Living with Deer

The Black-tailed deer is a sub-species of the mule deer. The doe may have between one and three fawns. The young are born in late spring or early summer and stay with their mother through the next winter.

Deer are widespread and common. They will adjust to just about any open space they can find. Open areas surrounded by houses are common places for a small herd of deer. Problems can occur when they wander out into the busy street or when they begin choosing your roses over the weeds.

Most people do not object to a deer visitor until it becomes attracted to his/her garden. A regular six-foot fence is a deterrent, but a healthy adult can spring over it in a single bound.

Deer are learning to adapt to the small patches of wilderness in urban districts. And, it is not uncommon to find deer in herds of five to six. How can you keep these graceful mammals from damaging your yard or property?

– The best way of controlling deer is fencing. Deer fences should be at least eight-feet high, and if possible erect the fence slanted out towards the approach area. If the entire yard cannot be fenced in, place fencing around select plants or areas. Refer to the California Department of Fish and Game website for more information.
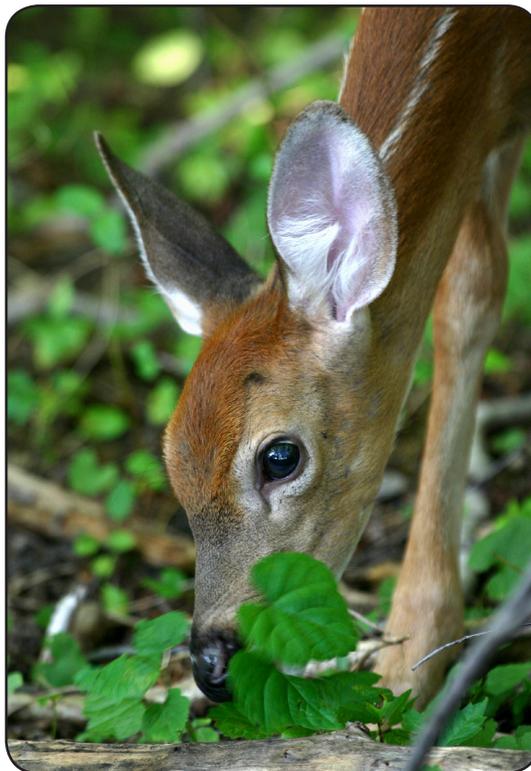
– Plant shrubs and trees that are known to be deer-resistant. For a list of plants and trees that are deer-resistant, refer to the Fish and Game and Marin County Cooperative Extension websites.

– Repellents can be successful, but instructions must be carefully followed. Remember, a repellent does not protect new growth, and may be washed off with dew or sprinklers.

– Motion detected water sprayers can be placed in garden areas to discourage deer.

– Do not feed deer and encourage their presence. It is illegal to feed wildlife in Marin.

If you have any questions or encounter specific problems when dealing with wildlife, please call the Marin Humane Society at 415.883.4621 or go to MarinHumaneSociety.org.

Websites:
CA Fish and Game
dfg.ca.gov

Marin County Cooperative Extension
cemarin.ucdavis.edu

The Marin Humane Society