

ANNUAL ANTLER CYCLE

WHETHER YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT WHITETAILS, MULIES, ELK, MOOSE, OR CARIBOU, ANTLEERS ARE AMAZING.

ANTLER FACTS

- Antler is the fastest growing known animal tissue
- If a deer is injured on one side of its body, the antler on the opposite side is likely to be deformed beginning the next growth cycle
- If you surgically transplant the pedicel from the deer's forehead to another part of its body, it will grow an antler there

Unlike horns which are permanent, antlers are shed and regrown once each year. The annual cycle of antler growth can be divided into six stages. The exact time at which the stages occur depends on where a deer lives, the hours of daylight that occur in that location, and the level of stress the animal endures during the winter.

THE STAGES OF GROWTH



FEBRUARY - APRIL

Velvet covered button forms approximately three weeks after old antlers shed.



APRIL - AUGUST

Maximum blood flows through antlers and the tissue is soft and sensitive. Primary antler growth occurs during this time--up to an inch per day in peak season.



LATE AUGUST - EARLY SEPTEMBER

Blood flow to antlers diminishes. Antlers harden under velvet.

EARLY SEPTEMBER - MID-SEPTEMBER

Blood flow to antlers stops completely. Velvet dies and sheds (usually within 24 hour period). Buck polishes hard, exposed antlers.



MID-SEPTEMBER - JANUARY

Hard antler period coincides with rut as well as extent of most hunting seasons.



JANUARY - MARCH

Due to a hormonal shift, antlers shed leaving raw pedicel. Antlers are solidly affixed one moment and fall away the next.