

Overview of the white-tailed deer

[Life](#), [Hobby](#)



In this report, I will be talking about the white-tailed deer. For white-tailed deer, I have always loved hunting growing up. My grandfather first took me out to some land and had me patiently sit in a stand when I was only 5 years old. As a kid who was only in love with Power Rangers and SpongeBob at the time, as soon as I sat in that stand for the first time and saw that white-tailed doe walk out, I immediately fell in love with the outdoors and deer hunting.

The white-tailed deer are also known for their scientific name being *Odocoileus virginianus*. These animals belong to the Phylum Chordata, to the Class Mammalia, to the Order Artiodactyla, to the Family Cervidae, and to the Genus *Odocoileinae* (Nature Works). Also known as the Virginia deer, these animals are known to have a tan-ish color in the summer and gray in the winter, with white on their necks and bellies (Nature Works). The name of the white-tail deer comes from, well, the fact that they have white coloring on their tails. You can see this white colored tail when the tail is pointed up, as they use when they are running and galloping through the woods and fields. Males, also known to be bucks, can grow up to be over 300 pounds while females, also known to be doe, can be up to 200 pounds (Nature Works). The white-tail deer can be found in many parts in many parts of North America, including lower parts of Canada and most of the United States of America, and their population even extends down to parts of South America. When it comes to their habitat, it can be anything from the forest to swamp land to even the edges of the city. They usually will try to sleep and stay in thick grassed areas for protection from predators who may be on the hunt. For the winter, they tend to go into the forest to be protected by the

canopies of the trees from the harsh weather conditions the winter can bring (University of Wisconsin Stevens Point).

They also use this technique of raising their tails as what is called a “ flag.” Why do they do this? In Keith L. Bildstein’s book *The American Naturalist*, Bildstein goes into great detail about these animals and the four reasons as to why the white-tailed deer might “ flag”:

1. Flash Behavior: the tail is to throw off the predator (predators can be known as coyotes, bobcats or even humans) by the sudden raise of the tail and then for the deer to run off and hide his/her tail.
2. Alarm Signal: it is a warning to those around the deer that a predator is around.
3. Cohesive Signal: to tell surrounding deer to keep together as a group.
4. Detection Signal: with a predator far away but approaching, the white-tailed deer signals to the predator that it knows it is nearby and will go into flight (run away) if the predator comes too close. The diet of a white-tailed deer is herbivores, which means their diet consist of twigs, leaves, and other plants. One plant that hunters use when it comes to hunting the white-tailed deer is corn, as they will plant it out in fields and trails. White-tailed deer normally only roam around during dawn and dusk and do most of their eating during these times.

As human ecosystems start clashing and taking over the ecosystems of these deer, it has been known that the white-tailed deer will eat from gardens of backyards and farms (Nature Works). Mating season with white-tailed deer is very interesting. The season when male breed is known as the

“ rut” in which they have an increase in testosterone and want to mate. Their seasonality normally goes from October through December. The female will usually give offspring to about one to three fawns at a time within a 200-day period. When it comes to the male wanting to reproduce, they will try to claim their ground so that they can choose who they mate with. Although deer are not known to be aggressive, it is normal to have bucks fight each other by attacking each other with their antlers during rut to gain dominance over one another to gain the land and from that first choice in mating with their doe of choice.