



HUMANE SOCIETY  
WILDLIFE LAND TRUST.

# Wildlife NOTES

## Living with Deer: Fencing

Deer are everywhere, to the delight some of us and to the frustration of others. Where deer are a problem, the most effective and permanent way to protect crops or landscape plants is to install deer-deterrent fencing. There are many types of fencing that can be effective in keeping deer out of your yard and garden. Check with your local extension or wildlife specialists before investing in a fence to see what local recommendations they have.



**Barrier Fences.** Where deer have other available forage, quite simple fences can sometimes keep them out of yards and gardens. Designs range from high-tensile strand wiring to standard mesh-woven wire and chain-link. A sturdy 8 foot high fence will keep deer out in most cases.

**Electric Fences.** *Note: Be sure to check your local ordinances regarding electric wire fencing to find out what is permissible in your community.* Electric fences can be constructed in a variety of configurations such as a single strand or 5, 7, or 9 wires pitched either horizontally or vertically. They are powered by high-voltage, low amperage chargers that provide timed pulses of short duration. Use a high quality energizer (or charger) that puts out 5000 volts. Check with your fence supplier to make sure that the charger is matched to the fence design and is appropriate for your needs. And don't forget to put up warning signs. Deer quickly learn to avoid these fenced-in areas. If they're not properly maintained, however, deer will learn how to get through them.

**Inspection and Maintenance.** Fences must be regularly inspected and maintained to remain effective. For electric fence, check weekly for broken wire and do a voltage check. Deer constantly test fences and if they get through once, it is much more difficult to recondition them.

**Mowing.** Be sure to clear a minimum 10-15 foot buffer on the outside of the fence so deer see it and don't run through it. On electric fences, vegetation must be kept away from the lower wires or the wire may short out.

**Leave Fence On.** Leave the electric fence ON at all times to prevent deer from testing the fence when it is off.

**Repellents.** For added deterrence, after deer have made initial contact with the fence, you can take strips of cotton and soak them in a commercial odor repellent. Hang the strips at regular intervals and reapply the repellent every month. The odor will help reinforce the negative impact of the electric shock.

### Three Deer Games

*Sometimes it is just about having fun. Here are three games to share with the littler "deers" in your life.*

**It's a Deer, Dear** Everyone sits in a circle. The Answer Person (starting with the youngest in the group) stands in the center of the circle. Each player asks the Answer Person a question. To every question the Answer Person must respond, "It's a deer, dear." The first player to make the Answer Person laugh wins a try in the middle. (What is that on your head? "It's a deer, dear.")

**White Tail Tag.** Put a strip of white cloth in each player's back pocket. Have the players try to grab each other's strips without having their own strip taken. The player with the most cloth strips wins the game.

**Find the Deer.** The Fawns hide their eyes and count out loud together to 50, while the Deer goes and hides. Then everyone begins to look for the Deer. When a Fawn spots the Deer, he/she doesn't tell anyone, then when no one is looking, he/she slips in and hides with the Deer. Soon everyone starts to disappear, and the only one is left. The first player to find the Deer, gets to hide as the Deer in the next round.