

Deer Tips

If you experience an aggressive deer incident, defined as “deer chasing, or kicking, at a person or pet resulting in damage or injury,” you should:

1. Call 9-1-1 if you feel threatened or witness someone being threatened by an aggressive deer.
2. Contact the Report-a-Poacher line at 1-800-642-3800 to report the incident. They will determine if further action is required.

Avoid Deer Conflict

Although deer aren't considered dangerous, they can act aggressively toward people and dogs to protect themselves or their fawns. Here are some strategies to reduce the chance of deer-human conflict:

1. **Never feed deer.** Feeding deer can cause them to associate people with food; they can act aggressively when hungry. Reliance on unnatural food sources poses challenges for deer in the winter when food sources are less abundant, increasing aggression.
2. **Deter deer from your yard.** Plant unpalatable species, remove bird feeders, use tree guards, rake up crab apples (or remove fruit trees altogether). If deer sleep in your yard, place objects randomly like patio furniture to disrupt sleeping areas. Don't let your dog chase deer out of your yard as this may encourage aggression.
3. **Give deer their space.** Deer may act aggressively if threatened. When walking, cycling, etc., change your course to give deer as much room as possible. When driving in the presence of deer, slow down.
4. **Keep dogs on leash.** Unleashed dogs often chase/scare deer causing them to run into traffic or encourage aggression. If a deer approaches a dog on leash, back away and seek an alternate route. Don't attach your dog leash to yourself.
5. **Behaviours to Watch For.** If deer feel threatened, their ears will be back and they will stomp their feet and sometimes snort.

Avoid Deer Conflict When Walking to School

Although deer aren't considered dangerous, they can act aggressively to protect themselves or their fawns. Children and youth should be informed on how to avoid deer conflict when walking to school.

The most important advice is to give deer their space. Deer are wild animals and may act aggressively if they feel threatened. Use the following tips to reduce the possibility of an aggressive deer encounter.

1. Safety in numbers. Walk with others when possible.
2. Change your path to give deer as much room as possible – this may involve crossing to the other side of the street or moving off the pathway system in a park to take a wider route around deer.
3. If you can't safely go around deer, back off and wait for deer to move on.
4. Never knowingly walk between deer. Deer may be protective over fawns or other deer and you don't want to be perceived as a threat.
5. Don't chase deer. Urban deer are very used to people and may not run off leaving you too close to unafraid deer. Deer that do run off may run into traffic causing an accident.
6. Never feed deer. Feeding deer can help deer associate people with food and they can act aggressively when hungry. An aggressive deer may have to be euthanized by wildlife authorities. A fed deer is a dead deer.

Report aggressive deer incidents to your teacher or parents. They can further determine if the incident should be reported to the appropriate authorities.