Deer’s Preference: Trophy Rock or Bio Rock

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Do deer prefer trophy rocks or bio rocks? I selected this project because I love spending time outdoors and studying the habits of wild animals, especially deer. Also, the city of Aiken has a large population of retirees, many of whom enjoy observing wildlife and could benefit from this information. From this project I hope to determine what kind of readily available “deer block” is the most beneficial for the purpose of attracting wildlife for viewing, photographing, or hunting. I predicted that deer would prefer trophy rocks over bio rocks. To conduct the experiment I bought trophy rocks and bio rocks, decided on two observatory locations, placed the cameras and rocks at the sites (rocks were placed perpendicular to the deer trail), and checked the cameras and recorded the data every 6-7 days. Periodically, the trophy rock and bio rock positions were switched. Initially, the deer at site 1 preferred the bio rock, which was located on the right. Once the blocks were switched, however, the deer preferred the trophy rock, which was now located on the right. Finally, when the blocks were switched again, the deer still preferred the trophy rock, even though it was now on the left. At site 2 the deer showed an obvious preference for the trophy rock the whole time. Therefore, deer showed an obvious preference for the trophy rock, whether it was the most convenient to get to or not.

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