

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MOTORISTS URGED TO BE CAUTIOUS FOR DEER ON ROADS NJ DOT Encourages Motorists to Report Trouble Spots

(13/P98) TRENTON - The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife is urging motorists to be alert for white-tailed deer on roads across the state with the arrival of the fall breeding season, especially during morning and evening commutes when visibility may be poor and deer are more active.

Drivers should be extra alert to avoid collisions that could result in injuries and damage to their vehicles, as deer movements related to breeding have begun and will pick up in the coming weeks. Motorists are encouraged to alert the Department of Transportation of dead deer they find along the state highway system and deer crossing locations. DOT has made it easy and convenient for residents to do so online at

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/potholeform.shtm>

Triggered by shorter days and cooler weather, deer disperse and move around considerably as they search for mates. Studies indicate the peak mating season for deer in New Jersey runs from late October, throughout November, and into mid-December in all regions of the state, beginning earliest in northern regions. The danger is particularly pronounced at dawn and dusk when many people are commuting to and from work. Visibility resulting from low light or sun glare may be difficult during these times. Commuters should be especially alert and drive with additional caution when daylight saving time ends on Nov. 3. Normal driver commuting times will more closely align with peak deer activity periods after this time.

The following tips are offered to help motorists stay safe:

- * If you spot a deer, slow down and pay attention to possible sudden movement. If the deer doesn't move, don't go around it. Wait for the deer to pass and the road is clear.
- * Pay attention to "Deer Crossing" signs. Slow down when traveling through areas known to have a high concentration of deer so you will have ample time to stop if necessary.
- * If you are traveling after dark, use high beams when there is no oncoming traffic. High beams will be reflected by the eyes of deer on or near roads.
- * If you see one deer, be on guard: others may be in the area. Deer typically move in family groups at this time of year and cross roads single-file. Female deer are being chased by bucks and during breeding phase are often unaware of traffic.
- * Don't tailgate. Remember: the driver in front of you might have to stop suddenly to avoid hitting a deer.

* Always wear a seatbelt, as required by law. Drive at a safe and sensible speed, taking into account weather, available lighting, traffic, curves and other road conditions.

* If a collision appears inevitable, do not swerve to avoid impact. The deer may counter-maneuver suddenly. Brake appropriately, but stay in your lane. Collisions are more likely to become fatal when a driver swerves to avoid a deer and instead collides with oncoming traffic or a fixed structure along the road.

* Report any deer-vehicle collision to a local law enforcement agency immediately.

For more information about white-tailed deer in New Jersey, visit:

<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/deer.htm>