

Deer, oh Deer

Keeping deer from eating your garden

After all the work you put into your garden, it can be very frustrating when deer come and eat your plants down to the ground. Even though a hungry deer will eat just about anything, there are some things you can do to protect your garden.

Deer Repellents

There are two types of deer repellents - those that repel deer by their scent, like Liquid Fence or Milorganite, and those that make plants taste bad to discourage browsing, like hot pepper sprays. These sprays need to be applied about every four weeks and after a heavy rain.

Fencing

In small areas, fences as low as 4 feet may be effective. Deer often avoid small, enclosed areas. For larger areas, very high fences may be needed, up to 8 feet tall. Shorter fences can also be effective if they are slanted outward at an angle or if double, parallel fences are used.



A family of five deer in my garden in early spring.

Other options

Desperate gardeners will try just about anything to protect their plants. Here are some alternative methods for repelling deer, including some ideas from our facebook "fans":

- Plant Marigolds around your garden.
- Hang deodorant soap from tree branches.
- *"They will wander into wood chips but don't seem to walk through rocks. Fencing is the only thing I've really found :(This year they even went after my rhododendrons."* -Jamie S.
- *"The most effective deterrent I have found is Scarecrow. It is both a motion detector and a water sprinkler(shooter)."* -Sharon S.

Malmberg's is committed to providing quality, locally grown plants and personal service. Stop by any of our three locations and let our knowledgeable staff assist you in finding the perfect flower, plant or accent piece to turn your space into your own personal garden retreat.

Garden Center Locations

20045 County Road 81
Rogers, MN 55311
(763) 428-2061

5120 N. Lilac Drive
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429
(763) 535-4695

13166 Johnson Memorial Dr.
Shakopee, MN 55379
(952) 233-2700

Plants that deer rarely browse

Annuals

Ageratum
Snapdragons
Wax Begonia
Dahlia
Polkadot Plant
Alyssum
Heliotrope
Lantana
Marigold
Zinnia
Verbena
Dusty Miller
Geraniums
Cosmos
Salvia

Perennials

Achillea (Yarrow)
Ajuga
Aquilegia (Columbine)
Baptisia (False Indigo)
Bergenia
Coralbells
Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)
Foxglove
Grasses
Peony
Iris
Geranium (Cranesbill)

Ferns

Liatris (Gayfeather)
Lupine
Mertensia (Virginia Bluebells)
Monarda (Beebalm)
Nepeta (Catmint)
Poppy
Pulmonaria (Lungwort)
Salvia (Sage)

Bulbs

Allium
Daffodil
Fritilaria
Muscari

Shrubs

Barberry
Forsythia
Bittersweet
Mugo Pine
Lilac
Potentilla
Cotoneaster
Mockorange
Spirea
Spruce

Connection between deer damage & fertilizer use?

Carolyn Singer, author of "Deer in My Garden", found that deer will eat plants that they don't usually prefer if they have been fertilized. She found that nitrates in fertilizers produce the same flavor as salt, which deer love, in plants.

The author recommends avoiding deer damage by using fertilizers with less than 10% nitrogen or fertilizing with well-aged compost. She has also found that planting perennials in the fall reduces browsing.

Master Gardeners of Renville County. Garden Gatherings Newsletter.
Aug. 2010



More information:

University of Minnesota Extension. "Coping with deer in the home landscape."
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/yardandgarden/ygbriefs/h462deer-coping.html>

