

July 2025

12 Months of Wildlife Management

From Joe Roy, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist



Figure 1. Loons

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Snag Tree Creation

July can be a great time to identify and create snag trees. Snags are standing dead or dying trees. These trees provide great resources for wildlife. Dying trees attract insects, which attract insect eating birds and woodpeckers. These woodpeckers excavate holes in trees creating cavities that can be the home of future cavity nesting birds and species of wildlife. Creating snag trees can be done mechanically or chemically.



Mechanically, snag trees can be created by “girdling” the tree. This is where you make two continuous shallow cuts, or rings, around the trunk of the tree, spaced 6 inches apart. The depth of these cuts varies from tree to tree, but you need to get through the bark and into the wood of the tree. Chopping away the bark between the cutting rings is also helpful, but not necessary. Chemical treatment can be done on cut areas in the tree by applying appropriate herbicides to axe cuts. It is important to follow all safety recommendations when working to mechanically or chemically create snags.

In July we really get to experience the beginning of the summer heat in most years. During these months I find myself sweating profusely as I tromp around in the woods. Not that the heat keeps me at bay, but I find myself doing more early in waxing and waning hours of the day and packing ample water. During the month of July as I am walking about, I notice the decline in bird songs. As the summer continues, many of our breeding birds reduce the frequency of their signing, since they are no longer defending territories and trying to attract a mate. During this month, most of our bird species are busy foraging, some to provide for young on the brink of fledging, and others to begin to build up their own energy stores. I also notice the changing colors across the landscape. No, I am not talking about the leaves, but rather the vibrant colors of our midsummer flowers that begin to bloom.

By July, I have already seen turkey and grouse chicks, and deer fawns, but this is generally the time I begin to see loon chicks on the water. July is a great time to be in the woods and on the water, and there are many things we should consider while we are out managing our land during this month.

Field Management

In last month's article we discussed delaying mowing during the month of June to benefit grassland dependent birds. Well now that it is July we can get mowing. Generally, we want to delay until after July 15th if we have birds like the Bobolink present. If



you are uncertain as to who is using your field, delaying until after July 15th is a good bet. Now you don't have to immediately jump on the mower or tractor the morning after the 15th. Maintaining a field condition all summer has its benefits for wildlife. I recommend walking your field to evaluate it. If you see that woody stems or trees are starting to pop up, you may consider pulling those stems or spot spraying with herbicide to maintain the field. If the occurrence of these wood plants is high, mowing now might be the best call.

Summer Plantings

Planting and maintaining food plots can have an annual calendar of its own dedicated to it. That being said, I do want to put summer plantings on your radar. While planting in our garden in July may seem way too late, food plots are a different story. The plant you are growing is not necessarily intended to get to the growth stage or size for human consumption. The leafy green forage may be the intended target for wildlife forage. There are a variety of annual and perennial plants that can be seen in food plots during the month of July that will grow through the summer, and early fall, to provide forage for wildlife.

Invasive Species Control



Figure 2. Multiflora Rose

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.



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