OAK BAY DEER PROJECT

2023 UPDATE

This project will inform the most effective urban deer management in British Columbia (both in terms of cost and effort),

Importance of Data

Accurate & precise understanding of deer distribution, movement, and population size are all needed for long-term and effective urban deer management.

Scientific Methods

These analyses were generated by independent researchers applying cutting-edge statistical techniques to data collected from marked & collared deer and 39 remote cameras deployed across Oak Bay.

Population Size

In 2018, we estimated deer density to be 14 adult deer / km^2. There has been approx. **31% reduction in deer** by fall 2022.

Fawning Rates

After the first year of immunocontraception (IC), the relative abundance of fawns **decreased by 58%** in 2020. The analysis for additional years is currently underway. With fewer fawns available to grow into adulthood, the population should decrease.

Favoured Habitats

Peer reviewed paper:

The deer population is not distributed evenly throughout Oak Bay. Deer are selecting for areas with **lush green vegetation** and **large-sized residential lots**. This may be due to the conversion of Garry Oak meadows into landscaped properties.

Future Analysis

Ongoing research expands knowledge of Oak Bay's deer population and the use of IC for population management. **Data analysis continues:** the amount of data from each year affects confidence internals (CIs). As more deer are treated and tagged, confidence increases (CIs get smaller). **Why we aren't administering IC:** to confirm that fawning & population decreases continue over time after initial IC.