



U.S. Department of Justice

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ARREST MADE IN ILLEGAL KILLING OF A BLACK BEAR IN MISSISSIPPI

Dunn Lampton, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi, and Robert T. Oliveri, Resident Agent in Charge of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service for Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi, announced the arrest last night of Darryl Eubanks of George County, Mississippi, on federal charges relating to the illegal killing of a Black Bear, a protected species in Mississippi. Eubanks was arrested by agents with the United States Fish & Wildlife Service and Conservation Officers with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries & Parks.

Darryl Eubanks was indicted on May 7, 2008, by a federal grand jury in a four count indictment. The indictment charges Eubanks with killing the Black Bear in violation of the Endangered Species Act, transporting the Black Bear in violation of the Lacey Act, giving a false statement to federal agents in connection to the investigation, and obstruction of justice for tampering with a material witness in a federal investigation. Eubanks is scheduled to appear today at 1:30 p.m. before United States Magistrate Mike Parker in Hattiesburg for an arraignment.

If convicted, Eubanks could face up to one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine on each count for illegally killing a Black Bear and for transporting the illegally killed animal, and up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine on each count for giving a false statement to a federal agent and for obstruction of justice for tampering with a material witness. The defendant is

presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in court.

In 1932, Black Bears were given statewide protection in Mississippi because there were less than twelve Black Bears remaining in the state. In 1974, the Black Bear was included on Mississippi's first list of rare and threatened animals. In 1992, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service declared the Mississippi Black Bear, a subspecies of the Louisiana Black Bear, as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act.

In January of 2008, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) received information that a Black Bear carcass had been found in Perry County, Mississippi. The MDWFP and the USFWS initiated a joint investigation. After conducting numerous interviews, the investigators gathered information and evidence leading to an indictment.

U.S. Attorney Dunn Lampton commended the work of the federal and state agents involved in this case. "This is yet another great example of teamwork by federal and state agents," said Lampton. "It is important to all of us to protect endangered and threatened species, such as the Black Bears in Mississippi, and our office will vigorously prosecute those who illegally kill Black Bears or any other protected species."

"Anyone involved in the illegal killing of Black Bears protected by the Endangered Species Act will be vigorously pursued by state and federal agents," said Robert T. Oliveri of the USFWS.

For additional information, contact John Dowdy, Chief of the Criminal Division of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi, at 601-965-4480.

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