

Gardening with Deer

Cheryl Harrison
Master Gardener



Deer 101: Know Thy Enemy



Deer Physiology

- Sense of smell: Super-sensitive for identifying food, deer trails, and their young
- Sense of hearing: many times better than humans; large ears can rotate to detect even the smallest sounds
- Sense of sight: 310 degree view, can see in low light (in greyscale), keen awareness of motion
- Speed: 35 mph and can clear 9 feet
- Camouflage: Reddish-brown in summer, gray in winter

Deer Psychology: Top Priorities

(except during mating season)

- Don't get eaten
- Eat
- Rest
- Dominate other deer



Deer Psychology: Behavior

- Paranoid
- Sensitive (senses)
- Creatures of habit
- Curious
- Good communicators (with other deer, of course!)
- Adaptable

What can be done?



For Heavy Deer Pressure: A Multi-Faceted Approach



Take Advantage of Their
Weaknesses
&
Exploit Their Strengths!

Potions and Concoctions



Mechanical Gadgets



Fences & Barriers



Not All Fences Work... Well, at least not for the deer!



Effective Landscape-Fence Combination



Other Barriers



Tricks

- Substitute unsavory plants for “deer candy”
- Make their entryway uninviting (repellents) and move any marginal plants to a safer location, away from the beaten path
- Create an “unattractive” boundary of unsavory plants and smells
- Interplant strongly aromatic plants amongst any marginal plants, to confuse deer
- Obscure the view with shrubs or a trellis
- Eliminate areas of cover to prevent bedding down and loitering

Tricks

- Be tidy--pick up any rotting fruit and harvest vegetables promptly
- Provide no landing place by using terraces or multiple levels, if topography allows
- Adapt sustainable gardening techniques--xeric plants, gravel paths, rock borders
- Incorporate non-edible points of interest (i.e garden art)

Strategies

- Use SEVERAL deterrent tactics
- ROTATE tactics throughout the seasons
- Change tactics BEFORE deer adapt to them
- Take advantage of ALL of the deer's highly developed senses

All That Being Said,
NOTHING
is Absolutely Deer-PROOF!



Resources

Wildflower Center Database

The image shows a screenshot of the Wildflower Center website. The header features the University of Texas at Austin logo, navigation links for SHOP, RENTALS, INTERACT, MOBILE, and CONTACT, and a search bar. The main navigation menu includes ABOUT, VISIT, EXPLORE PLANTS, EVENTS, CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, and SUPPORT. The 'EXPLORE PLANTS' menu is open, listing various resources such as Explore Plants, Plant Database, Image Gallery, Mr. Smarty Plants, How To Articles, Step By Step Guides, Suppliers, Organizations, Drought Resources Center, Bibliography, and Recommended Species. A red arrow points to the 'Recommended Species' link. The page also features a 'NATIVE PLANT INFORMATION' section, 'WHAT'S IN BLOOM', 'UPCOMING EVENTS', and 'WHAT'S NEW' sections.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

SHOP RENTALS INTERACT MOBILE CONTACT

EN ESPAÑOL

Lady Bird Johnson
Wildflowercenter
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Search go

ABOUT VISIT EXPLORE PLANTS EVENTS CONSERVATION EDUCATION SUPPORT

Explore Plants
Plant Database
Image Gallery
Mr. Smarty Plants
How To Articles
Step By Step Guides
Suppliers
Organizations
Drought Resources Center
Bibliography
Recommended Species

BAN LEGEND

Wildflower Center will be closed early at 3:00 pm on Friday

NATIVE PLANT INFORMATION
Search for over 7,000 native plants

WHAT'S IN BLOOM

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 9 - MAY 27
Shou Ping - Paper Sculptures

MARCH 9 - MAY 27

WHAT'S NEW

WILDFLOWER STORYTIME
10 a.m., Mondays at the Little House

Wildflower Center Database

Wildflower Center
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
The University of Texas at Austin

EN ESPAÑOL

Search

ABOUT VISIT EXPLORE PLANTS EVENTS CONSERVATION EDUCATION SUPPORT

RECOMMENDED SPECIES

Welcome to the Recommended Species section of the Native Plant Information Network. Here is where we post lists of native plants recommended for various purposes. Once you have selected a collection, you can browse the collection or search within it using the combination search. Please contact the [NPIN Director](#) if you have an interest in adding a collection to this section.

Recommended Native Plants by State

Select State or Province

CT
D.C.
DE
MA
MD
NH
NJ
VT

EXPLORE PLANTS

EXPLORE PLANTS
PLANT DATABASE
IMAGE GALLERY
MR. SMARTY PLANT
HOW TO ARTICLES
STEP BY STEP GUIDL.
SUPPLIERS
ORGANIZATIONS
DROUGHT RESOURCES CENTER
BIBLIOGRAPHY
RECOMMENDED SPECIES

Help us grow by giving to the **PLANT DATABASE FUND** or by **BECOMING A MEMBER**

Did you know you can access the Native Plant Information Network with your web-enabled smartphone!

SPECIES COLLECTIONS

Butterflies and Moths of North America - Plants that are valuable to moths and butterflies.
Native Plant Network - Propagation protocols from the Native Plant Network.
Deer Resistant - Native plants that deer tend to avoid.
Chesapeake Bay - Native Plants for wildlife and conservation landscaping in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Wildflower Center Database

The screenshot shows the Wildflower Center Database interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for ABOUT, VISIT, EXPLORE PLANTS, EVENTS, CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, and SUPPORT. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled "SPECIAL COLLECTIONS" and features a section for "Deer Resistant Species". Below this, there is a list of 344 results, with 10 items displayed per page. The list is organized into columns for Scientific Name, Common Names, and Image Gallery. The first four items are:

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAMES	IMAGE GALLERY
<i>Abutilon incanum</i>	Indian mallow Petosape Shrubby Indian mallow	3 images
<i>Acer grandidentatum</i>	Bigtooth maple Big-toothed maple Canyon maple	25 images
<i>Acolythe rostrata</i>	Cardinal's feather Cardinal feather	12 images
<i>Acacia rigidula</i>	Blackbrush acacia Blackbrush Catclaw Chaparral prieto Garla	17 images

On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar titled "EXPLORE PLANTS" with a list of links: EXPLORE PLANTS, PLANT DATABASE, IMAGE GALLERY, MR. SMARTY PLANT, HOW TO ARTICLES, STEP BY STEP GUIDE, SUPPLIERS, ORGANIZATIONS, DROUGHT RESOURCES CENTER, BIBLIOGRAPHY, and RECOMMENDED SPECIES. Below this, there is a "NARROW YOUR SEARCH" section with several filters:

- SELECT STATE OR PROVINCE: Texas (selected)
- GENERAL APPEARANCE: All habits
- LIFESPAN: All durations
- LIGHT REQUIREMENT: Sun - 6 or more hrs, Part shade - 2 to 6 hrs, Shade - 2 hrs or less
- SOIL MOISTURE: Dry (selected), Moist - looks & feels damp, Wet - saturated
- SLOON TIME

Red arrows point from the "Texas" dropdown menu and the "Dry" radio button to their respective filter options.

Texas A&M Website

Aggie Horticulture

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

[Home](#) [Lawn/Garden](#) [Commercial](#) [Master Gardener](#) [FAQ](#) [Earth Study](#) [County/Regional](#) [People](#) [Search](#)



Deer in the Urban Landscape

Going with the deer by the use of deer resistant plants.

By Forrest W. Appleton
Person's Active Assistant Answer Man
Retired certified nursery professional, Bexar County Master Gardener

Many of us who live in the suburbs must share our environment with the native wildlife. For the most part, we can live in harmony with these creatures and derive considerable pleasure from their presence. At times the squirrels can cause great exasperation as we try to keep them out of the bird feeders and fruit and nut trees but the entertainment they provide as they frolic about the yard offsets any inconvenience they cause. We may speak harshly of the occasional skunk, possum or armadillo when they dig holes in our lawns as they search for grubs. And that pesky roadrunner seems to always have one of our insect eating snail boards in his beak.

However, none of these critters seems to cause irreparable damage. The one that brings to bear serious heartburn though is the whitetail deer. Their natural ability to assimilate themselves into the residential community is exacerbated by those who delight in putting out food to attract them into their yards.

This graceful animal has absolutely no respect for the property of his human neighbors and possesses great athletic ability, making it difficult if not almost impossible to preclude its presence. They leap six foot fences with ease. They come under the cover of darkness to determine what new delicacies have appeared since their last visit and I can not help but believe that they take the greatest of pleasure in ripping off the almost open buds of tomorrow's blossoms.

Much has been written and said about what the serious gardener can do to lessen the impact of the deer in his landscape. This usually includes a listing of those plants which deer are not supposed to like and the unqualified statement that repellents exist to fend them off your prized plants. I have found these writings and proclamations to be of little value to the person who is trying to put some variety into his landscape and do his share to improve the beauty of his surroundings. At the end of this article I will list those plants which I, through trial and error, have found to be least bothered by the deer.

The physical damage caused by the deer by means other than browsing is something that is seldom addressed by either those who would have us believe that the deer are a definite plus in our communities or by the horticultural experts as they dispense their advice. No small tree or shrub is safe from the buck that is rubbing the velvet from his antlers or marking his area. They not only cause breakage, but will rub the bark completely off a plant, girdling it and causing its eventual death. The only protection that I have found to be effective is to place an unightly cage of fencing or concrete reinforcing mesh around the plant. Since I usually install small plants, this means a lengthy period of exercise in the landscape.

Books

Deerproofing Your Yard & Garden

RHONDA MASSINGHAM HART

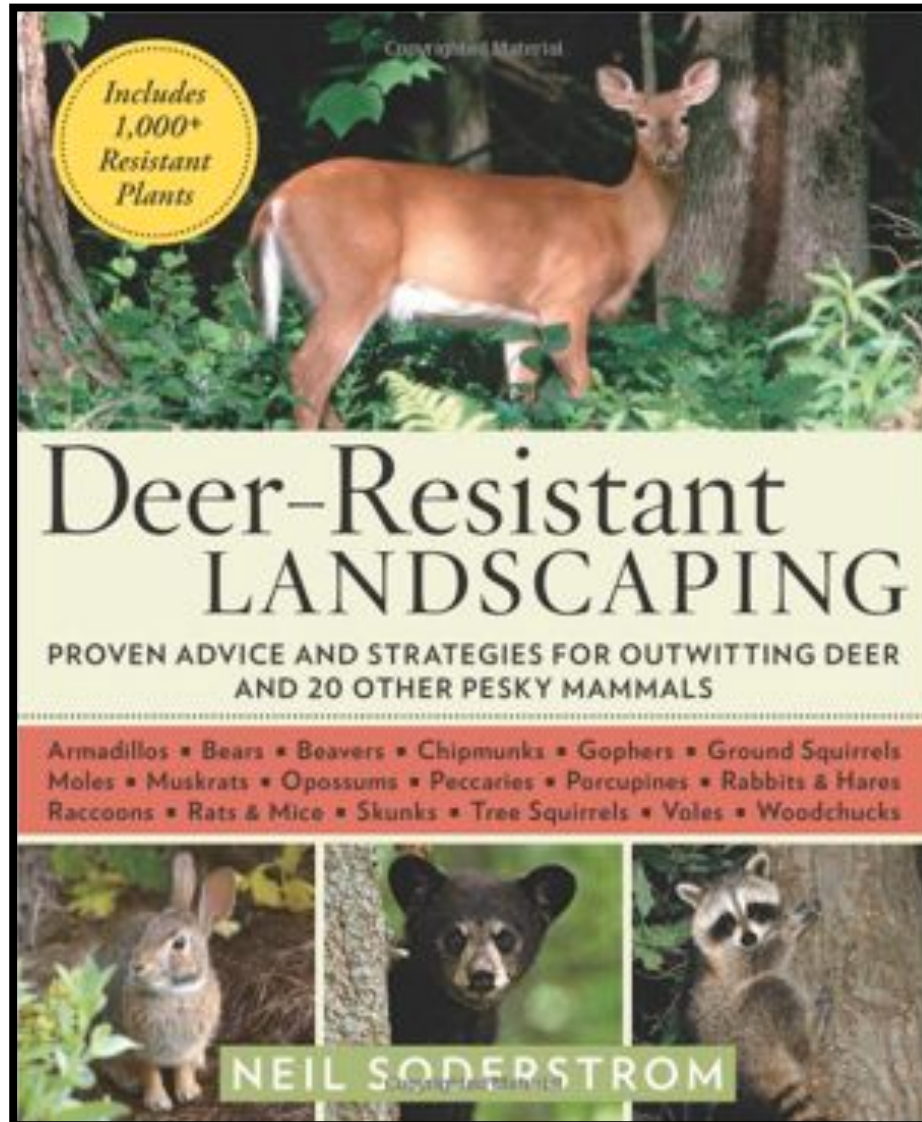
THE BUCK STOPS HERE!

- ❌ Surefire plants that deer truly hate
- ❌ Homemade & store-bought deterrents that really work
- ❌ Innovative fencing & netting options
- ❌ Up-to-date information on Lyme disease

2nd Edition
COMPLETELY
REVISED &
UPDATED

Foreword by
JIM WILSON





Copyrighted Material

Includes
1,000+
Resistant
Plants

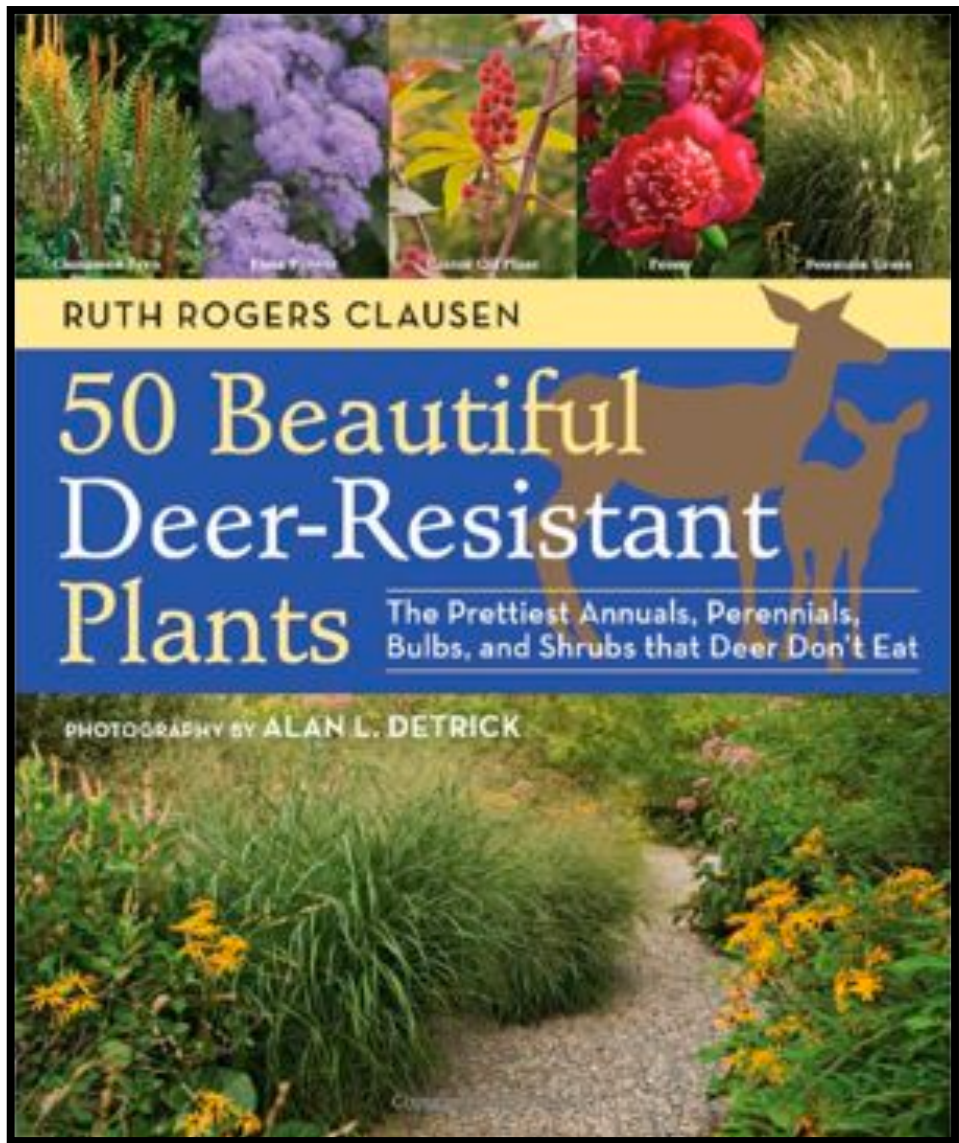
Deer-Resistant LANDSCAPING

PROVEN ADVICE AND STRATEGIES FOR OUTWITTING DEER
AND 20 OTHER PESKY MAMMALS

Armadillos • Bears • Beavers • Chipmunks • Gophers • Ground Squirrels
Moles • Muskrats • Opossums • Peccaries • Porcupines • Rabbits & Hares
Raccoons • Rats & Mice • Skunks • Tree Squirrels • Voles • Woodchucks



NEIL SODERSTROM



RUTH ROGERS CLAUSEN

50 Beautiful Deer-Resistant Plants

The Prettiest Annuals, Perennials,
Bulbs, and Shrubs that Deer Don't Eat

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALAN L. DETRICK

GOOD LUCK!



Thank you!

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