Jimenez, Media Ranger

Things are busy here in Katmai and at Brooks Camp! July has flown by and we've seen so many wonderful bear stories develop! We've seen the return

of the beloved bear 480 Otis. We've had the privilege of witnessing a rare bear adoption of bear 909Jr by her aunt bear 910. As a result of last year's abundant salmon run, we've seen many sows return with spring cubs. It's been a busy month! August is here and operations are shifting to more science in the backcountry! Bear monitoring at Crosswinds is about to begin and so are surveys along Katmai's coast. Bat research has also been done this past week in many locations throughout the park and in Brooks Camp. It's been an exciting season and we're looking forward for more to come!



Katmai Culture Camp Update

by Laura Stelson, Katmai Cultural Resource Team

This year we hosted our first Culture Camp in the Katmai backcountry! Cultural Resources rangers were joined by five participants from the Native Village of Perryville, including a mix of culture-bearers and teens whose ancestral lands include Katmai National Park. Over 5 days at Amalik Bay, the group learned to identify and document archaeological resources at endangered cultural sites along the park's coast. Then they worked to stabilize one of these eroding sites for future generations by using local vegetation. The group also saw a lot of wildlife, and learned to sea kayak, harvest bidarkis, hunt octopi, and cook tea over a campfire the way the Elders did.

Although the weather wasn't always ideal, everyone looked past the wind, rain, and bugs with good spirits in the name of science and cultural connections. We look forward to exploring opportunities to continue this program, building on this year's successes, and reaching out to other native communities to participate in future years.

Fat Bear Week 2023

Which brown bear transcends the ordinarily large and enters the realm of extraordinarily fat? Your vote decides during Fat Bear Week! Fat Bear Week is an annual, single-elimination tournament focused on bear education. Starting in early October, the public votes online for the bear they think best exemplifies fatness in Brooks Falls brown bears. The bear with the most votes advances, but only one is crowned Fat Bear Week champion.



There's no fat shaming in Fat Bear Week. Fat bears exemplify the richness of Katmai National Park and Bristol Bay, Alaska – a wild region that is home to more brown bears than people and the largest, healthiest runs of sockeye salmon left on the planet. Learn more at fatbearweek.org and watch live, streaming footage of the bears at Brooks River every day on explore.org.

Join us this October for Fat Bear Week, and be sure to stick around for the grand finale, Katmai Conservancy's annual online Fat Bear Week Celebration Fundraiser! We'll celebrate the 11th year of the bear cams and the 2023 bear cam season, highlight the Fat Bear Week champion, and discuss Katmai Conservancy's important work in support of Katmai National Park and Preserve.

Stay tuned for Fat Bear Week updates as they become available!

Bears in Fireweed Quilted Blanket



Introducing our Bears in Fireweed - Quilted Sleeping Bag Blanket!

Crafted with sustainably-produced 30D nylon, this Large 52" x 75" lightweight blanket is perfect for indoor and outdoor use. It's designed like a soft sleeping bag, providing optimal comfort.

With its convenient drawstring bag, you can easily store and carry this eco-friendly blanket made from 100% recycled materials. The artwork by Valisa Higman showcases a heartwarming scene of a momma bear snuggling her cub among the fireweed.

Available now!

Katmai Conservancy Fat Bear T-shirts

Discover our latest Katmai Conservancy Fat Bear T-Shirt, featuring the iconic Fat Bear® Logo prominently placed on the front left chest. Embrace sustainability with this eco-friendly tee, skillfully crafted from a blend of 50% recycled cotton and 50% polyester. These shirts are lightweight and soft, ensuring comfort during the warmer months. Made entirely in America, we take pride in using ethically sourced and eco-friendly materials for these shirts, embodying our commitment to environmental consciousness.



Order yours today!

Famous Otis Candle and Wax melts



*Hand Poured
Cookie Scented Candle*

8.5oz / 241g

Introduce a delightful aroma into your living space while showing your love for bear #480 "Otis" with our Famous Otis Cookie Scented Candle. Experience the comforting scent that combines the essence of freshly baked cookies with hints of sweet vanilla and a touch of subtle spices.

Our candles are crafted in the United States and hand-poured with care. We use a premium soy blend to ensure a clean and long-lasting burn.

Visit our
website!



We sincerely appreciate the incredible love shown to Katmai National Park and Preserve and Katmai Conservancy by our extraordinary supporters, THANK YOU!