

A SUMMARY OF DEERYARDING CONDITIONS OF THE STATE, 1941

To the present time, general weather conditions this winter can be defined almost as sharply as the two peninsulas comprising the state. General deer-yarding conditions and deer welfare, in the final analysis, will very likely adhere to two distinct areas, the Upper Peninsula and the upper half of the Lower Peninsula. For the Upper Peninsula the outlook is "fair to middlin'." The Lower Peninsula deer range will be looked to with apprehension.

In the west end of the Upper Peninsula, the deer remained scattered over their summer range until mid-January when there was a definite movement to the swamps. Subnormal depths of snow in certain areas to fourteen inches of un-crusted snow in other areas made it possible for the deer to range in the vicinity of the yards thus alleviating the problem of obtaining food in the yards.

The central part of the Upper Peninsula, which is usually subject to heavy snow, experienced a maximum snow depth of three feet. Although the deer were able to move about in the vicinity of the yards and weather conditions were generally better, reports from that area express a belief in witnessing some starvation losses.

The deer in the east end of the U. P. were definitely yarded by the last half of January and remained in close proximity to the yards. The twenty-four inches of soft snow did not impede their travel and, generally, they will fare in good shape this year.

The yarding movements of deer in the Lower Peninsula were noticeable early in January in some localities. By the end of January, the deer were in the vicinity of the yards to be subjected to subsequent various extreme weather conditions. Sub-zero temperatures, deep snow, driving winds, and cutting crusts, separately and in combination, sapped what strength the deer could derive from generally over-browsed yards. Some of the deer in yards where browse is still plentiful will see the spring but as early as February 10, deer dead from starvation were found. As the winter

were on the discovery of dead deer became more frequent, and without doubt, intensified searches after receding snow will reveal more starved deer.

Two salient factors which helped many deer through the winter were the increased lumbering activities throughout the state, and the extremely, strong wind storm of last fall. The latter blew down great quantities of browse but such occurrences are not dependable.

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