



Howard County Government News Release

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Department of Recreation & Parks Announces Deer Management Program for 2016-2017

ELLICOTT CITY, MD – The Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks has announced its fall/winter schedule for managing the deer population through bow and shotgun managed hunts and sharpshooting. This effort helps maintain a stable, balanced white-tailed deer population in our parks where deer browsing has been shown to reduce biodiversity.

New to the program this year is an agreement with Columbia Association to hunt along the Middle Patuxent River in an undeveloped area called “the Gorman Area,” including adjacent lands in Kings Contrivance.

Since the program began in 1998, there has been an observable improvement in habitat quality and vegetation abundance in many of the parks where managed hunting and sharpshooting has taken place. The managed hunt program gives specially screened and selected hunters daytime access to various parks. This year’s managed hunts will include a combination of bow and shotgun, and will take place from dawn until noon. Each park will be closed for all other uses during this time.

The sharpshooting program utilizes licensed and qualified marksmen and precise, accurate, noise-suppressed firearms in areas where the managed hunts are not feasible. Sharpshooting will take place from 3:30 p.m. to midnight, unless otherwise noted. All properties involved in the sharpshooting program will be closed to the public during this time. All the meat from this operation is donated to charitable organizations in the area.

The deer management schedule for 2016-2017 is as follows:

Alpha Ridge Park:

Bow & Shotgun

October 11; January 10 and 24

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Department of Recreation & Parks Announces Deer Management Program for 2016-2017 *(continued)*

Blandair Park (north of Maryland Route 175 only):

Bow Hunting September 27; October 41; November 3 and 22

David Force Park:

Bow & Shotgun October 18; November 1, January 31

Gorman Area (Middle Patuxent River and Kings Contrivance)

Bow & Shotgun October 25, November 9 and 15, January 19, February 7

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area:

Bow & Shotgun October 13 and 27; November 11 and 17; January 5 and 26;
February 9 and 16

West Friendship Park:

Bow & Shotgun October 20; January 12; February 2 and 14

Wincopin Trail Area of Savage Park:

Bow Hunting September 29; October 6; November 10 and 29

Since deer population reduction programs (such as the hunts and sharpshooting) are not possible in many areas of the county, the Department of Recreation & Parks has developed a Deer Management Reference Manual to help homeowners and gardeners live in harmony with white-tailed deer. The manual, which is available in all county library branches, contains information on the use of deer repellents, fencing to protect crops and property, how to avoid deer-auto collisions, and Lyme Disease prevention. There is also information about the county's deer management program available on the Department's website at www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Recreation-and-Parks/Natural-Resources/Wildlife.

The Department of Recreation & Parks and the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service also can arrange to have experts on the topic speak to homeowner associations, schools or other groups. Other Recreation & Parks' deer management programs include an effort to reduce ticks on deer through the use of "Four-Poster" devices which delivers an approved pesticide to deer attracted to a feeder baited with corn. Developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the devices have been shown to reduce tick populations by 90% or more.

For more information on the deer management program, call the Department of Recreation & Parks at 410-313-1675.

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