

September 2025

12 Months of Wildlife Management

From Joe Roy, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist



NEC released at Scarborough Marsh WMA in Sept 2022

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Identify Hard Mast Trees

Check on Apple Trees

Planning Winter Harvests

Dormant Season Seeding

Invasive Species Control

With the Autumnal Equinox arriving on the 22nd, and parts of the state getting its first frost of the year, September brings us the beginning of fall, and some of our first thoughts of the coming winter. We can still expect a few warm days this month, but towards the final days, many of us will find we are throwing on long-sleeved shirts and maybe even a knit cap while we work. The growing season is winding down, and much of our time will be spent wrapping up tasks that we started previously or preparing for winter. But an important task to undertake this month will just be appreciating the fruits of labor. Over the last 8 months, we have accomplished a lot on our woodlots, and we have really prepared ourselves for fall and winter.



Identify Hard Mast Trees

Mast is the fruit and seeds of trees, shrubs, and plants. Soft mast is fruits and berries while hard mast is nuts, acorns, and

seeds. Both soft and hard mast are used extensively by wildlife, but hard mast is more seasonally relevant in the fall as the acorns drop. Hard mast can also persist into the winter to provide nutrient-dense foraging opportunities outside of the growing season. Research has found that in some instances, as much as 70% of acorns are produced by only 40% of the oak trees. Identifying these trees now and marking them for retention can ensure you know which trees are most important for your wildlife foraging needs, and you can make sure these don't end up in a woodpile during future operations, in the coming years.

Check on Apple Trees



through the fall and now is a great time to see how your trees are producing. Do not be concerned if your most recently pruned trees haven't increased apple production yet, it may just take another growth season.

Maine is home to many varieties of apples that have been planted over the past decades. We have talked about the need to identify trees and prune them in previous months but now is a great time to see how they are responding. Many apple varieties hold onto their apples

Planning Winter Harvests

If you are planning to have a winter harvest done, now may be a good time to work with your forester and logger. Having your trails laid out, and timber marked, during the growing season, may help you better visualize what the landscape will look like after the harvest.

Dormant Season Seeding



While we still want to wait until October or November to spread our wildflower seeds, in September, we can check on the areas we are planning to seed, which we have been preparing. We are looking to make sure we have bare soil, free of undesirable vegetation. Take time this month to

check these spots and remove any persistent vegetation to prep the seedbed. Lightly raking the area to prep the seedbed may also be beneficial.

Invasive Species Control

This is a constant battle that requires constant effort. Keep on top of monitoring and removal through the growing season.



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.