

August 2025

12 Months of Wildlife Management

From Joe Roy, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist



A Partially Mowed Field

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August is a transition month here in Maine. It is where we really see summer dwindle and fall begins to show itself on the horizon. As the dog days of summer begin to wind down in August, our days continue to get shorter. August 31st has 80 fewer minutes of daylight than August 1st. By the end of August, I also start seeing the leaves showing some color, especially red maples growing in wetlands. I begin envisioning the upcoming hunting season, and I enjoy the full bloom and bounty of my garden, and see the fruits of last year's labor when I walk through my wildflower patch. I also instinctively feel the pressure of



the changing season as I look at my management to-do list, in addition to getting ready for winter as I stack wood and can my tomatoes. There is a lot to do this month on our woodlots, much of it is a continuation of tasks started earlier in the year.

Trail Maintenance

Many landowners like to bush hog or mow their trails and trail edges to keep them from overgrowing. August is a good time to do that. By mid-late August, wildlife have been able to access and browse on the herbaceous vegetation we have alongside trails and benefit from that cover. Cleaning up those edges now can help maintain your access. That being said, if the edges are not encroaching on your access, considering delaying another year may be the best approach.

Nest Box Maintenance

With the breeding bird nesting season over, now is a great time to check on your nest boxes and clean them up for the season.

Timber Stand Improvement

August is a great time to continue timber stand improvement. If you have received federal cost-share dollars, and you have had to limit your management during June and July, now is the time to get back in your lot to do your improvement work. Thinning and pruning are great activities to work on now, as well as crop tree release. Many hunters like to finish their timber stand improvement this month and then to limit

their activity near their hunting spots as the deer season approaches. Many hunters like to finish their timber stand improvement this month and then to limit their activity near their hunting spots as the deer season approaches. It's also a great time to evaluate hard and soft mast levels!

Field Management

In both June and July's articles we have discussed field management and the need to delay mowing to benefit wildlife. August is a good time to mow if you have waited this long, and if you have spot-treated invasives earlier, you will see the results of that work. You can mow your whole field now, or you can consider beginning a three-year mowing plan. In this plan, you will mow only one-third of the field annually, alternating a different third every year, so in three years, each third will be mowed once.

Evaluate Summer Plantings

If you have established food plots, and you did your summer plantings last month, now is a great time to evaluate them for success and browse pressure. In most food plots, I recommend a small exclusion fence around a 2-3 foot diameter area, and August is a great time to check that exclusion area to judge the difference between browse levels.

Invasive Species Control

Once again, you can accuse me of sounding like a broken record, but invasive species monitoring and control should be on your to-do list during the entire growing season. I am paying particular attention



to purple loosestrife, and honeysuckles this time of year.



Joe Roy is the Private Lands Wildlife Biologist for Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. Contact Joe at: joseph.roy@maine.gov or (207) 592-3344. Find more resources online at beginningwithhabitat.org.

This newsletter article was originally written for our partner Small Woodland Owners of Maine.