HUMAN-DEER CONFLICTS

Deer account for approximately 4,500 calls to the Conservation Officer Service reporting line every year. Many of these calls are reports of injured deer as they are often involved in wildlife-vehicle collisions.

Deer can eat almost anything we plant and can tolerate some plants considered deer-resistant. Urban-deer conflicts are on the rise as once deer become established in communities, it can be challenging to encourage them to move on. Deer have been seriously injured or have died trying to clear wrought-iron picket fences or loose barbed-wire fences.

Attacks by deer on humans are rare but can occur, especially when people approach them too closely or have pets nearby. Their sharp hooves can inflict serious injuries. Pets have been attacked and killed by deer. Usually, these attacks are a defensive response to a dog or cat approaching the deer's young.

Deer fawning season is from late May to June. If you suspect a fawn has been abandoned, do not attempt to capture or transport it. Call the Conservation Officer Service at 1-877-952-7277.

BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The BC Conservation Foundation is a not-for-profit, registered charity that has been working in BC since 1969.

www.bccf.com

BRITISH COLUMBIA

To report wildlife in conflict contact the Conservation Officer Service at

1.877.952.7277

WildSafeBC is funded through the Province of British Columbia and in partnership with communities and organizations throughout BC.

WILD SAFE BC

British Columbia Conservation Foundation

www.wildsafebc.com

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DEER

WILD SAFE BC

British Columbia Conservation Foundation

MANAGE YOUR ATTRACTANTS

Deer are especially hard to remove from a neighbourhood once they have established themselves, so it is important to ensure that deer do not become comfortable in your yard.

1. Do not feed deer. Deer are well-adapted to surviving on natural foods. Deer that congregate around food sources may increase the transmission of disease. They are also vectors for ticks. Deer that spend time in communities are more likely to be struck by vehicles or get into conflict with gardeners and pet owners.

2. Keep bird seed inaccessible. Bird feeders should be kept out of reach of all non-target species and the seed not be allowed to collect on the ground.

2. Remove excess cover. Trim back any cover that they might use while travelling or bedding.

3. Use motion-activated lights and sprinklers. When used randomly, this can help dissuade deer from using your yard.

4. Use deer fencing to protect orchards or crops. Fencing should be at least 2.5 m high. Solid fencing can be shorter as deer are less likely to jump into an area where they cannot see the landing. Chicken wire can be used to protect from deer rubbing against trees. Burlap can protect shrubs from deer browsing over the winter.

5. Deter deer from your property using umbrellas, water hoses and making noise. Note that it is illegal for you, or your dog, to injure a deer.

! DEER SAFETY

Deer are normally timid animals but if they become habituated to humans they can become a danger. Never approach a deer, especially if it has young. Dog walkers should avoid areas where deer are raising fawns. If a deer does attack you, try to stay upright as they inflict injury by striking at their opponent with their sharp hooves. Cover your head with your arms and back off to some form of shelter. Deer may signal an impending attack by laying their ears back and lowering their head.

Call the Conservation Officer Service at 1-877- 952-7277 to report abandoned fawns, injured deer, or deer acting aggressively.
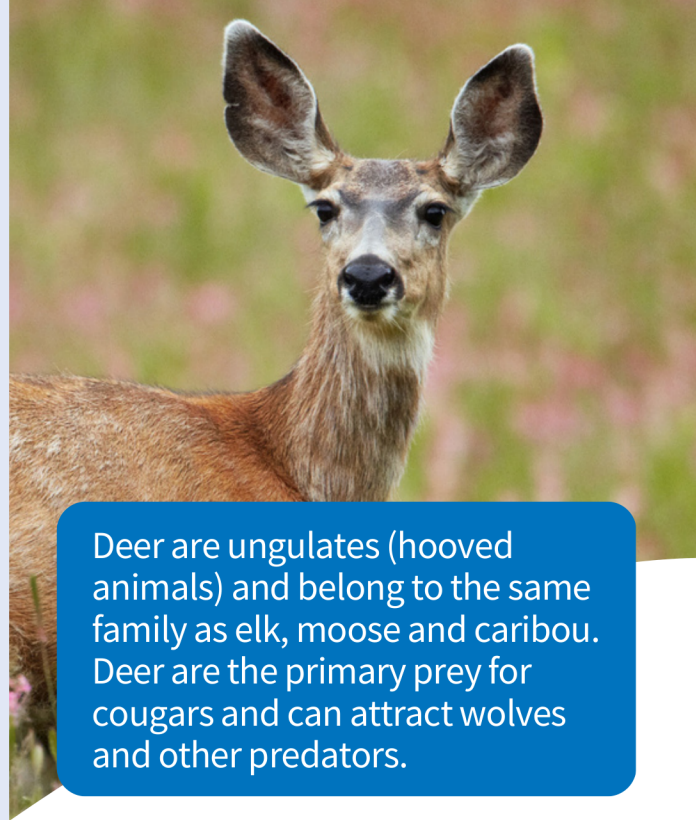
Deer are ungulates (hooved animals) and belong to the same family as elk, moose and caribou. Deer are the primary prey for cougars and can attract wolves and other predators.

While all three types of deer in BC may seem similar, there are distinct physical and behavioural differences. Other subspecies/races in BC are: Rocky Mountain mule deer, Columbian black-tailed deer and Sitka black-tailed deer.

Deer are herbivorous browsers and grazers, and they will migrate significant distances between their summer and winter ranges. Urban deer may remain in communities when they become habituated to people and our activities.

Fawns are born late May to June. Fawns are born scentless and with camouflage spots. They will lay very still to avoid predators while the doe leaves them for long periods to forage for food. It is best to leave fawns alone and leave the area so that the doe feels it is safe to return. If the fawn cries out and the doe does not return, call the Conservation Officer Service.

From May to October, deer mainly travel alone or in small groups. In late fall, deer enter into the breeding season known as the 'rut.' In winter, large groups may gather around feeding areas.

Cougars are the prime predators of deer. Bears, wolves, bobcats and coyotes tend to prey on fawns, elderly or injured deer.

DEER SPECIES IN BC

Pictured from left to right: Black-tailed deer, white-tailed deer, and mule deer.

DEER FACTS:

- There are three deer native to BC: mule deer, white-tailed deer and the coastal black-tailed deer.
- Deer are both browsers (eating shrubs and woody plants) and grazers (eating grasses).
- Males grow bony antlers every spring from a stubby protrusion called a pedicle. Antlers are typically shed by late December but some may retain theirs much later.
- Bucks use their antlers for both display and fighting in order to assert dominance and secure breeding privileges with the females (does).
- Deer are prolific reproducers with 90 percent of does producing offspring every year once they are two years old; twins are common.
- Fawn mortality can range from 45 to 70 percent. They can live 8 to 10 years.
- Fawns are born scentless and spotted to help camouflage them while they are left unattended by the doe as she goes off to feed.
- Deer carry a wide variety of ticks and wherever deer have spent time over the winter, typically evidenced by browsing, droppings, tracks and defined trails, you should be on the lookout for ticks.

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