



Deterring Deer from Eating the Home Landscape

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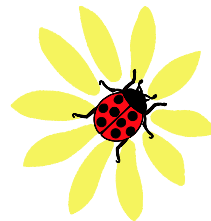




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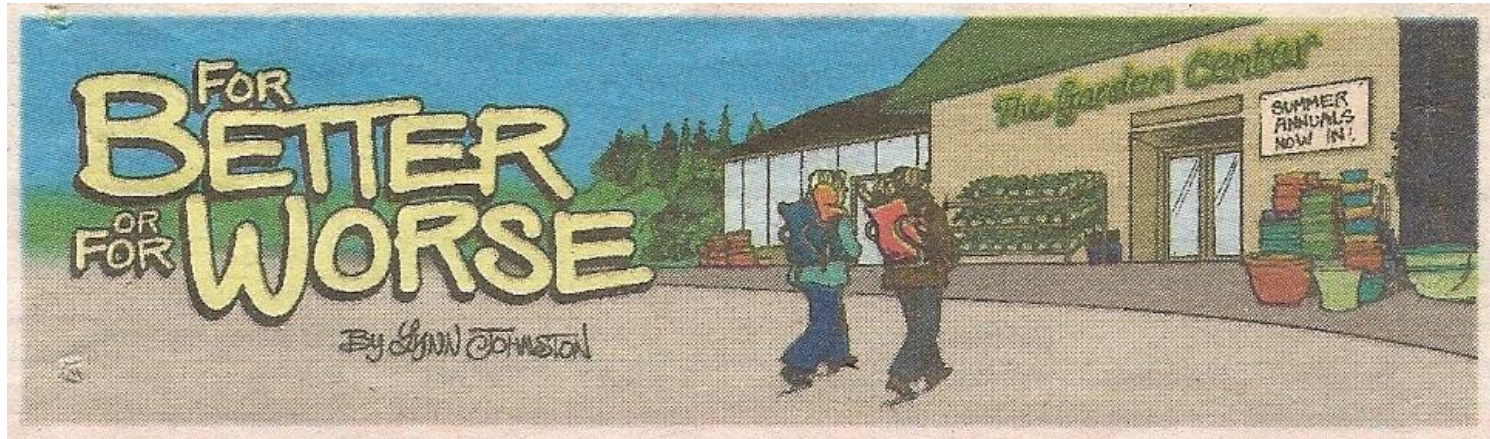


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**HOME AND GARDEN
INFORMATION CENTER**
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How to Garden Successfully in Deer Country



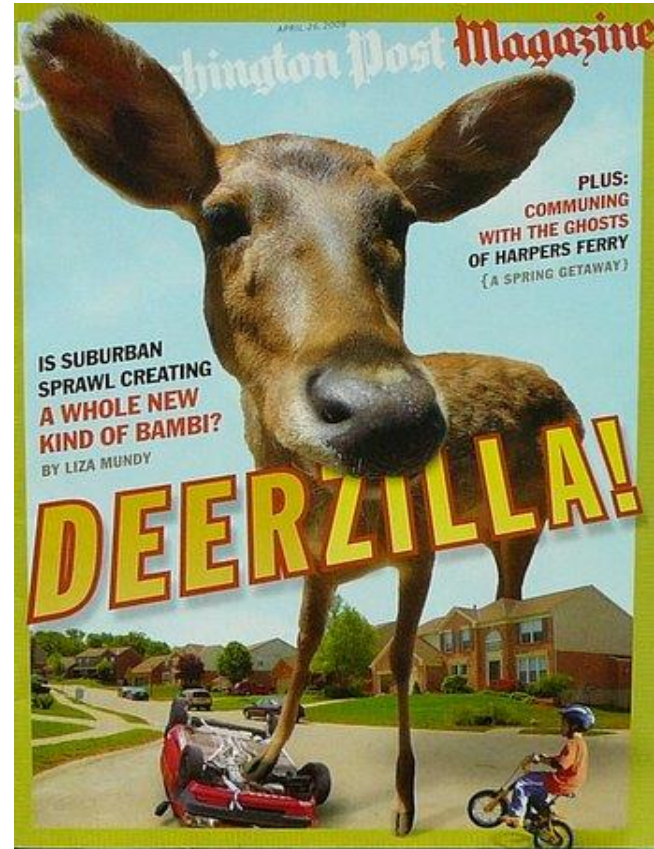
Suggestions to help you grow vegetables, flowers, & other plants where deer eat just about everything

What we're going to discuss

- Publications about deer & gardening
- Deer, vegetables & small fruits
- Recipes for venison
- Deer & flowers (perennials)
- Deer & shrubs & trees



Deer, love'em or ...



Howard County parks & lands

- FLIR technology used for annual survey (2009)
- Low concentration: Schooley Mill, 17.2/square mile
 - 5/0.29 square mile
- High concentration: Belmont, 450/square mile
 - 90/0.2 square mile
- Average of 16 areas: 46.1/square mile
 - 772/16.73 square miles
- Feeding pressure is very high because of overpopulation

Detailed information

- Maryland White-tailed Deer Plan 2009-2018, 83 pp:

http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/hunt_trap/pdfs/2009-2018marylandwtdeerplan.pdf

- Howard County Comprehensive Deer Management Plan

www.howardcountymd.gov

Search for “deer management plan”

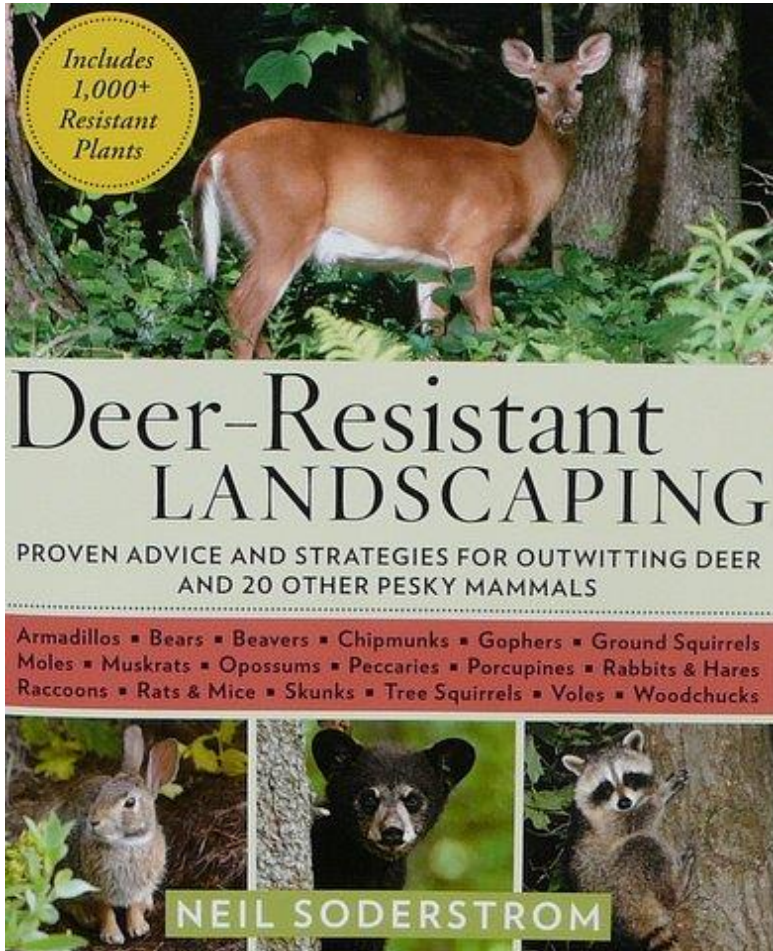
Deer diet

- **January to March:** Coniferous browse, deciduous bark & dry leaves, acorns and other nuts, winter fruits such as rose hips, sumac, & poison ivy (4 to 5 lbs/day).
- **April to June:** Herbaceous plants & grasses followed by buds & shoots of shrubs & trees (7 to 10 lbs/day).
- **July & August:** Herbaceous vegetation, young leaves, new growth of shrubs and trees, gardens.
- **September to December:** Soft (fruits) & hard (nuts) mast. Acorns make up to 50% of diet. Bramble leaves, mushrooms, gardens.

How much do deer eat?

- 3,000 lbs per year compared to 1,500 lbs per year for the average human
- 7 lbs per day. A healthy deer density is 18 to 30 deer/square mile. Problem herds are 100 deer/sq. mi or more
- *Example: 100 deer X 7 lbs/day equals 4900 lbs/week, 21,000 lbs/month, and 255,500 lbs/year*
- *This food is not available in small woodlots of suburbia, which is why lawns, hedges, and flower beds attract deer*

Favorite book



Chapter 1: Deer (56 pages)

Chapter 21: Research on
Deer (5 pages)

Chapter 22: Deer-Resistant
Plants (37 pp., with list of
1,000+ plants in
categories)

Chapter 23: Profiles of Deer-
Resistant Plants (65
pages)

935.0496S All 6 HoCo Libraries

Other books



Rhonda Hart, *Deer Proofing Your Yard & Garden* (1997)

635.0496H (5 HoCo Libraries)

Bill Adler, Jr., *Outwitting Deer* (1999)

635.0496A (All 6 HoCo Libraries)

Vincent Drzewucki, Jr., *Gardening in Deer Country* (1998)

635.0496D (4 HoCo Libraries)

Favorite Websites & Publications

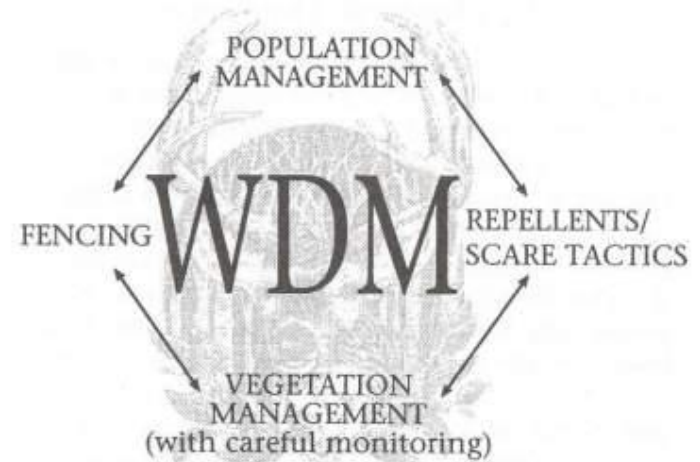
- <https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/information-library/home-and-garden-information-center-publications#wildlife>
 - Fact sheet 635 & 635a – Resistance of Woody Ornamentals to Deer Damage
 - Fact Sheet 810 – Repellents
- <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/deerresistance/>
 - Landscape Plants rated by Deer Resistance
 - Searchable and color coded
 - Websites contain information on trees, shrubs, vines, annuals, perennials, & bulbs that are
 - Rarely damaged
 - Seldom severely damaged
 - Occasionally severely damaged &
 - Frequently severely damaged

Favorite Websites (cont.)

- https://extension.umd.edu/sites/default/files/docs/programs/woodland-steward/EB354_ManagingDeerDamage.pdf
- Bulletin 354 – Managing Deer Damage in Maryland
 - Extensive information on
 - Vegetation management – planting vegetation less preferred by deer
 - Deer repellents including costs
 - Most are for use on non-edible plants
 - Fencing including costs
 - Electric
 - Plastic
 - Metal
 - Management by population reduction

Vegetables & small fruits deer don't eat

1. "Can't think of one"
2. Onions, garlic
3. Some herbs, such as parsley, fennel mints, sages



Recommendation 1 for protecting veggies & small fruits

Fencing is best: 8 ft or higher fence of wire or plastic...



Montgomery Co Master Gardeners



Costly to install but low maintenance and effective

References: [Managing Deer Damage \(EB354C\)](#)

Seven and a half foot plastic



More on fencing to protect veggies & small fruits

Shorter fences and electric fences using baited electric polytape or wire are good for small areas



Lake Elkhorn Community Gardens



Paul K.

References: [Managing Deer Damage \(EB354C\)](#)

Recommendation 2 for protecting veggies & small fruits

Herding dog with “Invisible Fence” works well but dogs must be left out at night when deer feed



Taunting Gromit



Gromit

Photos: Cindy M.

References: [Managing Deer Damage \(EB354C\)](#)

Recommendation 3 for protecting veggies & small fruits

Use netting on fruiting shrubs & trees, but it's often hard to reuse.



Kent Phillips'
blueberry
cage

Recommendation 4 for protecting veggies & small fruits

Repellent sprays containing ingredients that offend a deer's sense of taste or smell (rotten eggs, synthetic predator urine, fish or meat byproducts, bitter taste) work best. Few products are labeled for edible plants. Most are for ornamentals, so read labels carefully. Those labeled for edibles wash off during rain.

You must reapply repellents periodically, especially after rains or when plants are putting out new growth.

Reference: Using Comm. Deer Repell. (FS810)

Repellent sprays

- Evaluate repellent sprays by their active ingredient not their name.
- Repellents may eventually fail, if so, rotate.
- Best results if used prior to spring feeding patterns are established.
- Repellent sprays for edibles must be labeled as such. Always wash fresh fruits & vegetables before preparing & eating them.
- Read label carefully and follow manufacturer directions.
- Reapplication is necessary, especially after rains or when plants are putting out new growth.

Repellents

HGIC Fact Sheet 810

- Repellents are generally more effective when the following conditions exist:
 - Low to moderate deer pressure;
 - Light to moderate feeding damage;
 - Small acreage;
 - Repellents are not being used on adjacent properties, and
 - Alternative food sources are available.
- If any of the above conditions are not typical of your situation, then you should compare the cost of using repellents to fencing systems or other available deer management practices.
- Must be reapplied as new foliage appears
- Longer effectiveness on dormant plants

Recommendation 5: Support managed deer hunts and community deer-harvest efforts

- 1) Too many deer is the problem.
- 2) Encourage HOAs and local officials to work with wildlife professionals to harvest deer in your area.
- 3) Support managed hunts and bow hunting on small acreage properties.
- 4) Allowing high deer populations results in other safety & environmental problems, such as lyme disease, vehicle collisions, & damage to ecosystem.

Recommendations for Protecting Flowers

1. Plant resistant varieties (27 suggestions) from Howard County MGs
2. Have a good fence—or a deer-chasing dog
3. Plant in containers on deck
4. Use repellent sprays
5. Learn to live with them

N.B./Nota Bene/Please Note

- This is not a definitive list. It is based on the experience of 28 local gardeners.
- Deer diets differ from area to area.
- So please use these lists as a starting point for your personal experimentation.
- Study other lists cited previously.
- Ask other neighborhood gardeners about what works for them.

27 Deer-resistant Flowers

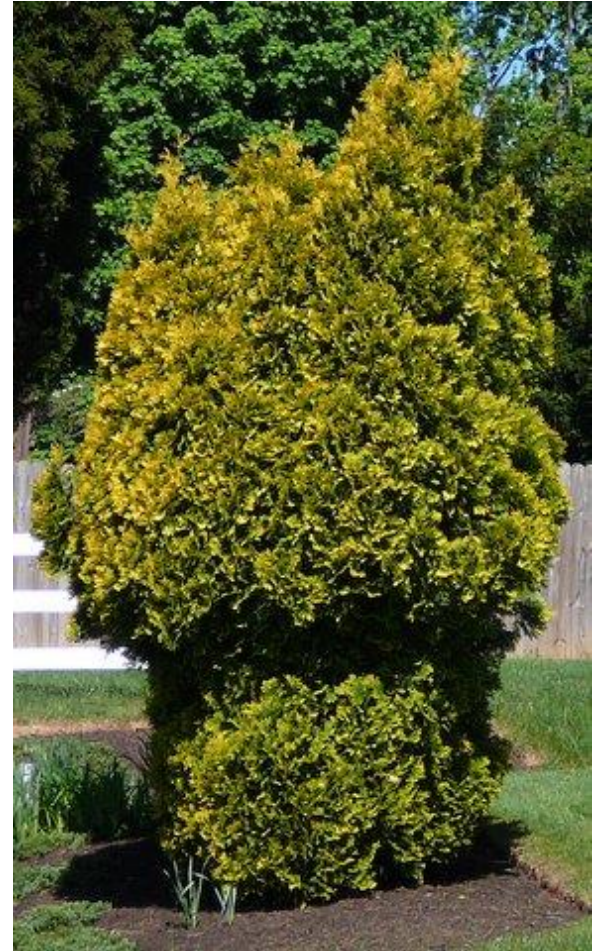
1. Daffodil
2. Bleeding Heart
3. Peony
4. Lily-of-the-Valley
5. Moss Phlox
6. Hardy Orchid
7. Garden Pinks
8. Stella d'Oro Daylily
9. Siberian Iris
10. Red Hot Poker
11. Lavender
12. Salvia
13. Beardtongue
14. Rose Campion
15. Daisy
16. Allium
17. Butterfly Weed
18. Blazingstar
19. Threadleaf Coreopsis
20. Blanket Flower
21. Lamb's Ear
22. Yarrow
23. Russian Sage
24. Goldenrod
25. Spotted Mint
26. Sweet Autumn Clematis
27. Ornamental Grasses

“Plants Deer Don’t Eat”, Joel Lerner’s
Green Scene column, Post, April 20, 2010, E5

- Viburnums
- Magnolias
- Thorny hollies
- Hellebores
- Rohdeas
- Foxgloves
- Irises
- Daffodils
- Catmints

Recommendations for Protecting Shrubs and Trees

1. Plant resistant varieties
2. Protect shrubs and tree trunks against “rubbing”
3. Protect trees below “browse line”



Deer-resistant Shrubs & Trees

S1. Boxwood

S2. Lilac

S3. Heather

S4. Butterfly Bush

T1. Junipers

T2. Spruces

Protect Shrubs & Trunks of Young Trees from Fall “Rubbing”

Bucks remove dead
“velvet” and polish
their new antlers in
October and November
by using trunks of
young trees and
branches of shrubs

If the buck rubs through
the bark all around a
trunk, the tree may die



Howard County Recreation & Parks/Stream ReLeaf
program

More examples of rubbing



Smooth Sumac (*Rhus glabra*)

Redosier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)

Gifts from Howard County Recreation & Parks/Stream ReLeaf program

Summary of suggestions for successful gardening in deer country

1. Install a fence
2. Plant resistant varieties
3. Buy a dog to chase deer out of your yard
4. Be a persistent sprayer
5. Protect shrubs & young trees up to the “browse line” (about 5'+)
6. Remember that deer don't read “don't eat” lists and in tough times will eat about anything
7. Plant enough so you won't mind sharing some
8. Keep reading and comparing notes with other gardeners
9. Relax! Deer are part of the environment!”



The End



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