

# BUCK IS BACK

**BADDER THAN EVER!**



I've been feeding the deer in my backyard for years and Buck is first deer that gives me the willies. He's the biggest deer I've seen and probably the oldest. But it's his attitude that makes him the baddest deer on the mountain.

Other deer will step back a few feet when I walk up with a can of deer food. *Not Buck!* He just stands there and glares at me and doesn't move an inch. It's like he's saying ...

*"What are you looking at?"*

Every other deer on the mountain is scared of Buck. Look at that thick neck and the muscles in his shoulders! All he has to do is turn and step a few paces toward some other deer and they trample the blackbrush to run away.

Last summer (2025) Buck stopped coming to my house. We didn't see him again until just a few weeks ago. It was nice to see him back again.

*Slightly off topic:*

*When we first moved here, the deer that would go past our house just didn't look healthy. Their fur wasn't smooth and glossy. They didn't act like they felt good.*

*Look around the canyon. There isn't a lot of variety for the deer to eat. I've watched them and the natural things I have seen them eat is Juniper Tree needles and Blackbrush. That can't be a complete diet. I think they suffer from a lack of some vitamins and minerals that they need.*

*The food we give to deer is formulated specifically for deer. If you look at the label on the bag, it looks like a multi-vitamin pill. We don't feed them any junk food.*

*The deer around our house look a lot better now. And besides, the worst thing that happens to deer is that they get hit by cars down on SR-9. We've seen deer with broken legs trying to survive. Our house is way up on the hillside and we make sure that there is water here too. We like to think that*

*maybe a few have avoided SR-9 because they don't have to go down there now.*



This deer got into a tussle with another deer last year and I'm guessing that it had to be Buck. It seems that most of one antler was literally torn off. (Oooo! That's gotta hurt!) There's no other deer on the mountain big enough to do it.

One advantage of making friends with the deer is that you can examine things like Longhorn's damaged antler up close. It clearly looked like it was torn apart violently.

We've watched the deer clash on the hillside. The object is to lock antlers and turn the other deer over. Usually, it's a fairly gentle pushing contest and when a couple of males decide they've pushed enough, they just walk away. But once, I saw Buck toss another deer completely over on his back. The other

deer ran across our patio to get away. I checked out the battleground when it was over and there was deer fur all over. "Gentle" is not in Buck's vocabulary.

Here's a closer look at Buck's face. He didn't get those scars playing tiddly winks. The short stubs near his head have been broken off. Deer shed their antlers every year, so all of this damage is from this year.



I see that Buck has been busy since we last saw him.