

## DRIVING TIPS

### BE VIGILANT

When you drive, make a habit of watching from side to side, especially in areas of low visibility or where shrubs or grasses are close to the road.

### WATCH FOR GROUP BEHAVIOR

Deer tend to travel in groups. If one deer crosses the road, watch for more to follow. Female deer tend to stay together as "doe groups" in winter and have young fawns following them in the spring and early summer. Keep in mind that a deer crossing in front of you may double-back.

### OBSERVE DEER CROSSINGS

Always observe deer crossing warning signs. When approaching a posted area, slow down and maintain a slower speed.



### BE AWARE OF SEASONS

In the fall, bucks are on the move due to rutting, and in some places, hunting seasons. In spring (May-June), yearlings are seeking new territories. Be extra careful driving during these times.

### BE AWARE OF TIME OF DAY

Deer are most active at dusk and dawn. Be watchful during these times when deer may be crossing roads.

### USE HIGH BEAMS

At night use high beams to see farther ahead. Slow down and watch for the eye-shine of deer near the road edges.

**HONK!** if you see a deer on the road or making its way onto the road.

### DON'T SWERVE!

If possible, do not swerve to avoid a deer. Instead, brake firmly and sound your horn. Deer are easily confused; if you swerve, deer may run into the vehicle rather than away from it. Swerving could mean driving into another vehicle or off the road.

**THE JOINT CITY OF BLOOMINGTON-MONROE COUNTY TASK FORCE** is a collaborative, citizen-based effort formed in response to residents' concerns about deer in urban and suburban areas and at Griffy Lake.

The Task Force is charged with responsibly mitigating issues of human-deer interaction, examining the ecological impact of deer and engaging in public education. The group will offer its recommendations to local government and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Learn more about the Task Force at:  
[www.bloomington.in.gov/deertaskforce](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/deertaskforce)

E-mail the Task Force at:  
[deertaskforce@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:deertaskforce@bloomington.in.gov)



Living  
with **DEER**

Joint City of Bloomington-Monroe County Deer Task Force

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# LIVING WITH DEER

Not that long ago, one could take a walk in the woods in Monroe County and likely never see a deer. Today, not only are deer commonplace in the woods, but it is not unusual to find white-tailed deer in Bloomington backyards. As deer have become more prevalent in areas of human habitation, nature and culture are mixing in new ways.



When it comes to deer-human interaction — and sometimes conflict — deer should not be entirely eliminated. Nor should residents endure unreasonable property damage. Instead, there must be a careful balance and respect for both people and deer. Here are some tips that residents can take to reduce deer damage.

## DON'T FEED THE DEER!

Many people feed deer with the best of intentions. However, feeding deer is neither good for deer nor people. Feeding: increases nose-to-nose contact and can spread disease, causes deer to no longer be fearful of humans (a bad thing for deer), can cause dietary health problems and will likely cause increase landscape damage to neighbor's yards.

Monroe County winters are not severe enough to warrant supplemental feeding. Feeding likely has little impact on deer condition, survival or reproduction.

## FENCING

Deer will rarely jump over a 8' fence or into a space that they perceive to be an enclosure.

**8' deer proof fence:** This is a woven-wire fence that is good for keeping deer out of yards or large gardens for an extended period of time.

**Snow fencing:** Lattice-type snow fencing can be used successfully around small garden plots. Snow fencing is less expensive than woven wire and can be removed and reused as needed.

**Angled fencing:** Deer have poor depth perception. An fence top angled at 45 degrees toward the outside will often deter a deer.

## DEER-RESISTANT PLANTS

By choosing species that are undesirable to deer, you can reduce the amount of damage to many plants. Deer-resistant plants include:

**Flowers:** Butterfly Weed, Woodland Larkspur, Penstemon, Daffodils, Wild Geranium, Healall, Obedient Plant, Hyssop, Rattlesnake Master, Christmas Fern, Evening Primrose, Wild Bergamot, Bee Balm, Lemon Mint, Wild Quinine, Wild Lupine, Purple Coneflower, Wild Columbine, Black-eyed Susan, New England Aster, Blue Wild Indigo, Prairie Blazing Star, Monkey Flower, Common & Marsh Milkweed, Joe Pye Weed, Queen of the Prairie and Coreopsis



Monarch on Butterfly Weed.  
National Park Service

**Shrubs:** Spicebush, American Holly, Leatherleaf, and Pawpaw

**Grasses:** Switchgrass, Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indian Grass, Sideoats Grama, Bottlebrush and Prairie Cordgrass

**Trees:** American Barberry, Paper Birch, American Holly, Bigtooth Aspen, Quaking Aspen, American Beech, Gray Alder, Hazel Alder, Southern Arrowwood, Hawthorn, Tamarack, American Hornbeam, Black Locust and Eastern Hop Hornbeam

## REPELLENTS

Repellants can be effective to deter deer over a limited time period in a localized area. Repellants do not eliminate browsing, they reduce it.

**Deer-away Homebrew:** Deer are especially repelled by smells that combine mint and rotten eggs. A number of these recipes are listed at: <http://www.deer-departed.com/deer-repellent-recipes.html>.

**Hair Bags:** Try putting bags of human hair in fine mesh bags and hang the bags from areas that are experiencing the heaviest browsing. Bags should be placed in the spring, at least 3' apart and replaced monthly.

**Soap:** Suspend strongly-scented soap from tree branches or in bags near the damage, no greater than 3' apart. (Irish Spring works great.) Weathering actually makes the soap more effective!



**Bloodmeal:** Bloodmeal spread within 30" of the damage works for a short while, but may attract dogs and other carnivores.

## Commercial Repellents

When considering any chemical repellent, be fully aware of application restrictions. Many commercial repellents are not safe for edible plants. Commercial repellents include: Hinder®, Magic Circle®, Thiram, Ro-pel® and Deer-Away®.\*

## SCARE DEVICES

Devices such as motion-sensitive lights and sprinklers work especially at the first sign of a problem. Deer eventually acclimate to scare devices. Try moving and varying the scare devices for extended efficacy.