

Managing Deer Within Suburban Communities



Lethal Management Considerations

Often, the best approach for long-term deer management in suburban areas is the implementation of lethal techniques, resulting in the immediate removal of deer from the population. If continued year-to-year, this approach can prove to be an effective permanent solution to suburban deer issues. Communities are encouraged to estimate support before beginning lethal removal, as these approaches can be controversial. Two of the most common practices are managed hunts and sharpshooting.

A managed hunt is a specialized hunt, generally with added restrictions, designed to meet the needs and objectives of communities. These limits may include limiting hunter numbers and equipment, restricting days or times to hunt, requiring shooting proficiency tests, and more. A managed hunt generally has some oversight within the community, as well as a reporting requirement to assist with safety measures. These hunts also require the purchase of licenses by hunters participating.

Sharpshooting, unlike a managed hunt, requires the deployment of experienced marksmen to quickly and efficiently remove deer from an area. This method is often employed where other methods are ineffective or in areas with limited access. Sharpshooting is typically done by using center-fire rifles. Compared to other deer management techniques, sharpshooting can be relatively costly, though remains highly effective in terms of number of deer removed over short periods of time.



For more information visit: www.mi.gov/deer



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To help guide communities in considering each approach:

Managed Hunt

- A review of local ordinances and authority to implement hunting should be conducted.
- Hunts should be timed to coincide with statewide deer hunting seasons to increase efficiency and timeliness.
- A hunt manager should be assigned to oversee details of the program.
- Safety for participants and non-participants is the top priority during an urban managed hunt. Communities may want to limit equipment to short-ranged projectiles.
- It is recommended that some sort of proficiency exam be passed to verify the competency of the hunters participating.
- All hunters should participate in a brief informative session outlining the conditions or restrictions of participating in the hunt, the safety and visibility concerns of hunting within the community, overall conduct and appearance, etc.
- Hunt managers may wish to add restrictions to hunters that favor the taking of antlerless deer.
- Hunt managers may want to develop or adopt a liability waiver or form.
- Hunters should be assigned hunt locations and/or dates, depending on restrictions and program structure. It may also be prudent to inform landowners if private lands are involved.
- The hunt manager is encouraged to compile all relevant data to evaluate the success of the program and have this information publicly available for all to see and access.

Sharpshooting

- Safety is a top priority with deer removal, so a community hiring sharpshooters should pursue individuals or groups with a demonstrated safety record and proficiency.
- Sharpshooting with specialized equipment is authorized by permit only, issued by the DNR.
- Costs associated with sharpshooting are the responsibility of the permittee.
- Liability and safety of all sharpshooting efforts are the responsibility of the permittee.
- Donation of all venison from removed deer should be donated to local or nearby food shelters.
- Baiting to attract deer for removal efficiency can be permitted by the DNR.
- Conducting sharpshooting efforts in the winter is most likely to increase efficiency of removal.
- Humane euthanasia should be a priority. Deer shot in the brain are considered humanely euthanized by the AVMA, with cervical vertebrae and heart secondary options when safe head shots are not possible. Sharpshooters are encouraged to humanely dispatch deer.
- Equipment used for removal of deer should be powerful enough to humanely and instantly dispatch deer, while limiting safety concerns for community residents. Projectile size, frangibility, trajectory, and shooting locations should all be considered when implementing a sharpshooting program.

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Planting Deer-Resistant Plants

Deer enjoy a variety of plants in their diet and tend to show preference for certain foods so long as they are available. Planting certain deer-repelling plants, while avoiding plants which are preferred by deer is one strategy to help reduce or eliminate landscape damage by browsing. These lists are meant to serve as a general guide when helping to aid landscaping decisions, but should not replace recommendations by local horticultural experts.

Trees, shrubs and vines that are seldom damaged by deer*:

Common Name	Latin Name	Common Name	Latin Name
Alder (Gray, Hazel)	<i>Alnus incana, Alnus serrulata</i>	Tamarack	<i>Larix laricina</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier spp.</i>	Drooping Leucothoe	<i>Leucothoe fontanesiana</i>
Black Chokeberry	<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>	Tulip Tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
Barberry	<i>Berberis spp.</i>	Magnolia	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>
Paper Birch	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	Bayberry	<i>Myrica spp.</i>
Boxwood	<i>Buxus spp.</i>	Sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>
American Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	Eastern Hop Hornbeam	<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>
American Bittersweet	<i>Celastrus scandens</i>	Spruce	<i>Picea spp.</i>
Eastern Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Japanese Pieris	<i>Pieris japonica</i>
Leatherleaf	<i>Chamaedaphne calyculata</i>	Pine	<i>Pinus spp.</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus spp.</i>	Aspen	<i>Populus spp.</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus spp.</i>	Locust (Black, Honey)	<i>Robinia spp.</i>
Russian Olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Elderberry	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>
American Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus spp.</i>	Elm	<i>Ulmus spp.</i>
American Holly	<i>Ilex opaca</i>	Arrowwood (Southern)	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>
Mountain Laurel	<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	American Cranberry Bush	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>

* Certain species may prove more palatable within a specific genus

Trees, shrubs, and vines that are preferred and frequently damaged by deer#*:

Common Name	Latin Name	Common Name	Latin Name
Fir	<i>Abies spp.</i>	Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera spp.</i>
Maple	<i>Acer spp.</i>	Magnolia	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>
Horse-Chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Apple	<i>Malus spp.</i>
Barberry	<i>Berberis spp.</i>	Sweet Mock Orange	<i>Philadelphus coronarius</i>
Trumpet Creeper	<i>Campsis radicans</i>	White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus spp.</i>	Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>
American Hazlenut	<i>Corylus americana</i>	Firethorn	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>
Smokebush	<i>Cottinus coggygia</i>	Bradford/Callery Pear	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>
Bush Cinquefoil	<i>Dasiphora fruticosa</i>	Oak	<i>Quercus spp.</i>
Winged Euonymus	<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron spp.</i>
Forsythia	<i>Forsythia spp.</i>	Sumac	<i>Rhus spp.</i>
Witch Hazel	<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Willow	<i>Salix spp.</i>
English Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	European Mountain Ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>	Lilac	<i>Syringa spp.</i>
Rose of Sharon	<i>Hibiscus syriacus</i>	Yew	<i>Taxus spp.</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex spp.</i>	Cedars/Arborvitae	<i>Thuja spp.</i>
Juniper	<i>Juniperus spp.</i>	Basswood	<i>Tilia spp.</i>
European Larch	<i>Larix decidua</i>	Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum spp.</i>	Viburnum	<i>Viburnum spp.</i>

* Certain species may prove more palatable within a specific genus.

List is not comprehensive. Other trees, vines, and shrubs may be frequently damaged by deer browsing.



Plants (flowers) that are seldom damaged by deer*:

Common Name	Latin Name	Common Name	Latin Name
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Lavender	<i>Lavandula spp.</i>
Monkshood	<i>Aconitum napellus</i>	Prairie Blazing Star	<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>
Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Wild Lupine	<i>Lupinus perennis</i>
Wild Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Bugleweed	<i>Lycopus virginicus</i>
Milkweed	<i>Asclepias spp.</i>	Lemon Mint	<i>Monarda citriodora</i>
Butterfly Weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Mint	<i>Mentha spp.</i>
Blue Wild Indigo	<i>Baptisa australis</i>	Monkey Flower	<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>
Bluebeard	<i>Caryopteris spp.</i>	Bergamont	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
Lily of the Valley	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Bee Balm	<i>Monarda spp.</i>
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis spp.</i>	Daffodil	<i>Narcissus spp.</i>
Crocus	<i>Crocus sativus</i>	Catnip	<i>Nepeta cataria</i>
Larkspur	<i>Delphinium spp.</i>	Evening Primrose	<i>Oenothera biennis</i>
Common Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Pachysandra	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>
Purple Cornflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Wild Quinine	<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>
Rattlesnake Master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon spp.</i>
Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eutrochium purpureum</i>	Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>
Queen of the Prairie	<i>Filipendula rubra</i>	Christmas Fern	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>
Fritillaria	<i>Fritillaria meleagris</i>	Heal-All	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Geranium	<i>Pelargonium spp.</i>	Black-Eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
Daylilies	<i>Hemerocallis spp.</i>	Spiraea	<i>Spiraea japonica</i>
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	New England Aster	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>
Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	Common Mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
Spotted Deadnettle	<i>Lamium maculatum</i>	Yucca	<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>
Bleeding Heart	<i>Dicentra spp.</i>	Zinnia	<i>Zinnia elegans</i>

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