

## Royal Botanical Gardens and Haudenosaunee Set Dates for 2013 Harvest

**Hamilton, ON, December 10, 2013** — Royal Botanical Gardens and the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority (HWWA) have agreed to conduct a controlled harvest of White-tailed deer this December as part of RBG's deer management.

The 2013 harvest will be conducted at RBG's Arboretum, located at 16 Old Guelph Road, Hamilton, Ontario, and will take place between Monday, December 16 and Friday, December 20. Access to the Arboretum, including the access from York Rd. Trailhead will be closed to the public for the duration of the harvest with the Arboretum reopened at its conclusion. Notices to the public will be provided and posted at property at entrance points.

The Hamilton Police Services have been consulted with respect to public safety and advised of the closure. Appropriate trail signage and notification to adjacent residents will also be provided regarding the closure.

### **Background**

RBG is proud and honored to be a registered National Historic Site of Canada. The heritage value that supports that designation is first and foremost because, "...it is one of Canada's most important botanical gardens, distinguished by a first-class horticultural collection;" and also, "it has a world-renowned lilac collection which has gained it the honour of being named the international registration authority for cultivar names of lilacs." As such, and by virtue of the Act that created it, RBG has an affirmative obligation and duty to develop, manage and protect its collections.

RBG also stewards and manages significant holdings of natural lands and has worked for decades to foster balanced and sustainable populations of plants and animals, including deer that call them home. As part of the management of these lands, RBG is charged with protecting its natural areas against negative impacts caused by populations that are out of balance and exceed the capacity of the land to support them in a sustainable fashion.

Unfortunately, the health and well-being of RBG collections is threatened. It is well documented that the White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) population in the region is well above the provincial average density. A segment of the regional deer population has moved from natural food plants to collections material in the arboretum resulting in significant damage from browse and antler rubbing--in many cases causing death of the plants.

The deer issues being dealt with by RBG are part of a larger, regional issue. Wildlife population management is a provincial responsibility under the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). Royal Botanical Gardens approached the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority (HWWA), representatives of the Hadenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council, because of their relationship with Dundas Valley and Ontario Parks (Short Hills). The HWWA has experience instituting deer harvests that may help manage deer populations.

## HARVEST BOUNDARIES



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