

Drivers warned about deer danger



Police in East Herts are warning motorists about the heightened risk of collisions involving deer at this time of year.

October through to December is considered a high-risk period as deer will be on the move for the autumn mating season, also known as the rut. The highest risk of a deer-vehicle collision is between sunset and midnight, and the hours shortly before and after sunrise.

East Herts Rural Sergeant Duncan Wallace said: “We have a very large deer population in East Herts, with many deer crossing points on key roads including the A10. With most deer movement coinciding with key commuting hours, we are urging drivers to be more aware so that they can complete their journeys on our roads safely and without incident.

“Deer are highly active at this time of the year, meaning they can suddenly appear on the road, at both dawn and dusk. Also where there is one deer there is usually more and whole herds have been known to cross roads all together.

“Highways England estimate that across the UK there could be up to 74,000 deer-related motor vehicle accidents this year alone, resulting in 400 to 700 human injuries and 20 deaths. The combined economic impact of injury accidents and car damage is likely to exceed £50 million a year.”

Highways England's advice to drivers is:

- when you see deer warning signs or are travelling through a heavily wooded or forested stretch of road, check your speed and stay alert
- if your headlights are on, use full-beams when you can; but dip them if you see deer, as they may 'freeze'
- more deer may follow the first one you see
- be prepared to stop; try not to suddenly swerve to avoid a deer, hitting oncoming traffic or another obstacle could be even worse
- if you have to stop, use your hazard warning lights
- do not approach an injured deer – it could be dangerous

If you need to report a deer vehicle collision or to find out more on safety advice please visit [the Deer Aware website](#), which exists to offer basic advice on how to avoid a collision and to collect data on the number of accidents.