

Enhancing your property for wildlife

As farmland and woodlands change over time wildlife habitat can be negatively affected; but if you have a piece of property, some equipment and a few tools you have there resources to attract and support wildlife.



There are many ways in which you can attract wildlife to your property big or small. Wild animals need only the essentials to be content in your neck of the woods. By providing or considering food, water, cover and space with a few simple guidelines you can create a place, which will attract many species of

animals and care for their basic needs of breeding, nesting, hiding, resting, sleeping, feeding and traveling.

Research is especially important before starting a project like this. It is important to know the specific qualities

of your land—such as the plants, animals, and resources that are already in the area. It is also crucial to be clear beforehand as to what your specific interests and goals are in undertaking this project — which animals do you want most to attract and for what purposes.

Cover and Space

Cover is one of the easiest wildlife needs to meet. It comes in many forms depending on the size of animal you wish to attract to your property. Where a rabbit only needs bushes deer and larger animals take cover under trees. Strategically planting just a few trees or bushes can make a great deal of difference.

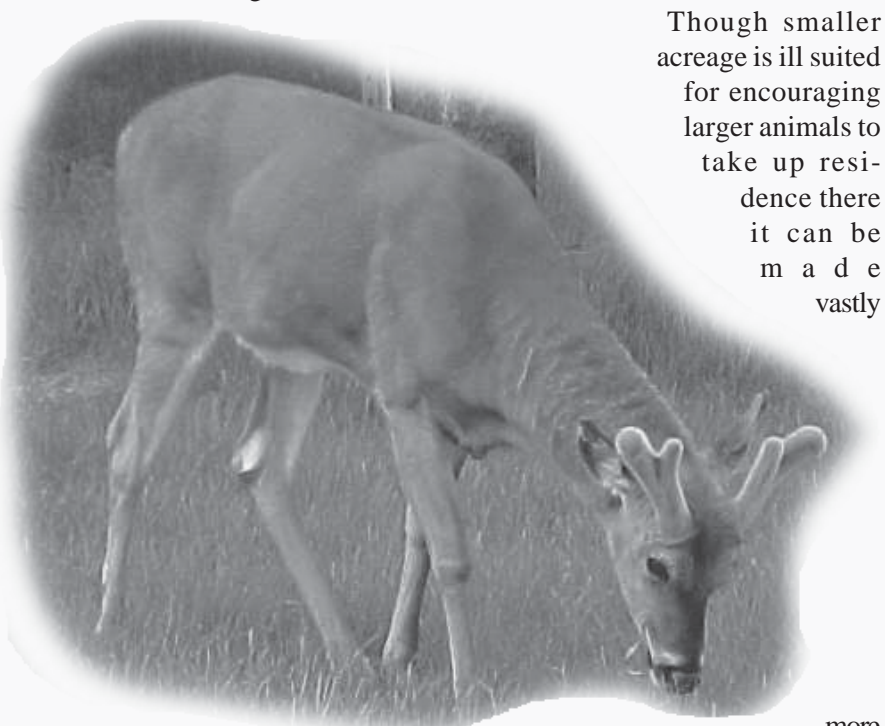
One of the easiest ways of creating wildlife shelter is with the use of brush piles. Best placed on the openings of wooded areas, placed 4-8 per acre, and built to approximately 8 feet high and 15 feet in diameter (according to the department of environmental protection.) These brush piles can accommodate a number of species including quail, rabbits, grouse, wild turkeys, skunks, raccoons, opossums, woodchucks, chipmunks, mockingbirds, white-

hance food source options. Blackberry and blueberry bushes grow naturally in many areas as well as sumac and honeysuckle, which are excellent food sources.

Snags, dead or dying trees that are allowed to fall and deteriorate naturally, are very beneficial for encouraging many smaller species of wildlife. Insects are naturally attracted to these areas that in turn increases the size, variety, and health of the bird population. The birds, which can nest in these decaying trees as well as feed there, are a crucial food source for many smaller carnivores.

Water is generally not a problem as any area of land is bound to have ponds or streams or at the very least dips where rainwater collects. Farm ponds can provide an excellent source for wildlife so long as livestock is kept out or limited to a small area of shoreline.

Though smaller acreage is ill suited for encouraging larger animals to take up residence there it can be made vastly



more attractive.

throated sparrows and juncos. Predators such as foxes, bobcats, hawks, owls and coyotes benefit from the small mammal and bird populations found in or around brush piles.

Allowing field edges, roadsides and other unusable areas such as ditches and bogs to return to more natural states will encourage wildlife to be comfortable on your property. Leaving these and other interior areas of your property untouched and untraveled can encourage wildlife activity.

Food and Water

Providing food for wild animals is an essential component. Planting fruit trees and allowing the fruit to drop naturally provides an excellent food source for many animals such as deer (and fruit trees provide excellent nesting sites for many species of birds.) Encouraging many varieties of fruit and berry producing plants that occur naturally on your property can en-

Smaller animals will be well provided for and larger species can be encouraged to be frequent visitors by supplying one or more of the four necessities.

If you are interested in starting a project, big or small, to your land, R.N. Johnson's can help. We have the equipment, the tools, and the know-how to make your undertakings a success. Come in and talk with the staff today. By letting them know what your goals are, what tools you have, and what your property's characteristics are they can guide you in the right direction.

Enhancing your property to encourage wildlife activity can be a very rewarding process. You can do a few very simple things and get lots of enjoyment out of your new visitors. Whether for bird watching, hunting, or simply for fun encouraging wild animals onto your land can be a very worthwhile and rewarding experience.

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