



# TIPS *for* COEXISTING WITH DEER

If you live among deer—that is if you live in San Antonio, the Hill Country, Austin, and anywhere throughout Central or South Texas—daily life requires respect and awareness towards them and the other wildlife who have been here long before us.

Below are a few tips that will help you coexist with deer in your area and most importantly what to look for when you think a fawn or deer is in need of rescue or medical care.

## Signs a fawn is in trouble

**Pacing, calling out, or appearing distressed:** Fawns who are still being cared for by their mother will *usually* be calm and lying down. Fawns who are just temporarily frightened may get up and move but will lie back down a short distance away.

**Lying on their side:** Deer are ruminants and when healthy will lie in the sternal position with the front of their chest resting on the ground. You will not find a healthy deer or fawn lying on their side.

**Covered in ants:** If the fawn is lying on the ground and covered in ants, he is in trouble. A healthy fawn will move if ants begin to attack. Gently brush the ants off right away and call WRR's 24-HR Emergency Hotline at (830) 336-2725 for assistance.

## Don't feed deer

"Deer corn" is a commercial name given to dried corn for the express purpose of marketing. There is no such food as "deer corn." Dried corn is one of the most harmful things you can feed deer. Their bodies are not made to digest corn. Eating it causes deer to develop diarrhea, seek corn instead of nutritious natural food, and contract diseases as a result of malnutrition. **If you happen upon a deer who appears sick, feed her protein pellets rather than corn, bread, or other sugary food. When the deer recovers, gradually stop supplementing her food.**

Feeding deer can cause them to become dependent on and trusting of humans. This will increase their chances of being hurt or killed in an encounter with humans.

**Remember:** If you find a fawn in your yard, the odds are they are probably healthy. You should not pick up a fawn for many reasons: they are more likely to survive if they remain with their mother, and it is illegal, among others. If you think an animal is injured or in danger, call WRR's 24-HR Emergency Hotline at (830) 336-2725 for assistance.



## FAWN FACTS *DID YOU KNOW?*

- A doe will leave her fawns for up to 14 hours at a time. After an early-morning feeding, she will hide the fawn in a place she deems safe which may be under a car or a more natural area such as tall grass, low shrubs, etc. She will then leave for the day to find her own food, returning at dusk to feed and spend the night with her fawn.
- Fawns do not emit the same odor as adult deer so they are safe from predators when the mother is not around.
- If you see a fawn on the side of the road or in another dangerous place, you should move the fawn to a safe location nearby.

## Landscaping with deer in mind

**As the Hill Country and outlying green spaces of San Antonio are destroyed by urban encroachment, more and more of the land must be shared between humans and native wildlife.** That means that at some point deer will sample your flowers and shrubs until finding the tastiest shoots in your garden. While there is no foolproof solution to this situation, you can minimize the damage to your garden by choosing deer-resistant selections from an array of beautiful native plants. A good resource for selecting deer-resistant native plants is the [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#) in Austin, Texas.

## Injured adult deer

Unfortunately, injured adult deer are common in urban or developed areas. Often, the best assistance we can give injured deer is to leave them alone. Deer are easily stressed to an extreme degree, and almost always if an adult deer is captured and transported to Wildlife Rescue, the animal dies from the stress of capture. Deer can also survive and move about quite well on three legs. If you find a deer who has been hit by a vehicle and he cannot stand, he will probably have to be euthanized. If he has a non-survivable injury, call the Sheriff's Office non-emergency number: **210-335-6000**.

## To reduce the likelihood of collisions

**Be vigilant:** When you drive, make a habit of watching from side to side, especially in areas of low visibility or where shrubs or grasses are close to the road. You can also purchase devices to place on your car that create a high pitched sound, alerting wildlife of your approaching vehicle.

**Watch for group behavior:** Deer tend to travel in groups. If one deer crosses the road, watch for more to follow. Female deer tend to stay together as "doe groups" in winter and have young fawns following them in the spring.

**Be aware of seasons:** In the fall, bucks are on the move due to rutting and the stress of hunting season. In Spring (May-June), yearlings are seeking new territories. Be extra careful driving at these times of year.

**Time of day matters:** Deer are most active at dusk and dawn. Be watchful at these times—wildlife are more likely to be moving across roads.

**Use high beams:** At night, use your high beams to see farther ahead. Slow down and watch for the eyeshine of deer near the road edges. If you see a deer on or in the road, immediately turn off your high-beams. When headlights are turned off completely, deer will often move out of the road. You must consider the safety of yourself and other motorists in this case.

**Drive straight and honk your horn:** If at all possible, do not swerve to avoid wildlife but brake firmly and blow your horn. Animals are easily confused. If you swerve, deer may run into the vehicle rather than away.

**For more helpful information please visit [Wildlife-Rescue.org](#)**



Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation's mission: To rescue, rehabilitate and release native wildlife and to provide sanctuary, individualized care, and a voice for other animals in need.

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