

# WILDLIFE TRENDS

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## Trees for Wildlife

By Rodney M. Dyer

After looking at thousands of acres of property being extensively managed for wildlife there is one thing in common, TREE PLANTINGS! From North to South, everyone is planting trees. We try to strive for the most natural habitat as possible and planting mast trees in my opinion is one of the keys in holding wildlife on your property. Allen Deese, nursery manager for the Wildlife Group based in Alabama, obviously agrees. I interviewed Allen for this article because he's seen and heard all the success and failure stories from land managers all



White Oak

Photo courtesy of Paul Wray, Iowa State University.  
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across the country. Because there are so many different types of trees available for wildlife, let's take a deeper look into what to plant, how to plant and why.

First we need to think in general to get started. We need to plant different varieties to be diverse. You do not want to put all your eggs in one basket. For instance, sawtooth oaks are a very popular hard mast tree to plant. But if you choose only those to plant and have a late frost and freeze the blooms, you will have a complete mast failure. Be diverse and plant different types of hard mast trees. Each tree has a different time of year it puts out flowers, called the bloom date. These times vary from early spring to late spring. So, plant a variety of trees to avoid a late frost that might kill your blooms. Late frost is the number one reason for mast failure according to Allen.

We could also learn a valuable lesson if we looked at how nature can affect or destroy our trees. The amount of devastation that hit the southeastern part of the

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