

Deer-Vehicle Collisions and YOU



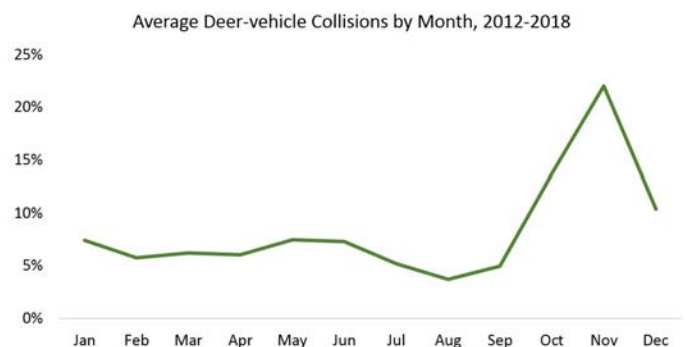
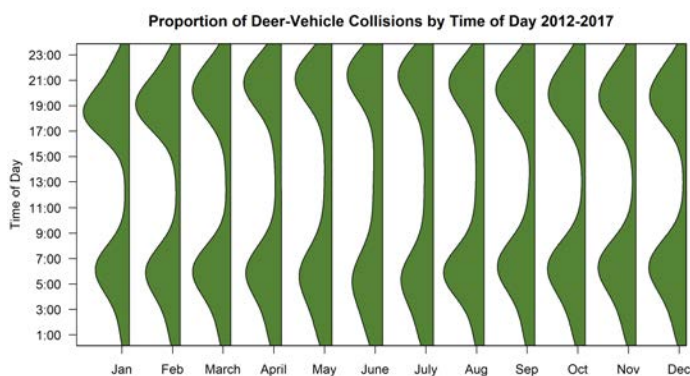
Anually, more than 14,000 deer-vehicle collisions are reported in Indiana. If you live where deer are found, especially in suburban areas or where field and forest meet, it is important to know ways to reduce the likelihood of a collision and what to do if you are involved in one. While you can't eliminate the possibility of running into a deer on the road, you can minimize the risk of severe damage to you or your vehicle.



WHEN do most deer-vehicle collisions happen?

Deer movements are not random, and the likelihood of seeing deer near roads varies by time of day and month. Deer are most active when many people are commuting to and from work, resulting in increased collisions. While your chance of hitting a deer varies, in general, deer-vehicle collisions are most likely to occur during these conditions:

- At dawn and dusk when deer are most active.
- From September through December, particularly October and November during deer mating season as bucks cross roads more frequently and are less cautious when crossing.



- In areas with high densities such as suburbs and where hunting is prohibited (state parks and national parks, nature preserves, and wildlife sanctuaries).
- In areas where roads divide agricultural fields and forestland. Deer cross roads to forage for food.
- During unfavorable road conditions. Deer may be difficult to see or avoid when conditions are foggy, wet, or icy. Allow as much stopping time as possible.



HOW to prevent injuries from deer-vehicle collisions

- Never swerve to avoid hitting a deer. Braking and hitting the deer is safer than swerving off the road or into oncoming traffic.
- When you see one deer assume there are more. Deer often follow each other, so slow down and look for others along the side of the road.
- Use your high beams at night to illuminate deer eyes.
- If a deer is on or near the road, slow down. Blow your horn continuously to scare the deer away.
- Don't rely on novelties like deer whistles. Whistles, fences, and reflectors are ineffective at deterring deer.
- Be alert, especially when deer are most active.
- Observe driving safety laws, always wear a seatbelt, and observe posted speed limits. Don't drive too closely behind other cars.

WHAT to do if you hit a deer

- 1** Move your vehicle to a safe place on the side of the road and turn on your hazard lights.
- 2** Call the police. Do not approach the deer, whether alive or dead; wounded deer are unpredictable and can be dangerous. Deer can survive even a direct collision and may appear dead when they are not.
- 3** You have the right to keep the deer for your own use with the proper permit. A local or state police officer, DNR conservation officer, DNR district biologist, or DNR property manager can issue permits to legally possess the deer. See dnr.IN.gov and search for "deer processors" if you need a place to take your deer for butchering. Thanks to the Sportsman's Benevolence Fund, donating deer meat is also an option—participating processors will get the deer meat to those in need. It is illegal to sell wild deer meat in Indiana.
- 4** As with any vehicle accident, follow the responding officer's instructions.

