

» Deer Screamer **WHISTLE**

Several years ago I was involved with an extensive test of over a dozen so-called “deer alerts.” This involved a number of zoological and auditory experts and actual field testing with several different species of deer. The details of that test are too involved to regurgitate, but produced the same results as numerous other studies conducted by several noted scientific organizations:

- 1) So-called “ultrasonic” whistles of any type are totally ineffective;
- 2) Whistles that produce an audible tone (that can be heard by humans) work about 30 percent of the time, depending on conditions.

Those conditions include, but are not limited to: Time of day; season of the year; ambient wind conditions; speed of the vehicle; age and sex of the deer; presence of other vehicles; and density of roadside foliage. The only whistles that are even partially effective are those that emit an audible tone that can be heard at least 30 yards forward of the vehicle.

For the past couple of months, and about 2,000 miles, I have been using the Deer Screamer mounted on my bike. This is an air-powered whistle that very simply



uses the air pressure at the front of your vehicle to produce an audible, forward-facing tone “alert.” In its favor, I can say that I hear the whistle at speeds of approximately 50 MPH and above. If I’m riding into the wind, I can sometimes hear it at 40 MPH, but if I have a tailwind, I don’t hear it until I reach 60 MPH or better.

Observers placed at the roadside in the quietest possible conditions, noted they could hear the whistle on my approach at an average of about 30 feet away. The only two times I actually saw a deer at the roadside on approach, one ran away and one didn’t. Of course, I have no way of knowing what spooked the one that ran. It could have been engine noise, my headlights, or just the motion of the bike.

The best I can tell you is the Deer Screamer makes noise, of a type that can be heard by deer. Will the deer hear it and run away? Maybe, if you’re going fast enough to activate it, and there are no obstructions to block or dampen the sound, and it’s not a buck during the rutting season, etc. I wouldn’t want to bet my life on it, and still believe that your best defense is to be extra-alert in areas deer frequent, particularly at dawn and dusk. Slow your pace, and if you see a deer, blow your horn, loud and long.

Still, from previous testing results, I would have to say there is a chance the Deer Screamer might be effective, some of the time. The unit is very small, unobtrusive and inexpensive (\$9.00 each or two for \$16), and if there’s even a chance that it might work some of the time, my take is that another level of protection certainly couldn’t hurt. I’m going to leave it on my bike.

—Fred Rau



Deer Screamer, deerscreamer.com

» Aerostich **UTILITY PANTS**

Aerostich’s Utility Pants bridge the gap between the comfort of casual denim and the functionality required in serious rider’s gear. On the casual side, there are no outseam zippers, fancy graphics, or reflective trim. In addition, the cut is low on the hips, like typical blue jeans.



On the functional side, the pants are constructed of 500 Denier Cordura bonded to Gore-Tex, for serious abrasion resistance and all-weather capabilities. They’re well armored, with Aerostich’s large, removable TF3 kneepads and optional hip armor.

The interior is completely unlined, with visible sealed seams. However, they cannot be felt and wore like iron over thousands of miles of testing. We expect the seals to last the life of the pants. The exterior features two front pockets as the main storage compartments and a smaller pocket on the left rear of the seat area. The waistband is gusseted and belt loops are integrated into the garment, though no belt is included. The Cordura is doubled up in the knees and seat areas for added protection, and three strips of velcro per ankle cuff allow adjustment for close fitment around any size riding boot.

The Utility Pants were practical for nearly all conditions. They’re lightweight, and the material is breathable enough to wear over a wide temperature range. Fitment is roomy, typical for American gear, so they can be worn as pants or overpants. Because they don’t look like moto-centric riding pants, they can pass as casual gear off the bike, and removing the armor takes seconds, if a social situation calls for it. The quality of construction is superb, and there is no question the Utility Pants will last many years and tens of thousands of miles.

Our only criticism is the zipper fly, which is not waterproof or sealed. The American-made Aerostich Utility Pants are available in men’s sizes 30-44 regular or long. MSRP is \$297.00 for black or grey colors, or \$342 for the tan color shown here.

—Moshe K. Levy



Aerostich, aerostich.com