



## Deer Exclosure: Keeping Deer Out



**White-tailed Deer**



**Marsden Tract Native Plants**

### What are we losing?

The National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and Wildlife Conservation Society are conducting a long-term study in the Gold Mine Tract to better understand how deer browsing contributes to the loss of native plant species. Loss of native plants creates a void, allowing for an increase of non-native (exotic) plants. The spread of exotic plants, such as garlic mustard, japanese stiltgrass & japanese honeysuckle, may be a leading cause in the loss of native plant communities.

### What can we learn?

Look for the nearly-straight line in the tree branches at about eye level. This was caused by deer feeding on the tender, reachable parts of trees and shrubs. By keeping deer out of this fenced area, researchers will be able to study native plant regrowth when undisturbed by deer. This new information will be used by the park to better manage the C&O Canal NHP natural resources.

### NPS Park Contact

If you would like more information on this study, please contact the C&O Canal NHP Natural Resources Management Specialist at 301.739.4200.

**Please do not disturb the deer exclosures.**