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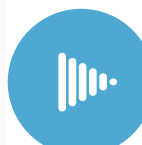
NEWS > CONNECTICUT NEWS

CT officials call recent crashes involving deer on I-84 ‘unusual.’ Here’s why



Signs for Rt. I-84 in Plainville on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024. (Aaron Flaum/Hartford Courant)

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After a pair of [crashes involving deer](#) on Interstate 84 snarled traffic on Wednesday morning, state officials are calling the incident “unusual” but said that collisions involving deer are more common this time of year.

The crashes were reported shortly before 6:20 a.m. on the eastbound side of the highway between Exits 36 and 37, according to [Connecticut State Police](#) and the [Connecticut Department of Transportation](#). According to state police, two crashes involving motor vehicles striking deer were reported. None of the vehicle occupants reported being injured.

A spokesperson with the state’s [Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#) said that deer may be having trouble navigating the icy snow and may look for places that are shoveled or plowed for easier footing.

“That is more likely at the local level than them using highways like I-84, though. We suspect that this was just an unusual deer-motor vehicle accident. We have heard of multiple deer that have been seen in the Farmington-New Britain area,” a DEEP spokesperson told the Courant.

“It is more common this time of year for deer to move in groups. It’s always good for motorists to be alert for deer near roadways, especially at dawn and dusk and if they see one cross a road to expect that more may be following it and slow down,” the spokesperson said.

[The mating, or rutting, season](#) for deer in Connecticut runs from late October to mid-December, with the peak being the last two weeks in November, according to the state’s DEEP. During this time, mature bucks become increasingly active and less cautious to establish dominance within their territory. Deer also commonly abandon typical daytime habits and begin moving about in search of a mate.

Despite the mating season being largely over, deer can still mate through the winter months, according to DEEP’s deer factsheet. During the rut, bucks are more active and try to herd does into their territory. A rut has three phases including pre-rut, peak rut, and post-rut. Throughout the rut season, bucks can become much more erratic and end up crossing busy roadways

According to data from AAA, between 2019 and 2023, there were 4,791 deer crashes in Connecticut. The number of crashes varies from year to year, with 2022 having the most crashes and 2023 having the fewest. While deer collisions can happen throughout the year, the state tends to see a spike in the fall, with 417 deer-related crashes between October and December of 2023, AAA data shows.

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