



Ferrum Nature Society

Dedicated to the appreciation and conservation of our natural world

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• Happy Thanksgiving

• To all FNS members and their families and friends!!!

Nature's Events:

Feathered Friends Return!!!!

If you haven't started filling your winter bird feeders, now is the time to start. Many resident birds are utilizing feeders, as well as some of our old migratory friends. We now have White throated sparrows and Juncos back in the area.

Sky Calendar:

Full Moon:

November 8th - known as the Beaver moon.

Total Eclipse of the Moon:

November 8th not only marks the full moon this month but we will be treated to a full lunar eclipse that night from around 7:30 to 9:30pm. Lets hope for some nice clear skies so we can all enjoy this rare occurrence.

White-tailed Deer Hunting Season

By Ryan Brown

It's a quiet November morning. While you are walking to class, you see people dressed in camouflaged clothing and you hear a gun shot in the mountains, and you soon realize that deer hunting season has begun.

There are some people that believe deer hunting is a very unfair and cruel sport. Back when hunting animals such as deer was the primary source for food, there were few people that objected to it. Today, you can drive down the road and pass three McDonald's, a Burger King, and a grocery store. Getting food today is a lot easier than before. Besides a source of food, if you reflect on deer hunting a little further, you may not think so badly about it.

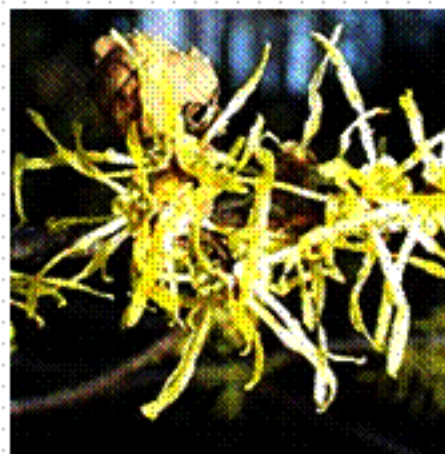
The deer population in our area needs to be maintained at a

certain limit. Most of the East coast of the U.S. is still overpopulated with deer despite the widespread practice of hunting. The main natural predators of white-tailed deer were wolves and large cats, species which are now missing from our forests. The human species is the only major predator that deer have left.

The over-population of deer causes several problems. Deer-car collisions cause property losses and higher insurance premiums. In winter, deer feed mostly on tree seedlings and saplings, which can lead to poor regeneration of our forests. Deer have also learned to adapt very well to living in close proximity to people. They can damage a wide variety of agricultural crops, fruit trees, nursery stock, landscape plants and home vegetable gardens. Roanoke and Bedford are taking a step to cut down the overpopulation by using sharp shooters and controlled hunting around the city. Deer that are

shot are donated to the Feed the Hungry Foundation.

While still providing a good source of food, deer hunting today is favorite recreational activity, connecting hunters with the outdoors and family traditions. Hunting also helps stabilize the population. The next time that you hear a gun shot and think that a poor deer has been cruelly shot, begin to think about the stability of the forests or how nervous you are when you drive at night on a mountain road.



Witch Hazel is a smallish (5-10 ft tall) understory tree that is characterized this time of year by its pale greenish-gold flowers that add a faint fragrance to these autumn days. These flowers appear after the ovate, wavy margined leaves have turned yellow and begun to droop. Along side these 1/2 inch

Plant of the Month:

Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)

- Nell Fredericksen

long crinkly petaled flowers are the just ripening fruits of last year. These fruits are a hairy, dull brown capsule and contain two shiny black seeds each that are ejected in a violent explosion to a distance of around 20 feet.

Witch Hazel has a long history of medicinal and magical uses. Anyone who has tried to find underground water on their property may have employed a witching stick - a forked branch from a Witch Hazel tree that has grown north to south so that it has had the influence of the rising and setting sun. Holding the two ends of the fork, you can walk along until

the end is "pulled" down by either underground running water or maybe even a gold vein!

More commonly known is Witch Hazel extract, available in most pharmacies today. This extract is obtained from the leaves and is believed to have healing properties for external ailments such as sprains, bruises, cuts and burns, as well as hemorrhoids. Modern medicine attributes these healing properties to the alcohol used for the extraction but with its nice fragrance and soothing feel, I like to keep a bottle on hand in my medicine cabinet.

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