

# Increased accidents tied to higher deer population

Hunters shouldn't be the only ones on the lookout for deer.

A University of Michigan study reports the deer-related automotive accidents are more common in Michigan than might be assumed.

In 1981, there were 21,242 such accidents, or 7 percent of all police-reported automotive accidents in Michigan.

The study focused on two types of accidents — those in which the deer was struck by the vehicle and those in which the deer was avoided but the vehicle left the road and struck a fixed

object or rolled over.

"In deer-collision accidents, only 3.3 percent of the drivers were reported as having been drinking," the study said. In the cases in which the deer was avoided, police officers judged that 23.9 percent of the drivers had been drinking.

"Some of those (latter) cases may have been falsely reported to police as deer-related to cover a driver's negligence," the study said. Researchers believe that some of the deer that were reported killed by collision with a car

were killed by other means, with an accident report filed only to make the taking and using of the deer legal.

**THE STUDY**, which covered deer-related accidents in Michigan from 1978 to 1981, found steadily increasing deer-related accidents in recent years. During the same period, there was a decrease in other kinds of auto accidents in the state.

Between 1978 and 1981, deer-related auto accidents in Michigan increased from 16,768 to 21,242 — from 4.3 percent to 7 percent of all auto accidents in the state, according to the report. The increase may be explained partially by the steady growth in the deer population in Michigan.

Total costs of deer-related accidents, including vehicle damage and medical costs, increased from \$10.9 million in 1978 to an estimated \$17.2 million in 1981.

The study showed that deer-related accidents are usually less severe and less costly than "many other police-reported vehicle accidents." Average per-accident cost in deer-related cases was \$651 in 1978 and about \$800 in 1981.

"In 15 of the 234 cases surveyed, total costs were \$50 or less," the report said. "In 12 of the 15 cases, the vehicle occupant took the deer for use as food, as did 43 percent of the respondents in the other 219 cases."

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## Holiday cards from charities featured

Pictures of holiday cards being sold by charitable organizations for Christmas and Hanukkah will be published by the Observer & Eccentric on Thursday, Oct. 20.

Information on ordering the cards will appear with the pictures in the Suburban Life sections of the newspapers.

Every effort will be made to publish all cards received by Oct. 3 on the Oct. 20 date. Cards received later will be published as space permits.

Extra space will be devoted to the

charity cards on Oct. 20 as a public service effort on behalf of the fund-raising organizations and people in the community who wish to buy the cards.

In addition to the published listings, display books of charity cards will be available for public viewing in the Observer & Eccentric offices at 1225 Bowers, Birmingham and 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, beginning Monday, Oct. 24.

Send three copies of cards to be published to Shirlee Iden, Observer & Eccentric, 1225 Bowers, Birmingham, 48012.

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Assistant Professor at Wayne State University

Patricia P. Duyer, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist,  
Neuropsychologist, Harper/Grace Hospital

Ellen Bach, Registered Dietitian

Judy Smouter, Exercise Physiologist

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