

Welcome to Girl Scout Troop 1727's Animal Trail! This is post number 1/8.

### **White Tailed Deer (Odocoileus Virginianus)**

Have you ever wondered why white tailed deer have their name? It's because the bottom side of the deer's tail is always white fur. White tail deer coats have a color change in the middle of the year from a light red/brown to a gray color. You can tell if a white tailed deer is a male if it has a white stripe on its nose or antlers. White tailed deer are also primary consumers in the food chain. This means that they eat plants like fruits, twigs, buds, and shrubs. Their main predator is the coyote.

**White tailed deer run fast if a coyote is nearby. Can you run fast?**

White tailed deer are known for eating plants in peoples' yards and creating problems by biting things, but deer do many other things to help in our ecosystems. For example, white tailed Deer help new plants to grow, and their droppings help the soil to grow more plants. The brush (medium sized plants) that they eat normally blocks the sun for little plants, but with the deer eating the brush, little plants have enough sun to grow.

In Tega Cay there are many wild deer. As you head out into nature you should know a few things. The first thing to know is when a fawn (baby deer) is alone, you should let it stay there. Many people believe you should pick it up, but this action can actually cause the mother to leave their fawn. The second thing is that if you want deer to stay away from your garden, use marigold flowers. The deer hate the smell and will leave your plants alone.

**Fun Fact: White tailed deer live about 10 years.**

