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Oh, Deer — They're More Likely to Be in Your Headlights This Time of Year

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Tagged as : [Deer 2019](#), [Deer Hazard for Drivers 2019](#)

Date : November 4, 2019

It's autumn and deer collisions in Connecticut occur with wild abandon! That's because love is in the air for our deer friends during deer mating season.

An AAA Northeast crash data analysis has found 72% of deer crashes generally occur outside daylight hours, especially during the 5 to 7 p.m. commute.

Based on statistics from the UCONN Crash Data Repository, 208 deer crashes occurred in Connecticut in November 2018 — the most of any month last year. That figure equates to one deer crash every four hours.

That number is likely underestimated significantly since many deer crashes go unreported. Earlier this fall, the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) estimated there were more than 3,500

deer strikes in Connecticut last year.

“Drivers need to be especially vigilant at dusk,” says Fran Mayko, AAA Northeast’s spokeswoman. “Deer present dangers to you and to your vehicle so it behooves everyone to be prepared since such crashes can be costly, even deadly.”

In Connecticut, the highest number of reported strikes occurred in Hartford County (63), followed by Fairfield County (62) and New Haven County (41).

To avoid a deer crash, you should take precautions as you would to avoid any type of crash, said Mayko.

- Scan the road ahead of you, including the shoulder. Deer can very well dash out from adjacent wooded areas.
- Be especially attentive in the early morning and evening hours, prime commuting times.
- Be careful rounding curves and climbing hills where visibility is limited.
- One long blast on your horn may frighten animals away from your car if you spy them early enough.
- If a collision can’t be avoided, apply your brakes firmly and try to remain in your lane. Swerving to avoid the animal may cause you to lose control of your vehicle and create a more serious crash.
- Report any deer-related collisions to local, state or DEEP conservation officers.

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with 66 offices in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing more than 6 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, finance, and auto-related services. In Connecticut, we serve a half-million members living in is Fairfield, New Haven, and Litchfield counties.