

Bob Watson Photography

Reflecting the Spirit of Nature
NATURE • WILDLIFE • LANDSCAPES



"Springers" in the Middle of Winter

You might wonder what I mean when I title this month's Newsletter "Springers in the Middle of Winter. Generally, only wildlife enthusiasts and, particularly bear enthusiasts, would know what I'm referring to. I'm talking about newly born bear cubs. Although newly born bear cubs aren't seen until spring (thus the term Springers), they're actually born in their mother's den in January or February.

Featured Photograph No. 1



Brown Bear Cub (Springer) With Mother, Katmai National Park, Alaska

Most writing in this Newsletter is true of all bears, but I'm specifically speaking of the Brown (Grizzly) Bear, of which I'm most familiar.

It's hard to describe my feelings, but it's always so special to see Springers. I'll never forget the first time I observed Springers. It was during my first trip to Alaska in early June 1981. A mother was playing with her 3 newly born cubs on a snow bank in Denali National Park. On many trips since then, one of my first questions when I arrive in Denali is "are there any new Springers this year"?

Inside their mother's den, cubs are born weighing about 1 lb., with no hair and no teeth. At this point, they have little strength and spend the next 1-2 months nursing their still sleeping or hibernating mother in the den before the entire

family ventures out into the world. At this point, the family is made up of the mother and from 1 to 4 cubs, but more often 2 or 3.

Remember, I said “their still sleeping or hibernating mother” above. The female bear doesn’t hibernate or sleep as deeply as other hibernators do. Although her heart rate does drop from an average of 40 beats per minute to around 8, she will awaken if disturbed enough.

Researchers watch bear populations carefully because they have one of the lowest reproduction rates of any mammal. This is true because of numerous factors:

1) Cubs stay with their mother from 2 to 3 years and the female may not mate for 2 or 3 years after her cubs have left.

2) After a female becomes pregnant, development of the embryo temporarily stops for a few months (called delayed implantation). If during the following months the female hasn’t had sufficient caloric intake or nutrients to sustain the winter and delivery of her cubs, her body will abort her pregnancy by reabsorbing the embryo.

3) Females don’t reach sexual maturity until at least 5 years old.

4) Nearly half of newly born cubs won’t survive their 1st year, falling to disease, starvation or predators, including male bears.

My Featured Photographs this month of Springers are both from my most recent trip to Katmai National Park in Alaska.

I hope you sometime get a chance to observe these playful and delightful cubs in the wild.

Featured Photograph No. 2



Triplet Brown Bear Cubs (Springers), Katmai National Park, Alaska

By clicking on either size below, you may securely purchase these "Featured Photographs" through [Paypal](#) with your credit card or your own [Paypal](#) account. \$8 dollars will be added for shipping. Satisfaction for all prints ordered is guaranteed or your money will be refunded.

*[Featured Photograph No. 1A - 8 x 12 = \\$35](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 1B - 12 x 18 = \\$65](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 1C - 16 x 24 = \\$115](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 1D - 20 x 30 = \\$145](#)*

*[Featured Photograph No. 2A - 8 x 12 = \\$35](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 2B - 12 x 18 = \\$65](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 2C - 16 x 24 = \\$115](#)
[Featured Photograph No. 2D - 20 x 30 = \\$145](#)*

Larger sizes are also available at similar discount pricing. Please email me to inquire about larger sizes that may interest you.

These photographs will remain as "Featured Photographs" available for special pricing until you receive another newsletter.

I invite you to visit my website at BobWatsonPhotography.com. My more recent photographs may be seen in my [New Images](#) section.

If you have any questions (i.e., additional description, special sizes, print paper,

etc.) about the Featured Photograph or any photographs on my website, please email me. Don't hesitate to email me; if just to say Hi.

When or if you ever change email addresses, please go to the "[Home Page](#)" of my website and subscribe using your new email address. Alternatively, just let me know of any email address changes.

When or if you ever change email addresses, please go to the "[Home Page](#)" of my website and subscribe using your new email address. Alternatively, just let me know of any email address changes.

I continue to receive new subscribers to my Newsletter. Many of them come from you forwarding my Newsletter to your friends and family that you think may be interested. For this, I heartily thank you. Please continue. Anyone wishing to subscribe to my Newsletter should go to my "[Home Page](#)". You can also just email me with their first and last name and their email address.

Thanks for letting me share my photography with you.

[Privacy Policy](#)