

This year's deer hunt is expected to be plentiful

By **ROBIN DOWNTON-POIRIER**
Special to *The Champion*

Halton's annual gun-controlled deer hunt is scheduled for November 7 to 11.

With a high population of deer, the prospects of shooting a deer are good for hunters, said John Almond, Ministry of Natural Resources' supervisor for the Halton area.

"Each year there are more and more deer out there and the harvests are going up," he said. "With the population of deer being dense, there are many opportunities for hunters to kill and tag a deer."

Mr. Almond said that the annual deer hunts

(both gun-controlled and archery) effectively help control the growing deer population.

"Problems arise with too many deer in most parts of southern Ontario," he said. "There are concerns with road safety, agriculture and farm crops as well as damage to some residential gardens and property. The annual harvest helps to reduce the number of deer and the number of problems."

Although the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) plans to distribute about 450 deer tags for the gun controlled hunt in Halton. It usually has between 300 to 350 applicants allowing hunters to apply for more than one tag, said Mr.

Almond.

He added that hunters needed to apply before the end of August to be eligible to hunt this year.

Data sheet must be completed

In order for the MNR to track how many deer are harvested each season, hunters are mailed a data sheet that must be completed at the end of the hunting week. The sheet requests information such as the number of hours spent hunting and in which areas, as well as the number of deer shot.

A similar process is used for archery hunters although it's done in the form of a survey after

the season closes.

The collected data proves MNR's statement that the deer harvests are increasing in numbers, said Mr. Almond.

"According to the data collected from hunters in the gun-controlled deer hunt, 133 deer were harvested in 2002, 140 deer in 2003, and in 2004, there were 161 deer shot. The numbers are going up proving that the deer population in Halton is growing as well," he added.

Mr. Almond said he's unsure if there will be check stations set up this year as fewer deer were being brought in over the past few seasons.

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