

ECOLOGY OF THE BROWN BEAR IN THE ENISEI TAIGA

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Abstract: The brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) is very important in the USSR from a practical point of view: It is a source of valuable hunting trophies; the meat is nourishing; the high-calorie fat has medicinal properties; the bile is in high demand in medicine; and by consuming the carcasses of dead animals, the bear performs a sanitary function in nature.

Our research on the ecology of the brown bear was conducted in 1967-76, in a 35,000-km² area in the middle of the Siberian taiga, where the Podkamennaya Tunguska discharges its waters into the Enisei River. We gathered 72 skulls of animals of different sex and age, took measurements and weights of 38 animals, analyzed the stomach contents of 29 animals, and determined the ages of 62 specimens by tooth cementum layers.

This paper describes the measurements and life history of the brown bear, including four annual feeding periods which may be differentiated. Bears in the Siberian taiga appear to have a selective impact on the moose population. Cases of bear cannibalism are known. Bears very seldom attack people.
