

[About your deer, part 1, declining population](#) July 13, 2014 South Carolina

Times and Democrat

... Dr. Charles Ruth who is the project manager for deer ...says ... predominant factors in this decline... seems to be habitat loss due to the many acres that are planted in ten-year old and older planted pine. These areas are basically wildlife deserts... The second major factor is the migration of coyotes into our state over the last decade...

[Coyote impact on deer unclear, but biologists still recommend population control](#)

August 17, 2013 South Carolina, Collection Today

... A six-year study into the impact coyote predation is having on whitetail deer fawn mortality rates hasn't yielded the clear picture for which biologists had hoped.

Charles Ruth, wildlife biologist ... all he can recommend for hunters and landowners concerned about coyotes do is be thorough in their efforts to remove them, as it will have at least some positive impact on the deer herd, albeit maybe not as much as originally suspected...

[SCDNR reports a decline of deer population, rise in coyotes](#) May 14, 2013 South

Carolina, WMBF

.... Wildlife experts contribute this decline to the influx of coyote and changes in vegetation ... Wildlife experts said coyotes are not indigenous to South Carolina...

[Coyotes are new players in deer management](#) August 23, 2012 South Carolina, MyrtleBeachOnline.com, Gregg Holshouser

... The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources is going on five years into an extensive study on fawn mortality being conducted on the Savannah River Site in Aiken and Barnwell counties.... Data from the study indicates approximately 70 percent of all fawns are dying by the age of 10 weeks with coyotes being responsible for approximately 80 percent of these mortalities. Coyotes likely first appeared in South Carolina in the late 1970s and have since spread to where they are prevalent in all 46 counties. ...

[Coyotes Prey Heavily on Southeast's Deer Fawns](#) April 19, 2012 South Carolina, Bowhunting.Com

... Coyotes in some Southeastern regions prey so heavily on newborn whitetails that less than one in five fawns lives four months... John Kilgo, a wildlife researcher with the USDA Forest Service in South Carolina said: "My guess is that the skeptics haven't yet seen places that once had deer but don't anymore. The data we collected at the Savannah River Site (South Carolina) showed it took a 75 percent harvest reduction [of coyotes] by hunters to level the population decline....

[Predation by coyotes on white-tailed deer neonates in South Carolina](#) May, 2012 Journal of Wildlife Management, Kilgo, J. C., Ray, H. S., Vukovich, M., Goode, M. J. and Ruth, C.

. From 2006 to 2009, we radio-monitored 91 neonates captured with the aid of vaginal implant transmitters in pregnant adult females and opportunistic searches.... Predation by coyotes was the most frequent cause of death among the 70 monitored neonates that died, definitively accounting for 37% of all mortalities and potentially accounting for as much as 80% when also including probable coyote predation. Predation by bobcats (*Felis rufus*) accounted for 7% (definitive) to 9% (including probable bobcat predation) of mortalities. The level of coyote-induced mortality we observed is consistent with the low recruitment rates exhibited in the SRS deer population since establishment of coyotes at the site. If representative of recruitment rates across South Carolina, current harvest levels appear unsustainable. This understanding is consistent with the recent declining trend in the statewide deer population. The effects of coyote predation on recruitment should be considered when setting harvest goals, regardless of whether local deer population size is currently above or below desired levels, because coyotes can substantially reduce fawn recruitment.

[Time to correct coyote comments](#) January 8, 2012 South Carolina, Aiken Standard

John C. Kilgo of the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station wrote an excellent commentary titled "Can Coyotes Affect Deer Populations in Southeastern North America?" that was published in the Journal of Wildlife Management. He suggests that coyotes may be having an impact on the popular game species. The research by him and his colleagues found that when coyotes become prevalent they prey heavily on deer fawns and at the same time deer populations decline

[Bill makes it easier for landowners to kill coyote as they threaten SC's wildlife](#) April 27, 2011 South Carolina, Management, Greenfield Daily Reporter

Hunters routinely kill coyote during the state's open season now while hunting other game. Coyote are having an impact on the state's deer population. A three-year study by the Department of Natural Resources shows coyote are responsible for most of the deaths of fawns.

[Deer Management meeting set for Oct. 18 in Edgefield](#) October 4, 2011 South Carolina DNR News

Results of similar meetings and surveys conducted across the state indicate that the majority of South Carolina deer hunters support making changes related to future deer management. Although DNR can make recommendations, any changes to the current deer hunting laws require action by the South Carolina General Assembly.

Perhaps the biggest issue that concerns hunters is the unregulated harvest of bucks. Although there is a 5-buck limit prescribed by law in each of the two Upstate Game Zones, these limits are not enforceable without a mandatory tagging system. In the four coastal plain Game Zones state law specifies there is "no limit" on antlered deer. This lack of an enforceable limit on bucks in the Palmetto State is in stark contrast to the approach taken in other states and to the approach taken with other fish and game species in South Carolina that typically have bag limits.

Many hunters believe this situation leads to overexploitation of bucks resulting in poor overall management. Results of the various surveys and public meetings to date have been consistent with a minimum of 70 percent of hunters supporting the concept of a reasonable limit on antlered bucks and the implementation of a tagging program that would provide for enforcement of such a limit.

Other data also supports hunters' desires to see a more conservative approach. Although there are still a few areas in the state that have high deer populations, the overall statewide population has decreased during the last 10 years resulting in an estimated 25 percent reduction. This is likely due to changes in habitat associated with forest composition and growth, urban/suburban development, and many years of extremely liberal deer harvests. Also, coyotes are a recent addition to the landscape in South Carolina and appear to be having a negative impact on deer. Deer in most areas are now well or slightly below the natural carrying capacity.