

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife Depredation Program

DNR Mission: To conserve and enhance our natural resources in cooperation with individuals and organizations to improve the quality of life in Iowa and ensure a legacy for future generations.

The Wildlife Depredation Program was established in 1997 initially to address issues between farmers and white-tailed deer. Today DNR Staff works with a wide variety of wildlife, providing education and assistance on over **35** different species of wildlife.

The Wildlife Depredation Program assists more than **350** Iowans every year.

The Wildlife Depredation Program works with wildlife in urban and rural settings including farms, cities, parks, airports, orchards, and homesteads.

The Wildlife Depredation Program has partnered with more than **30** Iowa airports to reduce wildlife hazards and improve passenger safety.

In **25 years** of operations, the Wildlife Depredation Program has increased response rates with increased staffing, increased urban presence, witnessed a decrease in the number of deer complaints received, and seen a decrease in requests for additional antlerless deer tags.

More than **4800** Iowans have engaged the Deer Depredation Program for help with reducing local

deer herd impacts on their farms, resulting in a deer harvest rate of **60%** which is double the harvest rate for farms not enrolled in the program.

The Deer Depredation Program has connected more than **12,800** hunters with farmers to assist in harvesting antlerless deer.

The Wildlife Depredation Program facilitated **110** unique special antlerless deer hunts to manage populations in cities, parks, and rural areas.

A survey of cooperators enrolled in the Deer Depredation Program rated DNR Staff highly in their performance and responsiveness, reported high levels of satisfaction with the program, and **90%** of cooperators indicated they would recommend the program to others.

The Wildlife Depredation Program strives to respond promptly with accurate knowledge and useful techniques to address human-wildlife conflict. The DNR looks forward to increasing publicly available education materials, increase outreach, optimize data collection, and facilitate hunter-farmer connections.



Current Depredation Program

Following a site visit from a Department Biologist to determine qualifying crop damage caused by deer, eligible producers are enrolled into the Depredation Program. A management plan is generated by the discussion between Department Biologist and producer which is signed by both parties. The producer is provided copies of all rules. Also provided is education on ecology of deer or other wildlife damaging crops. The producer participates in deciding harvest goals for the farm.

DEPREDATION TAGS

- Number of tags decided between biologist and producer. This quota is separate from County Antlerless Quotas.
- Resident hunters purchase tags for specific seasons
- Antlerless only tags
- Tags are at reduced price
- More hunting opportunities as individual hunters can hunt every eligible hunting season
- Tags can be used on farm property and immediately adjacent property with permission
- 2022 season: 116 days of hunting available
- Tags follow rules and regulations for the specific season
 - All deer are utilized according to these regulations
 - All deer are reported according to these regulations



OUT OF SEASON SHOOTING PERMITS

- Issued for times of the year when damage is occurring—designed to remove deer actively damaging crops
- Permits can be issued to the producer or other assigned residents of Iowa that are legal to hunt
- Only allowed on specific property where damage is occurring
- No shooting hour restrictions
- Any weapon legal to use in that county is available for these permits
 - All deer shot must be utilized
 - All deer must be reported

LANDOWNER/TENANT DEPREDATION LICENSES

- An additional reduced price antlerless landowner tag is available to depredation producers for each hunting season
- Follows all rules and regulations for specific seasons
- All deer are utilized according to these regulations
 - All deer are reported according to these regulations

ADDITIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED FOR PRODUCERS EXPERIENCING CROP DAMAGE

- Department provides contacts for hunters upon request
- Department provides records for participation in the program and can provide information per hunter upon request
- Information is provided on deer movements and other wildlife ecology
- Department is willing to work with neighbors and other producers in the area to work towards goals

