



CHRISTENSEN'S PLANT CENTER

Wholesale Supplier To Landscape Professionals

Deer Damage in the Landscape

The whitetail deer continue to spread into residential areas having adequate food and shelter. We will have to learn to live with them by either installing plants they find unpalatable or by applying repellents.

Nothing is completely deer-resistant. Their nature is to move and browse on just about everything, primarily at night. They will even eat poison ivy as part of their diet. It seems the most heavily damaged plants eaten in the landscape are Taxus and Thuja occidentalis Arborvitae cultivars. These are popular targets in winter when deep snow covers their regular food sources. Boxwood, Juniper, and most spruce are not normally eaten, but there are always exceptions. Make sure the customer does NOT feed the deer. They will just stay in the area, and browse on everything above the snow.

Most of you will likely inherit an existing problem and the best course of action will be the use of repellents. I don't mean lead-based options, because the neighbors don't want to find Bambi dead next to their children's swing set. Regular use of repellents will work if applied immediately, the same day after installing plants. A granular product spread outside the plants will form one barrier, and spray a liquid product directly on the plants. It is crucial to do this right in the beginning to behavior modify the deer. Always read the instructions thoroughly. Reapply as needed after prolonged rain and after heavy snowfall.

We offer an excellent selection of deer repellent products to help with this problem.



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photo: Holly Christensen