

Deer Population Problem: Wyckoff, New Jersey

Christopher Keary

Purpose and Goal

To better understand the deer populations in our community/ local environment and brainstorm ways to environmentally help solve the deer problem.

What's the Problem?

White-tail Deer populations have soared in Wyckoff, NJ. They destroy land and cost locals and the government thousands of dollars a year. These deer have become a nuisance in the town and pose a true threat to the environment.

Why Keep Animal Populations in Check?

Effects of Overpopulation include:

- Lack of food
- Wandering into Unnatural Places
- Damaged Ecosystems
 - Deer throughout the US are destroying forests and hindering the diversity of tree species
 - Deer have an appetite for saplings - which puts the forest in danger of becoming pasture land because overpopulated deer consume young trees
- Spread of Disease



Shift in Views...

- Then
 - “Standing, lying down, walking, feeding, running even for its life, it [deer] is always invincibly graceful, and adds beauty and animation to every landscape — a charming animal and a great credit to nature” - John Muir
- Now
 - “... it’s hard to think of a more insidious threat to forests, farms and wildlife, not to mention human health and safety, than deer” - Jonathan Bernstein

Scientific Classification

- Kingdom: Animalia
- Phylum: Chordata
- Class: Mammalia
- Order: Artiodactyla
- Family: Cervidae
- Subfamily: Capreolinae
- Genus: *Odocoileus*
- Species: *O. Virginianus*
- Binomial Name: *Odocoileus Virginianus*

Common Name: White-tail Deer



What Has Already Been Done in Other States and Towns?

- Indiana recently enacted the first modern firearms season targeting female deer in the state's history.
- In an effort to lower the population of deer in Wisconsin the Department of Natural Resources liberalized hunting dramatically - the result was a hunter revolt
- Saddle River, NJ: the Borough Council signed a deer culling contract on October 4, 2018
 - From October 4th to February 16th, 135 deer were killed
 - The Borough approved a second deer culling contract this past July that is taking place from mid-September to mid-January
- Franklin Lakes will not allow deer hunting

How to Safely Keep Deer Population in Check and Also Lower Deer Death on the Roads

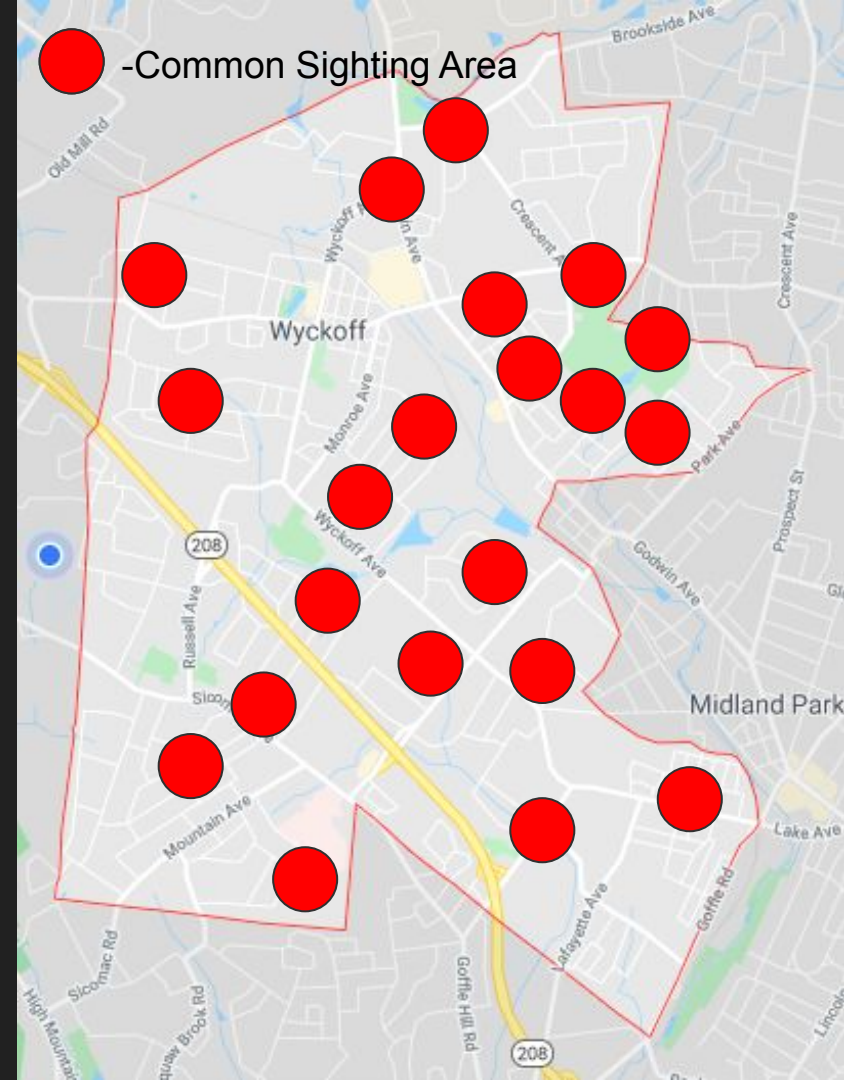
- Many solutions involve extermination and/or hunting
- Several states with more conservative gun laws have passed new laws to allow for more open hunting of deer in their overpopulated areas
- Communities cannot just remove deer from the environments and send them to hundreds of acres of federal protected land and the wild because they will then destroy the environment and consume the forests they join
- The ecosystem will become unbalanced and nature would not be able to adapt
- Towns could attempt to relocate animals in a very slow, steady pace, but even this could prove detrimental

Data, Analysis, and Community Feedback



Locations Spotted

- Received sightings from over 125 different people over the course of about 8 months
 - Sightings Varied → All districts of Wyckoff
 - Difficult to analyse data because, deer truly roam in every corner of Wyckoff
- Perspective
 - Received over 100 reported deer sightings within the months of August and September



Photos and Sighting Documentation



May 21 2019 - My House



June 3 2019 - Back Roads Surrounding Eisenhower Middle School



June 20 2019 - My House



June 25 2019 - Right Off Sicomac Ave in front of
Christian Healthcare Center



Wyckoff Dead Deer Clean-up Services

- All Stages Pest Control
- N.J. Wildlife and Pest Control Pro's
- TYCO Professional Animal Control
- All Jersey Animal and Pest Control



Local Opinions and Stories

- One friend (who wished to be unnamed) said, “We need to study the deer in the community with tracking technology to view their movements and get a better sense of how to solve the problem”.
- Another friend stated, “It is not a problem of deer right now. It is a problem of gun regulation. It’s so simple - with less restrictive gun laws, the idea of hunting and population control would be a more viable option”.
- Ramapo High School Student Collision with Deer:
 - A close friend of mine
 - A new driver who only had her license for a week
 - “I literally pulled out of my driveway on Charnwood Drive and started driving down the street. It wasn’t even that dark out. I would say it was about 7 in the morning. In an instant, a deer leaped from a bush in front of my car and I slammed on the brakes. It’s body was thrown forward and I just started crying. It was limp on the ground for like 5 minutes, and then it suddenly woke up and limped off, back into the woods”



Not the Only Problem...

Like the deer population problem, coyotes and foxes are also overpopulating Wyckoff, New Jersey. Horror stories are shared on Facebook and through the local news about brutal killings and attacks on citizen's beloved pets. These problems must be attacked alongside the deer population problem.

Creating awareness about the dangers of these overpopulated animal populations is what is best for the community and ecosystem of Wyckoff.

Why Solving this Problem Will Help the Town Move Forward on Sustainability

A healthy environment is only obtainable if the populations of all species are kept in check... and an environmentally sustainable town works the same way.

Information about my project:

This project was completed as part of the Wyckoff Environmental Commission's Junior Commissioner program. Junior Commissioner Christopher Keary, a student at Ramapo High School, class of 2021, created this *Deer Population Problem* project and completed the research for the project.

December 2019

For More Information and Questions, My Email is...

c.keary21@student.rih.org