

PROTECTING LANDSCAPE PLANTS & GARDENS FROM DEER



In response to feedback from residents, the City of Tecumseh has adapted the following helpful tips from the MSU Extension and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) websites on protecting landscape plants from deer:

- ◆ Use horizontal fencing barriers or woven wire fencing rolled over cement blocks. Deer cannot place their feet in holes to navigate through this type of fencing. Vertical fencing up to 6 feet in height can also be used, however; it's important to note that deer can often jump over this type of fencing.
- ◆ Plant deer-resistant landscaping, such as yarrow, coneflower and lavender. Prepare for spring by planting deer-resistant flowering bulbs like daffodils, snowdrops, grape hyacinth and fritillaria. <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/files/e3042.pdf> provides a more extensive list of deer-resistant plants.
- ◆ Use repellents; both homemade and commercial odor/taste repellents can be effective. Homemade repellents include garlic, moth balls, human hair, liquefied eggs in water, etc.
- ◆ Using a fertilizer like Milorganite may help discourage deer. Some gardeners have found Milorganite fertilizer to be a useful tool in repelling deer. The product says it has up to five-week repellency. Other possible aids include hanging chunks of strongly scented deodorant soaps in mesh nets, sprinkling human hair on the ground from a barber shop, scattering blood meal, and getting rid of outdated spices and herbs like cinnamon, red pepper flakes, cloves and anything with a strong aroma.
- ◆ Applying repellents early in the spring will gently encourage deer to retreat back to their usual woodland fodder. If using repellents, focus efforts on the perimeter of a perennial garden and corners most likely to get “nicked” by casual browsing. Once the deer’s behavior is curtailed, you can back off of the repellents and only apply an occasional reminder along borders.
- ◆ If using repellents, be prepared to re-apply them after a heavy rain. They work just as well when sprayed on the ground around the plants, especially if there is mulch.
- ◆ Feeding deer often does more harm than good. It may disrupt their natural behavior and cause them to linger too long outside of their normal habitat, leading to an increase in the possibility of disease transmission and the overbrowse of landscapes.

