



Grounds & Landscape Committee Winter Update

Completed and Upcoming Projects:

- Refresh of the Clubhouse landscape: Phase 1 was completed in time for the Brokers' Tour and the IOB Annual Meeting, and the additional plantings in Phase 2 were installed later in October. Still coming...a new plant for the large clay pot.
- Landscape and lighting Improvements at the front gate entrance and a new walkway to the DeLa Gaye dock were completed this fall. Special thanks to Alex and Eric for their help with these projects.
- The former playground landscape fabric was removed and replaced with pine straw. Pine straw was also added to the edge of Belle Grove Park along Islands Avenue to reduce erosion.
- Street islands with dead or overgrown shrubs are being reviewed and cleaned up.
- Several trees at the clubhouse need trimming and Spanish moss removal. This will increase the life of the trees and provide a cleaner appearance. Awaiting Board decision for funding.
- Holiday decorations have been installed at the front gate – special thanks to Kathy and Chris Gardner for taking this on.
- Several committee members cut vines growing into the planted foliage along Islands Avenue earlier this month, in preparation for additional plantings we hope to have installed in 2024.

OH DEER!



Deer can reach leaves and flowers up to 6 feet high

It's official... deer have taken over the Islands Of Beaufort! While they once avoided all kinds of beautiful plants that thrived here, they now eat many plants that they did not eat in the past. With more houses going up, along with nearby housing development and the new shopping mall, the deer have few places to go. Deer will eat whatever they can find simply because there are very few plants that deer will not consume if they are food-stressed.

Deterring Deer (cont'd)

Ideal habitat for deer is forest edges rather than dense, old-growth forest. Many populations of deer flourish in urban areas because of the diversity in plant foods, and lower, or no hunting pressure. Some ideas to ward off the deer include netting, frightening devices, using deer repellents, protecting trees, or choosing plants deer avoid.

The IOB has recently begun to do less bush hogging since that practice removes natural habitat that deer graze. Deer love to eat acorns, fallen leaves, mushrooms, yaupon holly berries, grasses, saplings, herbs, and treetops that fall to the ground. We are also trying to keep large fallen trunks, when they don't detract from the neighborhood appearance, since they rot in place, making the soil more fertile and providing fungi for hungry deer and insects for birds and other wildlife. Some housing developments with severe damage have obtained permits from SCDNR Wildlife Management to cull the herds or have tried birth control methods. Deer that are culled must be processed, and the venison is donated to local food banks.

NETTING: Netting may work temporarily and is useful when putting in young/new plants, due to their tender leaves. But long term garden netting is a risk to wildlife. (Note: A friend in Beaufort had to cut the netting around a snake to release it.)



Snakes and other animals can get caught in netting



Buck rubbing antlers on a tree

TREE PROTECTION: Protect young individual trees with woven-wire or plastic cylinders at least six feet high. The barrier can help with male deer that rub their antlers on trees during the fall breeding season. Mature bucks do this to serve as a form of communication both through smell and visual display. When a buck rubs his antlers on a tree, the bone shreds the bark and leaves behind an odor that tells other deer the buck was there. The antlers shed in mid to late winter.

FRIGHTENING DEVICES: Noises and strobes are only minimally effective. Deer acclimate quickly to noises and new features in the environment, especially if they are motivated by hunger.

REPELLENTS: Several repellents are registered for use to prevent deer damage to plants. Effectiveness is dependent on alternative food resources, deer densities, habituation, and motivation of individual deer. It doesn't hurt to spray newly planted shrubs, small trees and plants for the first few weeks. Nurseries use extra fertilizer (nitrogen) in their potted plants and deer are attracted to nitrogen and the young tender leaves.

Deterring Deer (cont'd)



Deer, especially fawns, love tender leaves, in your yard and the woods

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLANTS: The most effective thing we can do as homeowners is plant shrubs and flowers that the deer aren't eating. This may be due to thorns, tough leaves, overpowering smell, and furry or rough texture. Look around the neighborhood and you will see a wide variety of plants that do well in the IOB. What grows on Dataw, Habersham or at Cottage Farm may not work here. Many neighbors in the IOB have created beautiful landscapes with plants that don't attract deer. A lot of us come from another part of the country and are accustomed to roses, azaleas and hydrangea, but the plants that work best in Beaufort can be just as attractive and more forgiving. There is a huge list of proven winners. Of course, let's not forget the best defense for the backyard: A fence with a dog that is largely present. (*The best frightening device!*)

The ARB indicates deer resistant plants in its guidelines. (It hasn't had an update in the last few years and since then the deer have become even more prolific, but it can be a good start.) The guidelines can be found on the Islands of Beaufort website under BUILDING , and the list is found in Appendix F. While the list is very helpful, your best bet is to consult neighbors with landscape success about plants that thrive here. Neighbors next door can be especially helpful since deer have "pathways" and visit different parts of our island more frequently.

Fall Tips:

- Cut back irrigation in winter
- Use fallen pine straw as mulch
- Mulch fallen leaves rather than bag them
- Leave seed heads on flowers for the birds and insects this winter



Winter birds enjoy leftover seed heads and shrubs benefit from mulched leaves

Grounds & Landscape Committee Wishes Y'all a Happy Holiday and New Year!

Resources

<https://ask2.extension.org/kb/faq.php?id=607473>

<https://www.widopenspaces.com/buck-rubs/>

<https://www.fieldandstream.com/conservation/what-do-deer-eat/>

<http://wildlifecontroltraining.com/wildlife-species/deer/>

<https://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/publications/nuisance/deer.pdf>

<https://www.islandpacket.com/sports/recreation/outdoors/article57507133.html#storylink=cpy>

<http://www.islandsofbeaufort.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-IOB-Guidelines-.pdf>