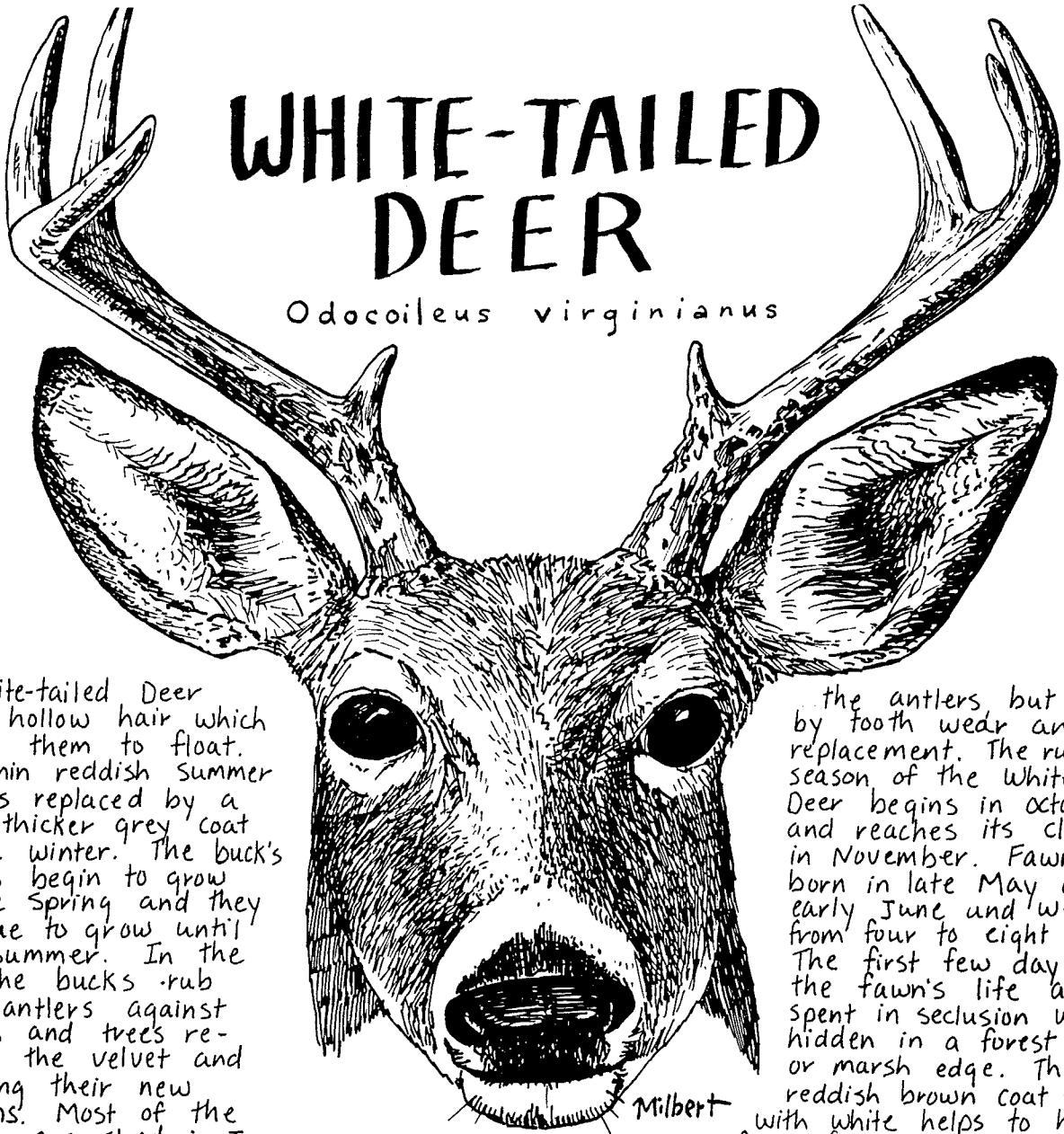


# River Bend Naturalists Notebook

Presented by: RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, Faribault, MN 55021

## WHITE-TAILED DEER

*Odocoileus virginianus*



White-tailed Deer have hollow hair which allows them to float. The thin reddish summer coat is replaced by a much thicker grey coat in the winter. The buck's antlers begin to grow in the Spring and they continue to grow until late summer. In the fall the bucks rub their antlers against shrubs and trees removing the velvet and polishing their new weapons. Most of the antlers are shed in January and February. The dropped antlers are soon eaten by rodents for their supplementary food during the winter, and for that reason are seldom found.

The age of deer isn't determined by the number of points or tines on

the antlers, but rather by tooth wear and replacement. The rutting season of the White-tailed Deer begins in October and reaches its climax in November. Fawns are born in late May or early June and weigh from four to eight pounds. The first few days of the fawn's life are spent in seclusion well hidden in a forest glade or marsh edge. The reddish brown coat spotted with white helps to hide a fawn from prying eyes. The fawn grows rapidly and at three weeks of age is nibbling on the soft new growth of shrubs. Gradually its spotted coat is shed and is replaced by one of longer, heavier and darker hair that is full grown by November.

Milbert