

Suburban Deer Management in Missouri



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Missouri Whitetails

- Fawns born in late spring (late May- June)
- Yearlings chased off at time of fawning
- Fawn near doe through next year
- Home ranges are about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ mi²
- Rut peaks in mid-November



Suburban Deer Densities



Ecological carrying capacity =
20 deer/mi²

*goal population for suburban areas



Social carrying
capacity =
~40 deer/mi²

Biological carrying
capacity = ???



Suburban whitetails: Problems



Landscape damage from browse & antler rub.

Suburban whitetails: Problems



Deer-vehicle collisions

Suburban whitetails: Problems



Concern over tick-borne disease

Suburban whitetails: Problems



Bold and aggressive behavior

Suburban whitetails: Problems



Deer overbrowse and decline in habitat quality

Suburban whitetails: Problems



Change in understory affects other wildlife species, especially birds and pollinators.

Non-lethal solutions: Damage control

- ✓ Fencing
- ✓ Repellants
- ✓ Scare tactics
- ✓ Deer “resistant” plants
- ✓ Road warning devices
- ✓ Prohibit supplemental feeding



Non-lethal solutions: Sterilization



- ✓ Surgical sterilization is the only method of permanent fertility control for free-ranging deer.
- ✓ Has been conducted in Town & Country along with sharpshooting.
- ✓ Expensive, and becomes increasingly expensive as more deer are sterilized (diminishing returns).
- ✓ Is not effective at reducing population.

Lethal solutions: Population control

Lethal solutions focus on long term population management. Does must be harvested for greatest reduction.

Options:

- ✓ Archery hunting
- ✓ Sharpshooting
- ✓ Trap & euthanasia

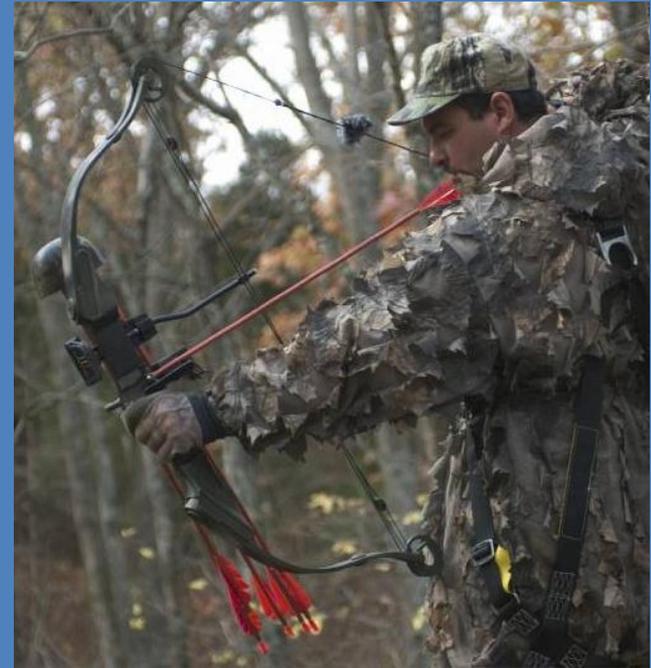


Suburban whitetails as a natural resource

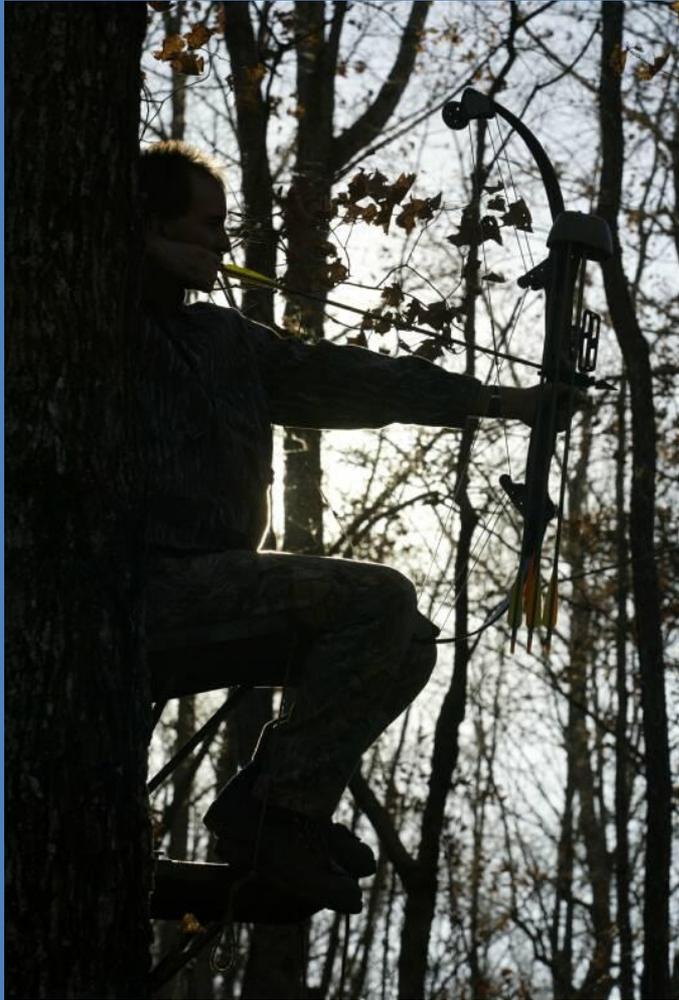


Lethal solutions: Archery hunting

- ✓ Hunting under statewide regulations with additional municipal restrictions
- ✓ Archery season runs Sept. 15- Jan. 15
- ✓ Low or no cost to community or landowner
- ✓ Adequate access to private property necessary for population reduction
- ✓ Good option for maintaining a lower population



Lethal solutions: Managed hunt



- ✓ Archery hunting under statewide managed hunt system at Klamberg Woods.
- ✓ Hunters selected at random through lottery system to hunt specific dates.
- ✓ Rules, regulations, and requirements can be specific to Klamberg.
- ✓ Would require staff time to administer, and a revised city ordinance.
- ✓ Hunt details proposed by January for hunt to take place the following fall/winter.

Lethal Solutions: Sharpshooting

- ✓ Trained marksmen shoot deer over bait
- ✓ Requires special permit from MDC
- ✓ Deer meat must be donated through MDC program
- ✓ Highly effective and efficient way to quickly reduce population
- ✓ Expensive



Lethal Solutions: Trap & euthanize

- ✓ Deer are individually trapped & euthanized with non-projectile device
- ✓ Requires special permit from MDC
- ✓ Deer meat must be donated through MDC program
- ✓ Does not require municipal ordinance change
- ✓ Expensive, inefficient way to lower population



Lessons learned

- Realize there is no magic solution.
- Decide on an objective:
 - To educate residents on living with deer & how to employ damage control techniques,
 - To make additional tools available to residents when they decide the deer are problematic, and/ or
 - To reduce the deer population community-wide.
- Cooperate with other communities and MDC.
- Evaluate the management program and adapt management plan accordingly.