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DEER IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(1)

“Scientists have estimated that, before the arrival of Europeans, North America supported some 40 million whitetail and 10 million mule deer. By 1908 – because of unregulated hunting with modern firearms and the mass slaughter, especially in the West, of millions of deer for their hides alone (which were valued at as little as a dollar each) – North America’s deer population had plummeted to a scant half million, and that figure represented the total of all species.”

Ref: David Peterson – North American Deer; Mule, Whitetail and Coastal Blacktail Deer – Guide to the types of deer in our continent, including whitetail, blacktail, mule, antlers and racks.

(2)

Annual estimates of deer damage are reported to exceed \$2 billion nationwide, including \$1 billion in car damages, more than \$100 million in agricultural crop damage, \$750 million in damage to the timber industry, and more than \$250 million in damage to metropolitan households (eg: landscape plantings). These estimates are conservative, and it is often difficult to obtain reliable statistics for wildlife-related losses.

Ref: White-Tailed Deer, Wildlife Damage Management Fact Sheet Series, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, N.Y. 2001 by Cornell University.

(3)

By the early 1900s, states began to limit hunting and open space began being preserved (as opposed to all of it being cleared for agriculture). In just a few decades, about 30 states had not only revived their deer populations, they had too many of them.

Ref: SixWise.com

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According to the Jack H. Berryman Institute for Wildlife Damage Management, white-tailed deer provided \$19.7 billion in benefits to the U.S. public in 1993. This was broken down to \$2.4 billion for hunter expenditures, \$236 million in value for the meat, \$4.3 billion for value of hunter recreation and \$12.8 billion for non-hunting recreation.

Ref: USDA Wildlife Services

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The deer herd is an economic engine for all of Maine. The health of Maine’s deer herd drives the fall hunting season, attracting more than 170,000 hunters. Increasingly, watching deer and feeding deer are becoming more popular throughout the state as well.

Ref: February 27, 2011 Maine Today Media, Inc.