

Animal Protection

Identifying Damage

DEER DAMAGE. When deer eat shrubs, their teeth gnaw twigs/branches which can result in a smashed appearance. Deer may also rub on the trunks of trees during the winter months if you are in a migration zone, though this is a rare occurrence.

RABBIT DAMAGE. When rabbits eat plants, it looks like someone took a clipper and cut the plant at a diagonal angle.

VOLE & MOUSE DAMAGE. Voles and mice cause damage at the base of the plant. The damage looks like someone scraped bark all the way around the stem or trunk.

If the animal has girdled (removed bark completely around trunk or stem) the plant, that part of the plant (or entire plant) will likely die. The flow of nutrients has been cut off. It is more difficult to identify which animal is the culprit on perennials/annuals since they have soft tissue/stems.

Caging/Wrapping

It is best to cage or wrap plant BEFORE damage occurs. If you live in an area with known animal traffic, prevention is worth the investment. Wrap tree trunks up to a 6' height (standard for deer) in the fall using a tree wrap or hardware cloth (i.e. chicken wire, rabbit wire, deer fencing). Be sure to remove the wrap or hardware cloth in late spring/early summer.

For diagnosis or repellent recommendation, talk to a nursery horticulture staff member.