

## Deer Survey Procedures using Game Cameras in August

There are many different brands and types of game cameras on the market. I recommend doing your homework by asking others what cameras have worked best for them, and/or researching online which cameras are the most reliable. When conducting deer surveys using game cameras in August, please follow the instructions provided below.

1. Position cameras at feeders or near high deer use areas such as food plots, natural food sources, and deer trails at a rate of one camera per 100-160 acres e.g., 2 should be fine for 230 acres).
2. Install cameras and pre-bait the area with corn 4-6 days before you begin taking photographs to maximize the chance of capturing all bucks on film.
3. Position cameras 10 - 15 ft from where the deer will be standing. The goal is to get close-ups of the bucks in order to identify their individual traits. It is more important to see 1 buck close-up than 3 bucks at a distance. Face the camera either north or south to avoid sun glare.
4. Eliminate standing grass, tree limbs, debris, feeders, and other obstructions that may interfere with the complete photograph of deer up to about 50 feet in front of the camera.
5. Set the camera to record date and time. Set the sensor unit to a 5-10 minute delay (10 min. intervals are better for areas with extremely high deer densities such as 1 acre/deer).
6. Photograph deer at each station for 10-14 days. If cameras are limited, each camera may be rotated to a new un-photographed station each 10-day period.
7. Check stations daily to ensure bait is available and cameras are functioning properly.
8. At end of the survey period, review all of the photos in order to use antler characteristics, pelage, and body traits to identify the number of individual bucks photographed. **Do not include unidentifiable deer.** Estimate the number of individual bucks seen in all photos from all cameras taken within the 10-14 day time frame. Call your biologist to arrange an appointment if you need assistance identifying individual bucks in the photo data if this is your first attempt at this survey method.
9. Herd composition data is required in addition to camera data (see Herd Comp Instructions) to derive a density estimate (herd composition data will yield more accurate age-structure and sex-ratio data than what you will get on your camera). ***DO NOT use camera data taken during the month of August at feeders for herd composition data!!***
10. **Send the estimated number of individual bucks and your herd composition data to your biologist no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>.** Do not send pictures to your biologist to review without making prior arrangements.