IRON RIVER—Will the best period for deer hunting already be over before the 2012 firearm season starts?

According to research conducted for years by Charles J. Alsheimer in "Hunting Whitetails by the Moon," the prime chase period this year will end on Nov. 4. But it's not all bad news for firearm hunters. __PUBLIC__

Don McDonald recently brought in Alsheimer's hunting predictions, which lists the rutting moon period, the prime chase period and the breeding window.

The rutting moon period, when does are in full estrus and the bucks are in maximum rutting, is at its maximum on the day of the full moon.

The "rutting moon" takes place on the second full moon following the autumnal equinox (the first day of fall).

Alsheimer's tables show that the prime chase period coincides with Michigan's firearm season (Nov. 15-30) in only two of the next nine years—2016 and 2019. This year's chase period ends on Nov. 4.

But don't despair, added McDonald.

According to Alsheimer's calculations, the first four days of the firearm season (Nov. 15 to 18) will be during this year's breeding window, and hunters should have a very good chance for success.

| Year | Rutting moon | Prime chase period | Breeding window |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2012 | Oct. 29 | Oct. 26 to Nov. 4 | Nov. 5 to 18 |
| 2013 | Oct. 19 | Oct. 16 to Oct. 25 | Oct. 26 to Nov. 8 |
| 2014 | Nov. 7 | Nov. 4 to Nov. 13 | Nov. 14 to Nov. 29 |
| 2015 | Oct. 27 | Oct. 24 to Nov. 2 | Nov. 3 to Nov. 16 |
| 2016 | Nov. 14 | Nov. 11 to Nov. 20 | Nov. 21 to Dec. 5 |
| 2017 | Nov. 3 | Nov. 1 to Nov. 9 | Nov. 10 to Nov. 23 |
| 2018 | Oct. 24 | Oct. 21 to Oct. 30 | Oct. 31 to Nov. 13 |
| 2019 | Nov. 11 | Nov. 8 to Nov. 17 | Nov. 18 to Dec. 1 |
| 2020 | Oct. 31 | Oct. 28 to Nov. 6 | Nov. 7 to Nov. 20 |