

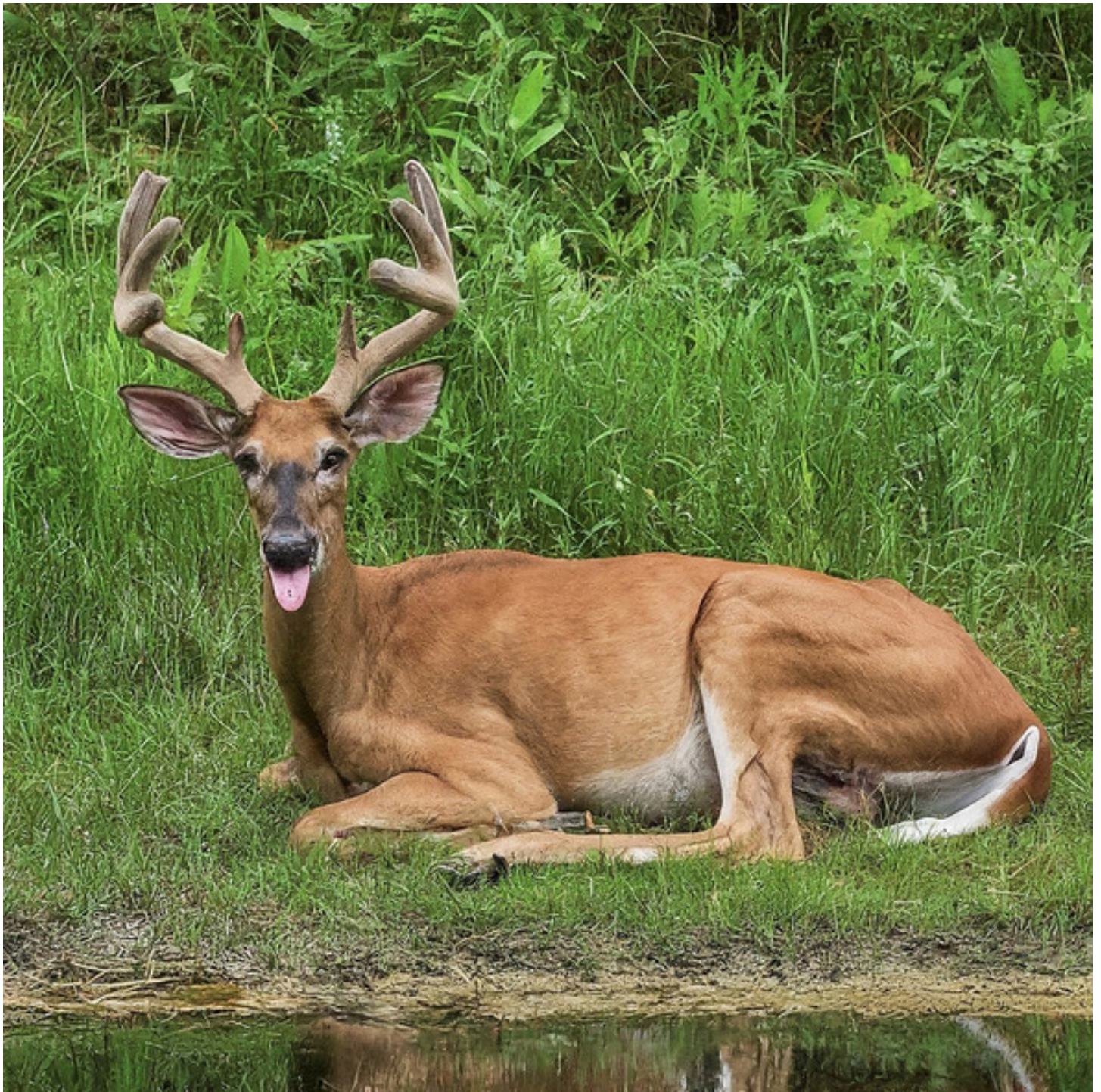
IOWA | DNR

Hunting News

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

July 26, 2024

Help the DNR track hemorrhagic disease



Deer are often found near water sources where they will try to drink away a burning sensation that is a symptom of hemorrhagic disease. Image courtesy of the Iowa DNR.

Hemorrhagic disease, commonly referred to as EHD or Bluetongue, has been impacting deer in Iowa for over a decade, with severe outbreaks occurring in 2012, 2013, 2019, and 2023. As a way to better understand disease impacts, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created an online tool where hunters and landowners can report dead deer resulting from hemorrhagic disease outbreaks.

The new reporting tool, plus an annual dashboard, is linked off the Deer Hunting and Deer Health Webpage (www.iowadnr.gov/deer). Hemorrhagic disease has previously gone underreported and this new tool will help to simplify the process, as well as improve the accuracy of the number of deer and local areas impacted. Submitting these reports assists the DNR in understanding and managing Iowa's deer populations.

Characteristics of hemorrhagic disease are

- Mortalities generally occurring between July and September, occasionally later during unseasonably warm weather
- Finding more than one deer carcass
- Discovering carcasses near a water source

Outbreak severity has varied from year to year and there is no effective treatment or known prevention for wild deer. Hemorrhagic disease typically doesn't impact county deer populations uniformly, meaning that deer on one property may experience a severe outbreak while deer on a neighboring property do not.

Generally, deer populations in areas where outbreaks occurred have recovered to near normal levels within 2-3 years with no additional management actions. However, counties with low or declining deer populations that experience an outbreak may need additional help to facilitate recovery.