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'I know it can happen at any given time': Sask. man, 80, shoots bear as it climbs through his window



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Robert Jardine, 80, came home from combining this weekend to discover a bear had broken into his home in Torch River, Sask. The bear eventually left and a conservation officer boarded up his window, but the bear returned and Jardine shot the animal as it barged through his boarded up window into his kitchen.

Robert Jardine has spent decades living and working in northern Saskatchewan — and until last weekend never had an experience with black bears like the one he had on Sunday.

After spending all Saturday combining, Jardine arrived back at his Torch River home early Sunday morning to discover the screens had been torn off a window. Hearing something still inside the home, he got back into his truck and drove approximately one kilometre away until he could find cell service and call the RCMP.



Robert Jardine, 80, shot two black bears on his Torch River property on Oct. 1. Pictured is a bear he shot as it headed toward his cabin. (Photo courtesy Robert Jardine)

A conservation officer soon met met Jardine at the home, roughly 70 kilometres northwest of Nipawin, but by

then the intruder was gone, leaving popping corn and punctured soup cans strewn across the kitchen. The officer helped Jardine board up the window with plywood and then departed — leaving Jardine alone, worried the bear would come back.

In preparation for a possible return, Jardine had two rifles ready: a more powerful one with a single bullet, and a less powerful weapon with more ammunition.

“I was laying in bed and that was my biggest concern: ‘What gun am I going to use? I have to make up my mind before I go to sleep,’” Jardine recalled.

He placed the more powerful rifle by his bed and arranged pots and pans by the boarded-up window so he would hear the bear if it returned. Sure enough, Jardine heard a loud bang around 5:30 a.m., as the plywood over the window came down. He leapt out of bed and hustled into the kitchen in time to see a bear poking its head through the window. Jardine shot the animal and, when he went outside to survey the damage, saw a trail of blood leading into the woods.

“It was a little bit close. It’s like a war. If you’re not alert, you’re going to die. If you’re not interested in what you’re doing, if you’re not taking it serious, you’re not going to last,” he said.



Robert Jardine, 80, shot two black bears on his Torch River property on Oct. 1. Pictured is some of the destruction a bear wrecked on his cabin. (Photo courtesy Robert Jardine)

Jardine’s adventures weren’t over. Less than 20 minutes later, he saw another bear lumbering toward his cabin, which is located roughly 100 metres from the home. Jardine fired and killed the second bear.

When he went to investigate, he realized the bear had been living in the cabin and tearing the place apart.

Though Jardine has had many close encounters with black bears, Sunday was the first time one has come into his home. Jardine used to have a dog, which helped him feel more secure, but the pet died last spring. Jardine has since borrowed his son’s dog and says it is helping him sleep better at night.

The experience rattled him but hasn’t dissuaded him from living alone in, as he says, “the middle of the forest.

“I know it can happen at any given time,” he said, “but I don’t want to live in fear.”