

**Deer Management  
In the Town of  
Islip, New York**

Human Dimensions Research Unit  
Department of Natural Resources  
Cornell University

# DEER MANAGEMENT IN ISLIP, NEW YORK

Research conducted by the  
Human Dimensions Research Unit  
Department of Natural Resources  
Cornell University

In cooperation with the  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)  
Bureau of Wildlife

- **Your responses are important!** The results of this survey will be distributed to local government officials, public land managers, and interested Islip residents.
- We would like to hear from EVERYONE who receives this questionnaire, not just those with strong opinions about deer.
- **All your responses will be entirely confidential and will never be associated with your name.**
- Please remember that this questionnaire is to be filled out by the adult in your household with the birthday that occurs latest in the calendar year.
- Please complete this questionnaire at your earliest convenience, seal it in the enclosed envelope and drop it in any mailbox; return postage has been provided.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!**

1. Do you live in the Town of Islip? (*Circle one number.*)

**1 Yes** → If Yes, CONTINUE TO QUESTION 2

**0 No** → → → If No, STOP HERE. (Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Thank you!)

2. How long have you lived in the Town of Islip?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Years**

<b>YOUR INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCES RELATED TO DEER</b>
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3. The following is a list of interests that people may have regarding deer. Please indicate how interested you are in doing each of the following. (*Circle one number for each item.*)

<u>How interested are you in . . .</u>	<u>Not At All</u>				<u>Very</u>	<u>Don't</u>
	<u>Interested</u>				<u>Interested</u>	<u>Know</u>
watching deer near your home?	1	2	3	4	5	0
photographing deer?	1	2	3	4	5	0
hunting deer?	1	2	3	4	5	0
feeding deer near your home?	1	2	3	4	5	0
seeing deer in Islip?	1	2	3	4	5	0
learning more about deer management in Islip?	1	2	3	4	5	0
providing input for decisions about deer management in Islip?	1	2	3	4	5	0
participating in decision-making about deer management in Islip?	1	2	3	4	5	0
Other ( <i>Please specify:</i> _____)	1	2	3	4	5	0

4. Have you ever seen a deer in the vicinity of your residence in Islip? (*Circle one number.*)

**1 Yes**

**0 No**

5. Have you seen deer or evidence of deer at your residence in the past 12 months? (*Circle all that apply.*)

**1 Saw a deer at my residence.**

**2 Saw deer feeding at my residence.**

**3 Saw evidence of where deer had been feeding at my residence.**

6. The following is a list of possible problems that people may have regarding deer. Please indicate how concerned you are about each of the following possible problems in the Town of Islip. (*Circle one number for each item.*)

<b>How concerned are you about . . .</b>	<b>Not At All Concerned</b>				<b>Very Concerned</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
a. deer-auto accidents?	1	2	3	4	5	0
b. deer damage to flower gardens?	1	2	3	4	5	0
c. deer damage to trees and shrubs in yards?	1	2	3	4	5	0
d. deer damage to vegetable gardens?	1	2	3	4	5	0
e. deer damage to trees and vegetation in natural areas?	1	2	3	4	5	0
f. deer threatening or harming pets?	1	2	3	4	5	0
g. deer threatening or harming people?	1	2	3	4	5	0
h. Lyme disease?	1	2	3	4	5	0
i. Other ( <i>Please specify:</i> _____)	1	2	3	4	5	0

7. Have you personally been affected by any of the problems listed in Question 6 in Islip? *(Circle one number.)*

**1 Yes** → → → → *(Please circle the letter(s) below corresponding to those deer-related problems from Question 6 that you have personally been affected by in Islip.)*

**0 No**                    a        b        c        d        e        f        g        h        i

8. Generally, how do you feel about having deer in your neighborhood? *(Circle one number.)*

- 1 Deer have an esthetic value; I enjoy having them around.**
- 2 I could enjoy a few deer, but I worry about disease and/or damage.**
- 3 I generally regard deer as a nuisance; I could get along without any deer.**
- 4 No particular feelings about deer.**

9. During the past 2 years, have you ever discussed the topic of deer management in Islip with friends or family members?

**1 Yes**

**0 No**

10. Residents may have different preferences about the size of the deer population in the Town of Islip. How would you like the deer population in Islip to change, if at all? *(Circle one number.)*

- 1 Large decrease**
- 2 Moderate decrease**
- 3 Slight decrease**
- 4 No change**
- 5 Slight increase**
- 6 Moderate increase**
- 7 Large increase**
- 0 Don't know** → → → *If Don't Know, SKIP TO QUESTION 12.*

11. How important is it to you that the size of the deer population change as you indicated in Question 10? (*Circle one number.*)

**Not At All  
Important**

**Very  
Important**

**Don't  
Know**

1

2

3

4

5

0

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN DEER MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Citizen participation in deer management can take many forms and can be used to meet many different objectives. Questions in this section are designed to obtain your views about citizen participation in deer management in the Town of Islip.

12. Do you believe that decisions about deer management in the Town of Islip should be based on input from the residents of Islip?

**1 Yes** → if Yes, CONTINUE TO NEXT QUESTION.

**0 No** → → → If No, SKIP TO QUESTION 20.

13. What methods do you believe should be used to collect public input for decisions about deer management in Islip? (*Circle all that apply.*)

**1 Unsolicited comments (e.g., letters, telephone calls) from citizens to the New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) or public land managers.**

**2 Meetings open to select groups and invited individuals.**

**3 Mail or telephone surveys of Town residents.**

**4 Public meetings open to all.**

**5 Committee of citizens representing a variety of interests who work together to resolve differences.**

**6 Other** (*Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_*).

People may have different opinions about who should provide input, who should make final decisions, and who should help carry out recommended deer management actions. The next three questions ask for your personal opinions on these issues in the Town of Islip.

14. How much responsibility should each of the following groups have for providing input for deer management decisions in the Town of Islip? *(Circle one number for each item.)*

	<b>No Responsibility</b>				<b>Great Deal of Responsibility</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Residents of the Town of Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Wildlife managers with the New York State DEC.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Managers of public (county, state, or federal) land in Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Town of Islip or Suffolk County officials.	1	2	3	4	5	0

15. How much responsibility should each of the following groups have for making deer management decisions in the Town of Islip? *(Circle one number for each item.)*

	<b>No Responsibility</b>				<b>Great Deal of Responsibility</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Residents of the Town of Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Wildlife managers with the New York State DEC.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Managers of public (county, state, or federal) land in Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Town of Islip or Suffolk County officials.	1	2	3	4	5	0

16. How much responsibility should each of the following groups have for carrying out deer management decisions in the Town of Islip? *(Circle one number for each item.)*

	<b>No Responsibility</b>				<b>Great Deal of Responsibility</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Residents of the Town of Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Wildlife managers with the New York State DEC.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Managers of public (county, state, or federal) land in Islip.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Town of Islip or Suffolk County officials.	1	2	3	4	5	0

17. A process that involves the public in decisions about deer management in the Town of Islip could be conducted for a variety of reasons, and in a variety of ways. When you consider a public involvement process concerning deer management in Islip, how important is each of the following to you? (*Circle one number for each item.*)

<b>How important is it to you that a public involvement process . . . .</b>	<b>Not At All Important</b>				<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
promotes communication between the New York State DEC and citizens?	1	2	3	4	5	0
uses the best scientific information?	1	2	3	4	5	0
weighs citizens' interests differently depending on their importance?	1	2	3	4	5	0
educates citizens?	1	2	3	4	5	0
considers all citizens' viewpoints?	1	2	3	4	5	0
does <u>not</u> take too long?	1	2	3	4	5	0
does <u>not</u> cost too much?	1	2	3	4	5	0
incorporates scientific facts?	1	2	3	4	5	0
reaches a decision quickly?	1	2	3	4	5	0
treats all citizens equally?	1	2	3	4	5	0
does <u>not</u> require spending public funds?	1	2	3	4	5	0
does <u>not</u> deny anyone the right to be heard?	1	2	3	4	5	0
favors those with more at stake?	1	2	3	4	5	0
improves relationships between the New York State DEC and citizens?	1	2	3	4	5	0
relies on science?	1	2	3	4	5	0
gives equal opportunity for all citizens to participate?	1	2	3	4	5	0
Other ( <i>Please specify:</i> _____)	1	2	3	4	5	0



18. There are many ways for people to express their opinions about deer to local or state government officials. Have you ever made your opinions about deer in Islip known in any of the following ways? (*Circle all that apply.*)

- 1 **Contacted the New York State DEC.**
- 2 **Attended a public meeting on deer.**
- 3 **Wrote letters to the editor or an article to be printed in a newspaper.**
- 4 **Contacted an elected government official.**
- 5 **Joined an organization that supports your views on deer.**
- 6 **Other** (*Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_*)

19. How much time would you personally be willing to devote to help make decisions about deer management in Islip? (*Circle one number.*)

- 1 **No time**
- 2 **One hour per year**
- 3 **One hour per month**
- 4 **One hour per week**
- 5 **More than one hour per week**
- 6 **Other** (*Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_*)
- 0 **Don't know**

<b>YOUR ATTITUDES ABOUT WILDLIFE</b>
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20. People differ in the ways they interact with wildlife. Some of these ways are listed below. Please indicate how you feel about the following by your agreement or disagreement with each statement. (*Circle one number for each statement.*)

<b><u>It is important for me personally that:</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>		
I talk about wildlife with family and friends.	1	2	3	4	5
I observe or photograph wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
I tolerate most wildlife nuisance problems.	1	2	3	4	5
I trap furbearing animals for sale of furs or pelts.	1	2	3	4	5

<b><u>It is important for me personally that:</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>		<b><u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u></b>		<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>
I know wildlife exist in nature.	1	2	3	4	5
I consider the presence of wildlife as a sign of the quality of the natural environment.	1	2	3	4	5
I hunt game animals for recreation.	1	2	3	4	5
I see wildlife in books, movies, paintings, or photographs.	1	2	3	4	5
I tolerate most levels of property damage by wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
I express opinions about wildlife and their management to public officials or to officials of private conservation organizations.	1	2	3	4	5
I tolerate the ordinary risk of wildlife transmitting disease to humans or domestic animals.	1	2	3	4	5
I hunt game animals for food.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand more about the behavior of wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
I appreciate the role that wildlife play in the natural environment.	1	2	3	4	5
I tolerate the ordinary personal safety hazards associated with some wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
game animals are managed for an annual harvest for human use without harming the future of the wildlife population.	1	2	3	4	5
wildlife are included in educational materials as the subject for learning more about nature.	1	2	3	4	5
local economies benefit from the sale of equipment, supplies, or services related to wildlife recreation.	1	2	3	4	5

## YOUR SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT WILDLIFE

Questions in this section will help us understand how you obtain information about deer and other wildlife in New York.

21. Do you read a newspaper at least once per month? *(Circle one number.)*

**1 Yes** → If Yes, CONTINUE TO QUESTION 22.

**0 No** → → → If No, SKIP TO QUESTION 23.

22. Please indicate whether you ignore, skim, read part, or read all of the following newspaper sections.

<u>Sections of the newspaper</u>	<u>Ignore</u>	<u>Skim</u>	<u>Read Partially</u>	<u>Read entirely</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Front page	1	2	3	4	0
Local community news	1	2	3	4	0
Business	1	2	3	4	0
Entertainment	1	2	3	4	0
National news	1	2	3	4	0
Sports/outdoor	1	2	3	4	0
Health	1	2	3	4	0
Travel	1	2	3	4	0
Long Island section	1	2	3	4	0
Editorials	1	2	3	4	0
Home and garden	1	2	3	4	0
Letters to the Editor	1	2	3	4	0
New York/metro	1	2	3	4	0
Science	1	2	3	4	0

23. Please estimate the average amount of time you spend doing the following activities. (If you do not do an activity listed below, please answer zero.)

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Average amount of time spent on activity</u>
Listen to radio	_____ hours <i>per day</i>
Watch T.V. programs	_____ hours <i>per day</i>
Watch <u>local</u> T.V. news programs	_____ days <i>per week</i>
Watch <u>national</u> T.V. news programs	_____ days <i>per week</i>
Read <i>The New York Times</i>	_____ number of times <i>per week</i>
Read <i>New York Newsday</i>	_____ number of times <i>per week</i>
Read <i>The Islip Bulletin</i>	_____ number of times <i>per week</i>

24. Please identify the information sources you watch, listen to, or read most frequently. (If you do not use a particular source of information, please answer "none.")

<u>Information Sources</u>	<u>Name of station, program, or paper you use most frequently</u>
Radio station	_____
Local television news program	_____
National television news program	_____
National newspaper	_____
Local newspaper	_____

25. Please indicate the extent to which you obtain information about deer-related issues from each source. (Circle one number for each information source.)

<u>Information sources</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Very Often</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Local or regional newspapers	1	2	3	4	0
<i>The Islip Bulletin</i>	1	2	3	4	0
<i>New York Newsday</i>	1	2	3	4	0
National newspapers	1	2	3	4	0
<i>The New York Times</i>	1	2	3	4	0
Magazines	1	2	3	4	0
Local television news	1	2	3	4	0
National television news	1	2	3	4	0
Radio	1	2	3	4	0
Special interest journals, newsletters	1	2	3	4	0
Books	1	2	3	4	0
Meetings of citizens organizations, clubs	1	2	3	4	0
New York State DEC employees	1	2	3	4	0
New York State DEC publications	1	2	3	4	0
Cornell Cooperative Extension	1	2	3	4	0
Family and friends who hunt deer	1	2	3	4	0
Family and friends who do not hunt	1	2	3	4	0
Local government agencies	1	2	3	4	0
Private conservation organizations	1	2	3	4	0
New York State parks employees	1	2	3	4	0
New York State parks publications	1	2	3	4	0
Nature centers	1	2	3	4	0
US Fish and Wildlife Service employees	1	2	3	4	0
US Fish and Wildlife Service publications	1	2	3	4	0
Internet/Worldwide Web	1	2	3	4	0
Other ( <i>specify:</i> _____)	1	2	3	4	0

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**  
(Please remember that all your responses are confidential.)

26. Are you . . . . ? *(Circle one number.)*

- 1 Female**
- 2 Male**

27. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? *(Circle one number.)*

- 1 11 years or less**
- 2 High school diploma (or GED)**
- 3 Some college or vocational training**
- 4 College or vocational school graduate**
- 5 Post graduate**

28. In what year were you born? *(Fill in the blank.)*

**19**\_\_\_\_\_

29. Do you own residential property in the Town of Islip?

- 1 Yes**
- 0 No**

30. Which category best describes your total 1998 household income before taxes and other deductions? *(Circle one number.)*

- 1 Less than \$15,000/year**
- 2 \$15,001-\$30,000/year**
- 3 \$30,001-\$50,000/year**
- 4 \$50,001-\$75,000/year**
- 5 \$75,001-\$100,000/year**
- 6 More than \$100,000/year**

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!**

(Please feel free to use the space below to make any additional comments)

**To return this questionnaire, simply seal it in the enclosed postage paid envelope and drop it in the nearest mailbox.**

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