HOLDEN arboretum
HOLDEN FORESTS & GARDENS

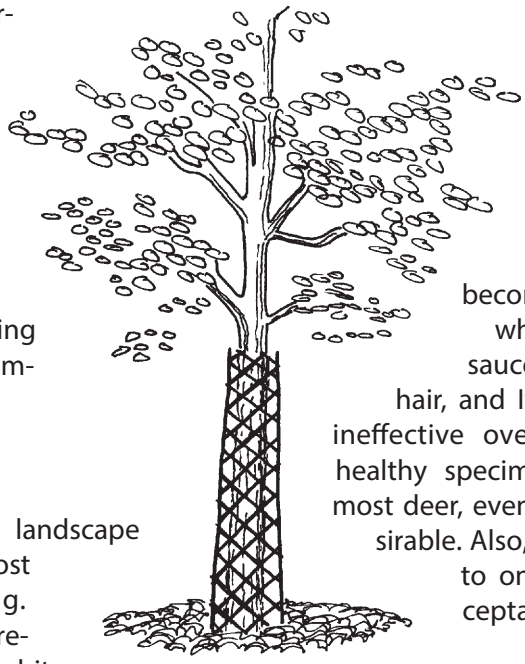
Landscape Bulletin #5

Landscaping Where Deer Roam

Anyone who landscapes where deer roam has seen the fruits of their labor destroyed. With the current trend in housing developments, we've created an environment that encourages deer since they prefer a combination of forest and open field for their habitat. Combine this with the fact that in many towns the only predator is the automobile and you can see why there is a serious overpopulation of white-tailed deer.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

The first rule in deer-proofing your yard is to know your enemy. The white-tailed deer is motivated for survival and reproduction. During the mating season – late September through December – bucks increase their range. A buck's territory will overlap with many other competing bucks. To designate his territory a buck will rub the bark off of small trees – leaving his scent behind and a damaged tree. Deer browse is another major cause of damage, either on new or established plantings. There are no easy answers for protecting your plants. However, the following three options exist, alone or in combination with each other.



~ Fencing ~

A more constant threat to landscape plants is deer browse, which is most effectively deterred by fencing. One warning however is that prevention is easier than breaking a habit. So be aware of susceptible plants and fence them before damage occurs. Three fencing options exist: around an individual plant, on a temporary basis surrounding a bed, and permanent fencing around an area. Fences around individual trees should be situated so as to keep the deer away from the trunk. Temporary fencing is an option with more vulnerable plants. It should be put in place during mating season around plants near your house and newly planted plants and should stay in place approximately 1 year, or until the new plants are established. Permanent fences such as an eight-foot high woven wire mesh fence is successful in keeping deer at bay, as is an electric fence (4' high x 5' wide at a 45-degree angle).

~ Repellents ~

Many deer repellent items are currently on the market and are effective to varying degrees. Hinder™, Deer Away™, rotten egg-based repellents, and Bobbex™ are sprayed on the plants and have proven to be somewhat effective if reapplied frequently. Tree Guard™ is a repellent that only needs to be applied once per season. A new repellent, called Repellex™, is a tablet that can be placed in the ground around the roots and is then taken up by the plant. The edible portions of the plant become bitter for 1-3 years, after which it must be reapplied. Hot sauce, mothballs, tankage, human hair, and Ivory™ soap have all proven ineffective over time. Any newly planted healthy specimen holds certain appeal to most deer, even if the plant is usually undesirable. Also, what is acceptable damage to one homeowner may be unacceptable to another.

~ Deerscaping ~

So what options does the average homeowner have, if they can't afford to or don't prefer to live in an impenetrable fortress of solitude? Plant landscaping that deer are not likely to eat. Refer to the tables on the back as to which plants are least susceptible to deer and plants to avoid.

PLANTS RARELY EATEN BY DEER

◆ Deciduous Trees

Acer spp. . . . . . .Maple
Betula spp. . . . . . .Birch
Carpinus spp. . . . . . .Hornbeam
Carya ovata . . . . . .Shagbark Hickory
Castanea spp. . . . . . .Chestnut
Catalpa spp. . . . . . .Catalpa
Cercis spp. . . . . . .Redbud
Crataegus spp. . . . . . .Hawthorn
Fagus spp. . . . . . .Beech
Fraxinus spp. . . . . . .Ash
Ginkgo biloba . . . . . .Ginkgo
Gleditsia triacanthos . . . . . .Honeylocust
Laburnum x watereri . . . . . .Golden Chain Tree
Larix spp. . . . . . Larch
Lindera benzoin . . . . . .Spicebush
Liquidambar spp. . . . . . .Sweet Gum
Liriodendron tulipifera . . . . . .Tulip Tree
Magnolia spp. . . . . . .Magnolia
Metasequoia glyptostroboides . .Dawn Redwood
Nyssa sylvatica . . . . . .Tupelo
Ostrya virginiana . . . . . .Hop Hornbeam
Platanus occidentalis . . . . . .Sycamore
Quercus spp. . . . . . .Oak
Robinia pseudoacacia . . . . . .Black Locust
Salix spp. . . . . . .Willow
Sassafras albidum . . . . . .Sassafras
Stewartia spp. . . . . . .Stewartia
Taxodium distichum . . . . . .Bald Cypress

◆ Evergreen Trees

Cedrus libani . . . . . .Cedar of Lebanon
Picea spp. . . . . . .Spruce
Thuja plicata . . . . . .Western Red Cedar

◆ Shrub Conifers & Broad-Leaved Evergreens

Buxus spp. . . . . . .Boxwood
Mahonia aquifolium . . . . . .Oregon Grape Holly
Pieris japonica . . . . . .Pieris
Rhododendron
'Ramapo' *&* 'Purple Gem' . . . . . .Rhododendron

◆ Deciduous Shrubs

Amelanchier spp. . . . . . .Serviceberry
Chaenomeles spp. . . . . . .Flowering Quince
Clethra alnifolia . . . . . .Summersweet
Comptonia peregrina . . . . . .Sweet-fern
Cotinus spp. . . . . . .Smoke bush
Cotoneaster spp. . . . . . Cotoneaster
Enkianthus campanulatus . . . . . .Enkianthus
Forsythia spp. . . . . . .Forsythia
Hamamelis spp. . . . . . .Witch hazel
Hydrangea spp. . . . . . .Hydrangea
(except *H. arborescens* & *H. quercifolia*)
Kerria japonica . . . . . .Japanese Kerria
Myrica pennsylvanica . . . . . .Bayberry
Oxydendron arboreum . . . . . .Sourwood
Paeonia spp. . . . . . Peony
Philadelphus spp. . . . . . .Mock Orange
Spiraea spp. . . . . . .Spiraea
Syringa spp. . . . . . .Lilac
Vaccinium spp. . . . . . .Blueberry
Viburnum spp. . . . . . .Viburnum
Weigela spp. . . . . . .Weigela

◆ Vines

Lonicera spp. . . . . . .Honeysuckle

PLANTS TO AVOID PLANTING

Abies spp. . . . . . .Fir
Cornus florida . . . . . .Flowering Dogwood
Elaeagnus angustifolia &
E. umbellata . . . . . .Russian & Autumn Olive
Ilex spp. . . . . . .Holly
Kalmia latifolia & cultivars . . . . . .Mountain laurel
Malus spp. . . . . . .Crabapple
Prunus spp. . . . . . .Cherry, plum
Rhododendron spp. . . .Evergreen & deciduous
Rosaceae . . . . . .Rose Family
Taxus spp. . . . . . .Yew
Thuja spp. . . . . . Arborvitae
Tsuga spp. . . . . . .Hemlock

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