# Robot wolves prevent Japanese bear attacks, are also very creepy

No, this is not a Halloween decoration someone forgot. This robot — "Monster Wolf" — is actually a bear deterrent. The city of Takikawa, Japan, deployed these robowolves to prevent bear attacks.

And yes, bear attacks were something of a problem: 157 people were attacked by bears in 2019. But since the Monster Wolves were installed, no attacks have occurred, *The Guardian* reports.

Black bears' recent attacks are probably due to a shortage of acorns in the Japanese wilderness, according to conservationists. Bears rely on acorns as part of their pre-hibernation diet, and without the high-calorie nut, they've started edging closer to cities to forage for food. Deforestation and growing cities have shrunk the barrier between bear and human homes. This leads to more bear-to-human contact, prompting attacks.

So naturally, robowolves are the decidedly human response to that problem:

The wolves scare away bears in the same way kids are instructed to do at summer camp: they move and make loud noises. They're also robotic and lifeless, producing a flavor of scary appropriate to the history of the real-life wolves upon which these robots are based.

Black bears and wolves used to share the central and northern

regions of Japan, but the wolves were driven to extinction by hunting and resource competition. In a way, the robowolves are their modern ghosts. They’re effective at dealing with Japan’s current bear problem, but these “wolves” may also be a portent of a possible future for the black bears if a better solution isn’t found.

https://www.theverge.com/21561095/japanese-town-robot-wolf-scarecrow-bear-deterrent