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Bear sighting at Whitewater State Park

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WINONA COUNTY, Minn. (KTTC-DT) -- A Rochester mother and daughter who were out photographing bald eagles in Whitewater State Park Tuesday night, came across something they weren't expecting, a black bear.

"Bear sightings are not that uncommon," says Jonny Marshman who owns Jonny's Saloon near where the bear was spotted

Lisa Christenson and her daughter Emme, were pleasantly surprised to see the black bear come wondering out of the woods Tuesday night.

"It actually gave me a little pleasure to actually get the photos of the bear," says Lisa.

While this isn't the first time she's seen a bear, it is the first time she managed to get pictures.

"I jumped out and grabbed my camera and got a half a dozen shots," she recalls.

As Lisa was snapping still photos, 10-year-old Emme grabbed her video camera and started rolling.

"I think it was my first bear sighting," Emme says about the experience.

Unlike most girls her age, Emme had no problem being just 100 yards from a black bear.

"It's actually a little surprise, like Christmas you know? Where you're hoping to get something and you get something good," the 10-year-old says about the experience.

One theory is that the bear came from Wisconsin, it might have crossed the Mississippi while there was still ice on it, or even swam across.

Black bears usually don't wonder more than 15 miles from their den, Lisa believes this one probably lives near by.

"He was maybe heading up into the hills where there might be a food source, maybe there's a farm up there"

For the most part, these bears don't like people, which is why Lisa's feels lucky she now has new photos to add to her collection.

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