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ND Game and Fish calendar, How to Fish the Red River, Feeding Deer

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department provided River Keepers with copies of their 2004 calendar. They normally cost \$3. If you want a copy, stop by the office. They are free until they are gone.

It's not too early to start thinking about spring fishing! Attend the Fargo Park District's class "How to Fish the Red River". It starts March 16 and continues through April 13 on Tuesday evenings, 7-9 p.m., \$35 for adult and \$25 for those under 16. Call 241-1350 for more information.

Occasionally we get calls regarding the practice of deer feeding, particularly in the winter. Deer frequent the banks of the Red River, both in and outside the city limits. In general the practice is discouraged. This press release from the MN DNR explains the problems associated with this activity.

Think Twice Before Feeding Deer

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages people who feed or are considering feeding deer to think twice before starting or continuing the practice. White tailed deer are highly adaptive animals that are "designed" to survive most harsh Minnesota winters. The insulating qualities of their hair and body fat, behavioral changes related to deep snow and cold temperatures, and the metabolic slow down that occurs as winter progresses, all aid in their survival over winter. During mild winters such as the ones we have experienced the past few years, deer winter mortality has been extremely low, resulting in some of the highest deer populations in history. Artificial feeding tends to congregate deer in numbers higher than would occur naturally. Bringing individual animals into close contact with one another has consequences. This contact increases the chance for the spread of disease. In addition, the concentration of deer in relatively small areas resulting from feeding puts increased pressure on the vegetation in the immediate vicinity. This often times results in over browsing of plants such as white pine, northern white cedar, jack pine and numerous shrubs. If feeding is occurring in a residential area, this browsing often times focuses on neighbors' gardens, ornamental trees and shrubs. Because most of us live on or near well-traveled roads, feeding tends to put deer and motor vehicle operators in situations where collisions are much more likely to occur. Few people consider this very real safety hazard for our neighbors, friends and deer when they start feeding the animals.

If you are already feeding deer or considering starting, the DNR encourages you to consider these ramifications. Keep in mind the impacts to neighbors, vehicles, gardens and the deer themselves.

[If you would like to be taken off this e-new list or have comments please respond to this e-mail.](#)

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