

'Business climate' in state improved

A national site-selection firm report released recently finds Michigan's business climate "substantially better" than it was 10 years ago, but said "persistence and innovation in economic development programs will be required to meet the new challenges of the 1980s."

Norton L. Berman, director of the Michigan Commerce Department, called the Fantus Co. study "a report card on what Michigan has accomplished in the past decade."

"But more importantly, (it's) a blueprint for continued improvement in order to ensure the competitive advantages of Michigan as a state for new business investment and expansion."

THE FANTUS Co. of Chicago is the

nation's leading firm specializing in location studies for U.S. and foreign business firms planning plant investment throughout the United States. The Michigan study was commissioned this fall by the Department of Commerce for \$45,000.

"It is the conclusion of the Fantus Co. that Michigan has a substantially better business climate in 1982 than in 1972," the report said. "State government has become far more responsive to the needs and concerns of the business community during the past 10 years."

"A comprehensive reform of the workers' compensation system has resulted in reduced costs for business and will produce continuing savings in future years."

outdoors

Growing antlers: buck's yearly job

By Lem Meese outdoors writer

Ever wonder why you don't see buck deer, elk or moose in late winter?

The bucks of these species grow antlers, not true horns, and shed them every year.

If you've been to Isle Royale National Park to see Michigan's only moose, or if you have spotted a bull elk in the Pigeon River country of the northeastern Lower Peninsula, you may have trouble swallowing that tale.

But it's true. Those magnificent racks are the products of a single summer's growth, according to state game biologists.

The common Virginia white-tailed deer, the elk and the moose are all

members of the Cervidae family and have antlers. True horns are possessed by cows, sheep, goats and antelope. When they break a horn, it's gone for good.

Bucks use their antlers principally for fighting off rival bucks during mating season. Rarely is there a fight to the death.

Deer also change color in winter. They grow grey, rough coats in cold weather rather than the reddish, rust-colored coat of warm weather.

Deer like a diverse habitat — woods, swamps, glades. There are probably more deer in Michigan now than in the days when our peninsulas were entirely forested.

They are browsers rather than grazers. Deer don't limit their diet to

grasses, like cattle and sheep, but can eat twigs, leaves, acorn and bark.

ANY BIRD eagles on your favorite hiking trail?

The state Department of Natural Resources will conduct its annual mid-winter bald eagle survey Jan. 2-16. If you spot America's national bird during these two weeks, note the date, hour and location by township and county.

Your contact: Tim Payne, DNR district wildlife supervisor, 2455 N. Williams Lake Road, Pontiac 48054; telephone 686-1500.

AT THE Huron-Clinton Metroparks this weekend:

• "Plants in Winter," 10 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 2 at Kensington Metropark nature center south of Milford. Natur-

alist Mark Szabo will discuss uses of winter plants during a 1.5 mile hike across woods and field. There's a vehicle admission to the park, but the program is free. To register, call the nature center at 685-1501.

• "Tracks — Stories in Snow," 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 2 at Kensington nature center. Mark Szabo will lead this 90-minute hike to identify animal tracks. (Hope you spot the side-hill wampus — the creature whose legs are shorter on one side of his body than on the other because it lives on the side of a hill.) To register, call the nature center.

• The third annual New Year's bird count will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 2 at Oakwoods Metropark, near Flat Rock.

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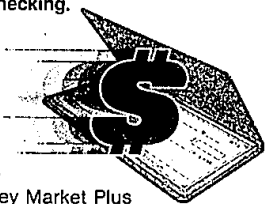
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