

# WILDLIFE TRENDS

SOUTHEASTERN EDITION

December 2002

Volume 2, Issue 12

## Mast Trees - The permanent Food Plot

by Wayne Bassett and Wallace Whatley

We are blessed with an abundance and variety of oaks here in the South, and it is common knowledge that these trees are beneficial to all wildlife. In Part I of this series in last month's *Wildlife Trends*, we discussed the importance of oaks to habitat improvement. We primarily covered the value of taking an inventory of the oaks you already have, as well as some ways to increase the growth and production of those oaks. The more significant points of that article are worth summarizing again:

- Acorns can comprise up to 75% of the diet of deer in November and December.
- It is recommended that approximately 20% of a property with a goal of habitat improvement be in mixed hardwoods — trees bearing acorns, or hard mast.
- It is strongly recommended, because of differences in ripening times, acorn fall, cold requirements, and unpredictable weather variations and even the ages of your trees, that you have a variety — a wide mix — of oaks.



Saw Tooth Oaks are very popular trees for both wildlife enhancement and for use as a ornamental.

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