

# White-Tailed Deer Biology and Urban Management

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# History

## ○ Overhunted

- Low populations by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

## ○ Protective measures by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

- Closed season, bag limits
- Hunting Licenses
- Game Wardens
- Trapping & restocking



# Present Day

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- ◉ Most numerous big game animal
- ◉ Most popular species of wildlife
- ◉ Important recreationally and economically

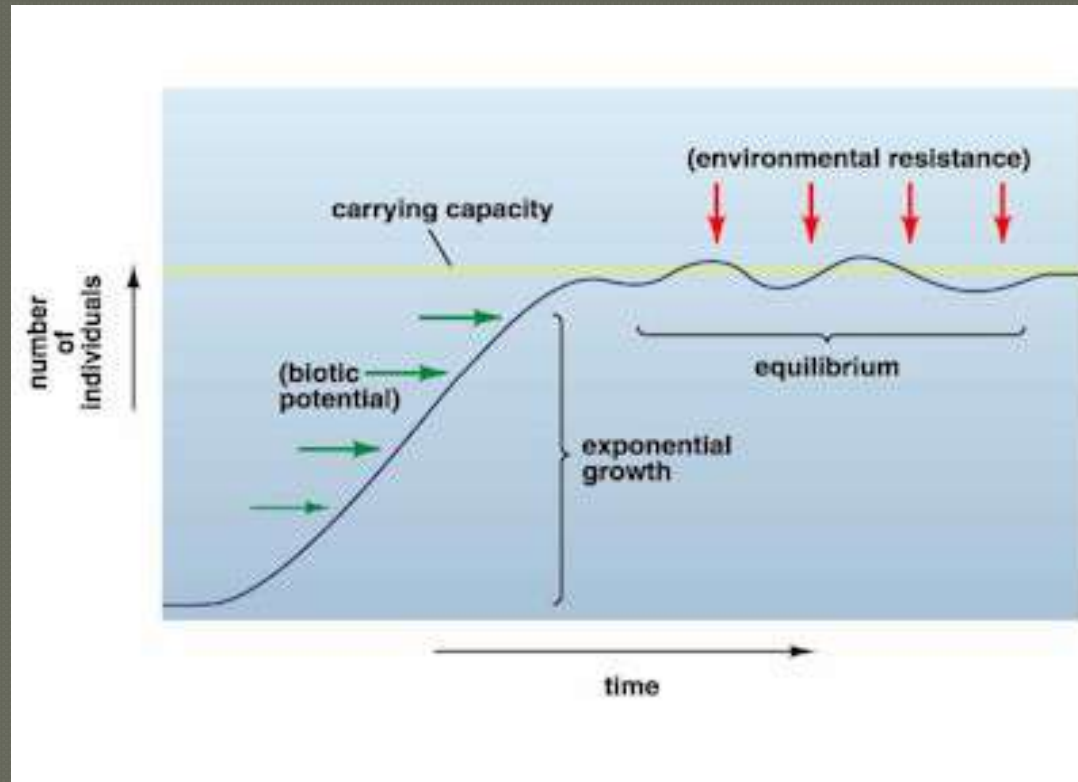


# White-tailed Deer Biology

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- **Biological Carrying Capacity (BCC)**
  - Maximum # of individuals the habitat can support without the habitat being damaged.
  - Reproduction decreases as population approaches BCC.
  - Mortality increases as population exceeds BCC.

# Biological Carrying Capacity



# White-tailed Deer Biology

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## ◉ Cultural Carrying Capacity

- Maximum # of individuals society will accept in a given area



# White-tailed Deer Biology

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## ◉ Food Habits

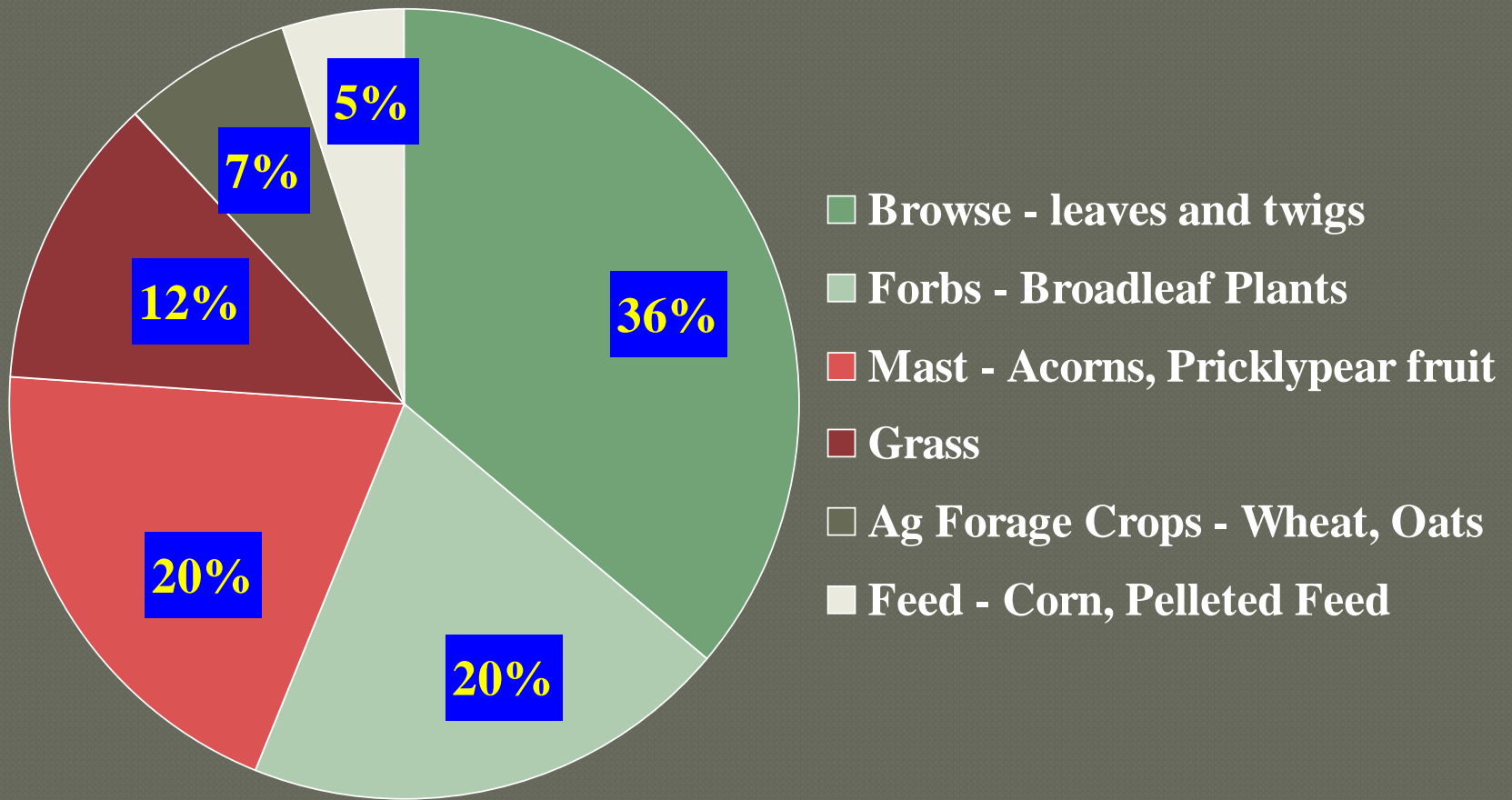
- High protein (12%)
- Forbs (broad-leaved plants) and browse (woody plants)

## ◉ Water

## ◉ Cover

- Protection (dense cover nearby)
- Fawning (mid-tall grassy areas)

# Forage Classes used by WT Deer





# White-tailed Deer Biology

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## ○ Reproduction

- Oct. - Jan. (peak in Nov.)
- Twins

## ○ Edwards Plateau Population

- Trend shows population increasing over the last 30 years



# Deer Human Issues

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- Landscape damage

- \$250 million in damage nationwide

- Vehicle collisions

- Have jumped 33% in the last 10 years in Texas

- Human safety

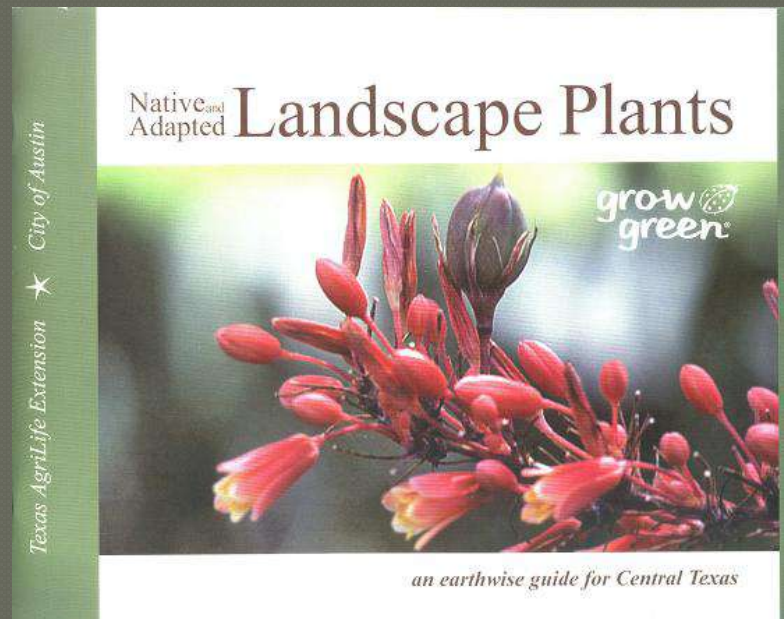
- Attacks
  - Aggressive males during rut
- Disease
  - Lyme disease
    - Black-legged tick



# Urban Deer Management

## ○ Landscapes

- Use deer resistant plants
- Protect sensitive plants (enclosures)



# Urban Deer Management

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- ◉ Limit feeding of deer
  - 12% protein
  - Corn “Beer for Deer”
  - Acidosis
  - Aflatoxin
  - Habituates deer to people



# Urban Deer Management

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## ◉ Fencing

- Limit deer movement
  - Can make the population easier to manage
  - Individuals cannot leave



# Urban Deer Management

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## ○ Hunting

- Maximize human safety, humaneness and efficiency
- City ordinances
- No hunting on properties 10 acres or less in Comal County



# Urban Deer Management

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## ◉ Texas Parks and Wildlife Permits

- Trap, Transport, Transplant (TTT)
  - Deer are trapped and released at a new site
  - Site needs to be inspected
  - 10% tested for CWD
- Trap, Transport, Process (TTP)
  - Deer are trapped and taken to processing facility
  - Meat is donated to charity
  - No CWD testing

# Urban Deer Management

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## ◉ Be proactive!

- Form a deer management committee
- Survey residents
- Conduct surveys for a population estimate
- Keep track of collisions with deer
- Limit feeding of deer
- Use “deer resistant” plants when landscaping