

Press Release

October, 2014

Notice on behalf of The Deer Initiative for England and Wales

South West England roads named for highest reported Deer Vehicle Collisions

Across the UK it's estimated there could be between 40,000 - 74,000 deer-related motor vehicle accidents, resulting in several hundred human injuries and several human fatalities each year. Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) are very widespread throughout almost all parts of England as well as increasing parts of Wales. The Deer Initiative's (DI) research of reported Deer Vehicle Collisions for South West England 2008 – 2013 has been released listing the top areas:



Locations of reported deer road casualties and related DVCs (grey stars). The most prominent clusters across the country where highest localised tolls of deer incidents have been recorded per 5km tetrad are highlighted in red.

Haldon Forest and Hill: A38 Kennford to Chudleigh; A380 Kennford to Ashcombe

The Mendips: Mendips – Cheddar, and esp. Burrington Combe

Wareham – Purbecks: A35 and A351 and minor roads Purbeck

Forest of Dean: All roads through FoD in particular A4136, B4226, b4234

The DI together with the Highways Agency is reminding motorists to be 'Deer Aware' as collisions between deer and vehicles increase in England and Wales at this time of year. October through to December is considered a high-risk time as many deer will be on the move to and from rutting grounds during the autumn mating season.

Dr Jochen Langbein, who has been working with the DI on Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) for the past 10 years, said "Aside from the surge in activity by our three largest deer species (fallow, sika and red deer) during their autumn rut, as days shorten and the clocks go back, peak traffic times also coincide with dawn and dusk when activity of all deer species is at its daily peak".

The list of the areas with the most reports remains very preliminary, as since cessation of data collection at end 2010 the new study funded from 2014 has recently restarted. More data input is

required from organisations and individuals to build a fuller picture of the present situation and trends.

For a fuller list of road names or areas with the highest numbers of DVC reports in your region please visit the Deer Initiative website www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk

The DI says be 'Deer Aware'. Top tips are:

- Be aware that further deer may well cross after the one you may have notice, as deer will more often move around in groups than alone.
- After dark, do use full-beams when there is no opposing traffic. The headlight beam will illuminate the eyes of deer on or near a roadway and provide greater driver reaction time. BUT, when a deer or other animals is noted on the road, dim your headlights as animals startled by the beam may 'freeze' rather than leaving the road.
- Don't over-swerve to avoid a deer. If a collision with the animal seems inevitable, then hit it while maintaining full control of your car. The alternative of swerving into oncoming traffic or a ditch could be even worse. An exception here may be motorcyclists, who are at particular risk when in direct collisions with animals.
- Only break sharply and stop if there is no danger of being hit by following traffic. Try to come to stop as far in front of the animal(s) as possible to enable it to leave the roadside without panic
- Report any deer-vehicle collisions to the police, who will contact the local person who can best help with an injured deer at the roadside. Do not approach an injured deer yourself it may be dangerous.

If you wish to report a Deer Vehicle Collision or to find out more on safety advice please visit

www.deeraware.com

END

Notes for editors:

The Deer Initiative

The Deer Initiative is a broad partnership of statutory, voluntary and private sector interests dedicated to 'ensuring the delivery of a sustainable wild deer population in England and Wales' (www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk). The Partners include such diverse organisations as the RSPCA, RSPB and The Highways Agency. All the members of the Partnership abide by the principles of the Deer Accord and encourage others to share their commitment and priorities as an integral part of their management of deer.

The DI will be using social media to spread the message and share tips about being Deer Aware.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DeerInitiative>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DeerAwareUK>

For further details contact our Media Officer:

Katie Barlow

Tel: 01691 887112

E-mail: media@thedeerinitiative.co.uk