

White-tailed and Mule Deer

Urban Wildlife Relationships



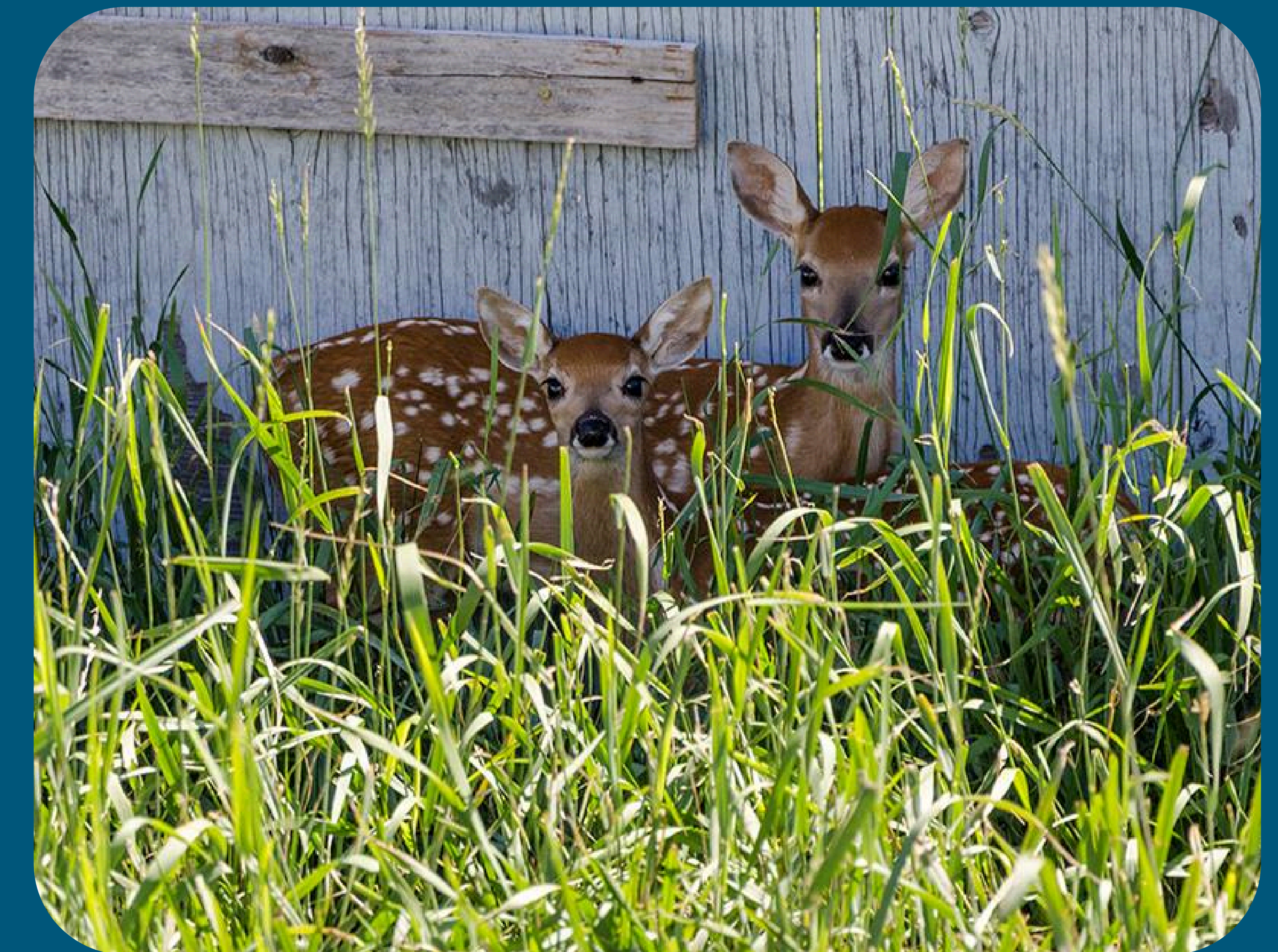
Did you know?

Only male deer, known as bucks, grow antlers and they shed them every year. They grow extremely fast at a rate of up to 1.25 centimetres per day.



Did you know?

Both species are distributed throughout Alberta's prairies, parklands, and forests. They are abundant around river valleys and forest edges.



Did you know?

Baby deer, known as fawns, are covered in white spots which help them camouflage into the understory. These spots remain for the first 90 to 120 days of life.

AIWC Blogs

[Spotting the Difference: A Guide to Alberta's Mule Deer and Whitetails Deer Fawns 2026](#)

Telling White-tailed Deer and Mule Deer Apart:

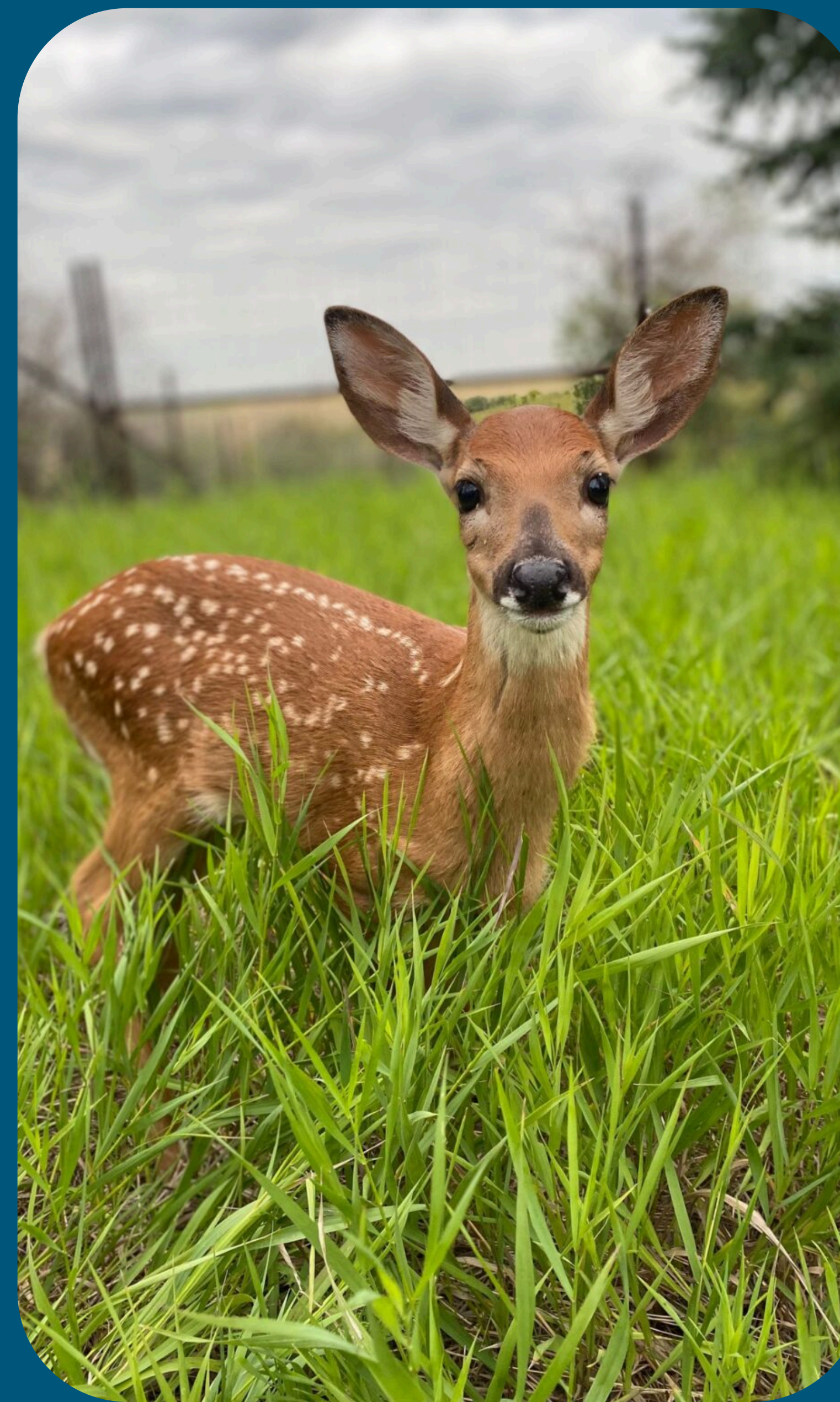
1. Mule buck antlers have dichotomous branching (Y-shaped) while white-tailed antlers always grow from one main beam.
2. White-tailed deer have small and rounded ears while mule deer have long “mule-like” ears.
3. Mule deer have a white rump while white-tailed deer have brown rumps.
4. White-tailed deer have wide brown tails with a white underside, while mule deer have a thinner rope-like tail that is black at the tip.

There are **5 members** of the deer (Cervidae) family native to Alberta. These are: mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, moose, and caribou.

Mule Deer Fawn



White-tail Deer Fawn



Ecological Niche

Deer act as a primary consumer in the province. They are a key prey species for many of the large predators like cougars, wolves, and bears. By consuming plant matter, they shape the understory vegetation by pruning and trimming trees, shrubs, and forbs. Many deer in Alberta are affected by chronic wasting disease, a serious fatal disease that affects members of the deer family.

Does This Fawn Need Assistance?

Mother deer will regularly leave their fawns unattended. Signs a fawn needs help are obvious injury, mother is confirmed deceased, or they have been left uncared for over 24 hours. If any of these are the case, call AIWC.

Human Wildlife Conflicts

- Enhancement of natural green spaces increases the likelihood of encountering deer in your neighborhood.
- Fencing your yard or garden can prevent deer from eating vegetation.
- Soap shavings or other smelly non-toxic deterrents can be placed around the garden to encourage deer to forage somewhere else.



**ALBERTA INSTITUTE
FOR WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION**

CONTACT US

(403) 946-2361

www.aiwc.ca

info@aiwc.ca