



2325 Burr Street  
Fairfield, CT 06824

Phone: 203-259-6305  
Fax: 203-254-7673

**Board of Directors**

**Joyce Hergenhan**  
*Chairman*

**Mim Schreck**  
*Vice Chair*

**Joe Mallory**  
*Treasurer*

**William Cotter**  
*Secretary*

**Barbara Strickland**  
*Chair Emeritus*

**The Honorable M. Jodi Rell**  
Office of the Governor,  
State Capitol,  
Hartford, CT 06106

January 22 2008

Dear Governor Rell:

The Connecticut Audubon Society recognizes the threat to our state bird populations posed by deer overpopulations in Connecticut. For more than 20 years studies throughout the northeastern United States have demonstrated that White-tailed Deer have a significant deleterious impact on vegetation structure and diversity through the over-browsing of shrubs, herbaceous plants and woody seedlings. This destruction in turn has an indirect effect on the abundance and diversity of wildlife that depend on those plants for food and nesting grounds.

Excessively browsed forests are already showing an alarming reduction in numbers of bird species that prefer a dense shrub layer such as Hooded Warblers, Ovenbird, Worm-eating Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Veery, Wood Thrush and Indigo Bunting. For example, Indigo Buntings are not observed in forests where deer densities exceed 7.9 deer / sq km. The Yellow-breasted Chat and the Golden-winged Warbler, both listed as Endangered in Connecticut are affected by deer over-browsing.

For these reasons the Connecticut Audubon Society is a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the recently formed Connecticut Coalition to Eradicate Lyme Disease. We urge you to take their proposals seriously and to begin a state wide public awareness campaign that will allow informed discussion of the best means to effectively and urgently reduce the deer population. With state level leadership we are optimistic that deer numbers can be controlled to balance the biodiversity of our forests and allow the recovery of our damaged native woodlands and valuable native wildflower and bird species.

Sincerely,

**Milan G. Bull**  
Senior Director of Science and Conservation

Michael Aurelia

Joseph Blumberg

Andrew Dasinger

Eileen Drake

David Engelman

William Green

Raphael Hodgson

Peter Kunkel

Anthony Mongillo

Stephen Oresman

Judith Richardson

Edward Rodenbach

Ross Strickland

Ann Wasmer

Ben Williams

Lorne Wilson

Ralph Wood