

PROTECTING LANDSCAPES FROM WHITE-TAILED DEER DAMAGE
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DEER DIET PREFERENCES

The White-tailed deer is known as a browser and forb eater. What this means to homeowners is that most of those shrubs and flowering plants are right at the top of their menu. Deer eat very little grass, preferring to eat weeds, annual plants and tender leaves of shrubs and trees. In a drought situation when very few of these plants are available in pastures and rangeland, deer lose their shyness and begin to invade outlying landscapes.

PROTECTING LANDSCAPES BY EXCLUSION

By far the most effective method of protecting a landscape is exclusion, or keeping the deer out of the area. Deer can be kept out of a landscape by building a tall fence, however this is usually not a method preferred due to the aesthetic value that could be taken away.

PROTECTING LANDSCAPES WITH REPELLENTS

Repellents are a much more economical means of protecting landscapes from deer. There are several types of repellents that can be used. A summary of possible repellents follows:

*Mothballs or flakes have shown some effectiveness in repelling deer from flower beds. They should be sprinkled in areas to be protected and replaced periodically as they melt and evaporate.

*Hot pepper sauce can be sprayed directly on the foliage of plants to deter deer from feeding on plants. A mixture of 2 tablespoons in 5 gallons should be strong enough to deter most deer.

*Garlic spray may be used to provide on odor and taste repellent. Garlic cloves should be minced and the oil added to water and sprayed on the foliage.

*Human hair placed in nylon stockings or other small mesh bags and hung in trees has shown some effectiveness in repelling deer. Human hair can be easily obtained from a barber or beauty shop. In some instances, empty bags hung from tree limbs have proven somewhat effective.

*Dogs are probably the best repellent or frightening device available to homeowners, however a dog in the back yard will probably be unable to protect the front.

It should be noted that all of these repellents will work only under certain circumstances.

When there is a shortage of food in a deer's native habitat, they will continue to plague landscapes regardless of the method used. Landscapes in deer populated areas should be designed with plants that are less attractive to deer. A list of these plants is included below.

Annual Sunflower	Ashe Juniper	Bald Cypress	Beargrass
Blackeyed Susan	Blackfoot Daisy	Cardinal Flower	Cenizo
Cherry Laurel	Clematis	Columbine	Cow-itch Vine
Cross-vine	Damianta	Holly	Ferns
Fleabane	Four O'Clocks	Gayfeather	Germanders
Indian Blanket	Kidneywood	Lantana	Larkspur
Lemon Mint	Maidenhair Fern	Maximillian Sunflower	
Mealy Sage	Mexican Hat	Mountain Pink	Penstemons
Evening Primrose	Pink Wood Sorrel	Cactus	Queens Delight
Red Yucca	Redbud	Rockcress	Shrubby Skullcap
Snow-on-the-Mountain	Snow-on-the-Prairie	Texas Ash	Texas Aster
Texas Mountain Laurel	Texas Persimmon	Texas Sage	Verbenas
Yaupon	Zexmenia		

Please remember that under extreme stress situations, deer will eat many of these plants. Other plants on this list may be desirable to deer at certain times of the year.

PLANTS THAT DEER LOVE TO EAT

Roses	Pansies	Pyracantha	Hibiscus	Petunias
Euonymous	Photinia	Geranium flowers		