

Lethal Deer Damage Abatement Techniques – Regulated Hunting

Regulated hunting is the most effective and economical method of controlling deer populations in many locales. Over 60 years of experience and research confirm the effectiveness of deer hunting as a means of deer population control. In most situations, private landowners have the ability to regulate the deer harvest in order to reduce the level of deer damage on their land to tolerable levels. The most successful deer management occurs when landowners play an active role. Hunters must focus their harvest efforts on the correct sex and age of deer to have the biggest impact. To reduce deer populations target adult does. To maintain a healthy herd spread out hunting pressure among young and adult does, and mature bucks.

Deer populations are best managed when landowners utilize all of Delaware's hunting seasons. Deer seasons and bag limits are established for hunters using bows, shotguns, handguns, or muzzleloading firearms. Delaware's bow deer season opens on September 1st and closes The last week of January. Shotgun seasons are scattered throughout this 5 month period and occur off and on from October through January. Muzzleloader deer seasons occur in October and January. By understanding these different seasons and hunting devices, a landowner can best address deer management goals. The annual Division of Fish & Wildlife publication "Delaware Hunting & Trapping Guide" describes the current deer hunting seasons and bag limits. This publication is available anywhere hunting licenses are sold, on the DFW's website, or by contacting the DFW directly.