

## Comparison of Deer Repellents Applied to Azaleas and Pansies

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**ABSTRACT:** The effectiveness of commercially-available repellents in reducing browse by white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) was assessed on two varieties of azaleas (*Rhododendron* spp.) and one variety of pansies (*Viola tricolor* var. *hortensis*). Repellents examined included Plantskydd™ (liquid, granular), Deer Stopper™, Milorganite™, and Repels-All™. Evergreen azaleas in 15-gallon containers were observed during 3 trial seasons in October – May, 2012 – 2015. During each trial, individual plants were treated with the maximum recommended level of each repellent, or no repellent, or no repellent with a wire cage to serve as a positive control. At the end of each trial, leaves were stripped from azaleas, dried and weighed to determine level of browsing. While differences ( $P < .05$ ) in leaf weight were evident across seasons, no differences ( $P > .05$ ) could be attributed to any repellent. Repellents (except Milorganite™) were tested on pansies from November – December 2018. Percentage of browsing of plants was determined by visual observation every 7 to 10 days. The control and some treated plants were browsed initially. Virtually all plants, treated or not treated, were extensively damaged by deer browsing within 40 days. Thus, no repellent was found to be 100% effective at reducing deer browsing damage in this study.

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