

WHY DO WE NEED FEWER DEER?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified deer as a critical link in the life cycle of the black legged tick which transmits Lyme disease as well as variety of other illnesses to humans. A single white-tailed deer can host enough ticks to produce 1.5 to 3 million eggs and larvae the following spring. Each tick may lay 2000-6000 eggs.

Reducing deer to below 8-10 per square mile breaks the life cycle of the black legged(or deer) tick and prevents the spread of tick borne diseases.

According to DEC estimates there are roughly 3500, or 65 deer per square mile, in the Township of Southold.

We have high rates of tick borne diseases including Lyme disease, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis, and Ehrlichiosis. Rates of these diseases are rising throughout Suffolk County. The CDC estimates reported cases to be only 10% of the actual total.

With only 7.5 % of the population of New York State, Suffolk County has 49% of the cases of Babesiosis, a malaria-like and sometimes fatal disease, and 44% of the cases of Ehrlichiosis.

The newly emerging Powassan virus, transmitted by the deer tick, is a **potential** threat also preventable by preventing tick reproduction by reducing deer numbers to 8-10. The virus is fatal in 10% of cases and may result in long term neurological problems in 50% of survivors. There is no treatment for it and no diagnostic test for it.

Economic costs of each case of Lyme disease are estimated to be \$10,652.74.

Undiagnosed or inadequately treated cases of tick borne illness can cause lifelong debilitation and are often confused with arthritis, MS, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, Parkinson's and many other conditions.

Deer cause major destruction to the understory of our forests at levels above 10-15 deer per square mile, eliminating the reseeded of the canopy; destroying the habitat for native birds, reptiles and small mammals; allowing the spread of invasive plants; and contributing to increased runoff and the pollution of our waters.

Deer/automobile collisions, which pose a serious threat of injury, property damage, and death, are on the rise while other moving vehicle accidents are decreasing. The average deer/auto accident results in a claim of \$3300; In Southold in 2012 there were 444 deer killed on the roads.

Large numbers of deer pose a devastating threat to farm crops, nurseries, vineyards, and residential landscaping; millions of dollars are being spent on deer fencing (some of it tax payer dollars) and deer repellants.

Outdoor recreation has become hazardous and children can no longer play outside without fear of ticks.

Hundreds of dollars are spent annually by individual homeowners for tick control with limited and only temporary results.

There is currently no effective means of contraception available for free ranging deer.

Sterilization is very expensive and does nothing to address the role of the neutered deer in the spread of disease, the destruction of vegetation and the cause of automobile collisions.

The experimental four poster program that targets the ticks on deer with permethrin is very expensive to install and maintain and is only effective in small areas. It does nothing to reduce the herd and the herds' undesirable effects on the understory, crops, landscaping and auto accidents.