

TELL US ABOUT THE DEER IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

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In the best of all possible worlds the Hopewell Valley Deer Management Task Force — a multi-disciplinary volunteer group of residents including hunters, farmers, gardeners, friends of deer, ecologists, and public health and law enforcement professionals — would have preferred to mail a questionnaire on deer to every residence, place of business and farm in Pennington Borough, Hopewell Borough, and Hopewell Township. The costs of doing so were too high, however, and so through the month of June residents are urged to search out the questionnaire, fill it in, and return it before June 30. Deer populations have increased in Hopewell Valley and the Task Force needs the community's input on what, if anything, should be done about it.

Questionnaires will be available at the following locations: Pennington Quality Market Courtesy Booth, Rosedale Mills, Hopewell Borough Library, Pennington Borough Library, and the Mercer County Library Hopewell Branch on Pennington-Titusville Road. The questionnaires will also be available at the front desks of the Hopewell Township, Pennington Borough, and Hopewell Borough municipal buildings,

For those who would like some one-on-one dialogue, there will be a special Deer Task Force Day outside the Pennington Market on Saturday, June 12, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.. Task Force volunteers will staff tables, have questionnaires available to fill out, and try to answer questions.

The Task Force has already conducted a deer count that estimates deer in Hopewell Valley are at higher levels than is good for the environment. A follow-up count is scheduled for August. In between these two deer counts stands the critical input of the homeowners, renters, businesses, gardeners, parents, drivers, hunters and farmers who live and work in our community. That means you!

Now is the time to speak up. Are you happy with deer? Do you have problems with deer? What kinds of problems? Do you have questions about deer? Do you have suggestions about better deer management? The Hopewell Valley Deer Management Task Force would like to know what you think. Please tell us by filling out and submitting a questionnaire. Thank you.

Francesca Calderone-Steichen is a member of the Hopewell Valley Deer Management Task Force.