



Tips to steer Bambi clear of your garden

Although they are both graceful and beautiful, deer can become quite the pests when they discover your vegetable garden or prized petunia plot and see it as their own all-you-can-eat lunch buffet. Before cursing out these majestic, albeit frustrating creatures, you may want to consider how urban sprawl has intruded on their grazing grounds, leaving deer fewer options for foraging. But that does not mean you have to welcome them over for dinner.

Fences

Perhaps the most common and successful means of protecting your veggies, fruits and flowers from deer is to surround your garden with a fence approximately eight feet in height. You'll want to be sure that a portion of the fence runs underground and that no sizable gaps exist through which a deer could potentially squeeze itself. For an added layer of protection, consider adding chicken wire to the fence or around areas where your most vulnerable plants are rooted. The more solid the fence, the less likely a deer is to scale it.

Create Distractions

Some gardeners have seen results by planting some deer favorites (e.g. tea roses, arborvitae, beans, berries and broccoli) on the opposite side of the yard from their more prized plants and produce.

Deterrents

Deer are regularly deterred by scents that they abhor, including rotten egg, urine of their predators and simple household goods like bar soap. You may want to consider mixing rotten egg with water and spraying it around your plants. Some commercial outlets sell urine of coyotes and bobcats, which are known predators to deer.

Other gardeners have speared bars of soap on stakes and planted them firmly near their gardens. Another well-known deterrent is human hair, stuff it into a used stocking and stake around your gar-

den or hang from tree branches. In addition, several commercial products are available on the market and typically come in a spray bottle so you can easily spread the concoction over a vast garden.

Deer will catch on to your tactics after a while, so be sure to mix up which deterrents you employ.

Change Your Garden

If none of the aforementioned options seems to be working, or if you are opposed to these ideas for any reason, you may ultimately want to reconsider what you plant. If hungry enough, deer will eat just about anything, but in particular, they enjoy smooth, tender, flavorful plants like dogwood, azalea, arborvitae, yew, hyacinth, rose, apples, beans, broccoli and sweet corn. Thus you may want to avoid these altogether when planning your garden or landscaping.