Wildlife Planting Guide

Southeastern States

A cooperative effort between Temple-Inland and the Angelina County Agricultural Extension Service. Compiled by Don Dietz of TIN and Mike Whiteman of TAEX.---5th Edition 2006.

We hope this wildlife planting guide aids sportsmen and wildlife enthusiasts in their efforts toward improving wildlife habitat. Temple-Inland and the Angelina County Agricultural Extension Service have field tested the various plant species listed in this guide. We recommend planting various combinations of seed in order to achieve maximum benefits for the targeted wildlife species.

Seeding rates are listed based upon single crop plantings. These rates can be lowered when planting combinations. For instance, a one acre field of oats would require 100 lbs. of seed, but a one acre field of oats and arrowleaf clover would require 75 lbs. of oats and 5 lbs. of arrowleaf clover.

Wildlife Plantings

Fall / Winter

Plant Species	Seeding Rate/ Lbs. Per Acre	Broadcast / Row Cropped/Drilled	Inoculant Yes / No	Planting Dates	Planting Depth	Annual or Perennial	Targeted Wildlife	Wildlife Benefit	Comments / Suggestions	Soil Tolerance	Maturation
Clovers:											
Arrowleaf	8	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	excellent choice for turkey,deer	well drained	July
Berseem	20	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	tolerates acid soils, short lived	widely adapted	May
Crimson	20	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	excellent choice for quail	widely adapted	May
Red	15	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A & P	D,T,Q	forage, insects	good for quail and deer	widely adapted	July
Subterranean	15	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T	forage, insects	good reseeder, forms matts	well drained, no deep sand	May
White/LAS1	4	B	Yes	October	1/4-1/2"	A & P	D,T,Q	forage, insects	survives well on wet soils	sandy loam to clay	Perennial
Small Grains:											
Elbon Rye	100	B	No	October	1-1 1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects, cover	not recommended for quail except for cover, very cold tolerant	sandy to loam	April
Oats	100	B	No	October	1-1 1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects, cover	hard on soil, rotate annually, subject to freeze damage	well drained	April
Wheat	75	B	No	October	1-1 1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects, cover	cold tolerant	widely adapted	April
Other:											
Ryegrass	30	B	No	October	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects, cover	lower in nutrition but reliable, well adapted to no-till, reseeds	widely adapted	May
Chicory	5	B/D	No	October	1/4-1/2"	P	D	Forage	Perennial, Plant in fall but provides spring/summer food plot	widely adapted	July
Winter legumes:											
Alfalfa	20/15	B/R	Yes	Sept/Oct.	1/2-1"	P	D,T	forage, insects	requires moderate to high pH.	well drained	April-May
Austrian Pea	35	B	Yes	October	1-1 1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	heavily browsed by deer	sandy loam, wet	May
Hairy Vetch	20-30	B	Yes	October	1/2-1"	A	T,Q	forage, insects	good ground cover	sandy to loam	May
Singletary Pea	35	B	Yes	October	1-1 1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	heavily browsed by deer	sandy loam, wet	May

Targeted Wildlife Abbreviations: D= Deer / DV= Dove / Q= Quail / T= Turkey / W= Waterfowl

Inoculation of Legumes

Many wildlife plantings are legumes, meaning they have the ability to produce supplemental nitrogen via root nodules and they require a species specific inoculant for development of these nodules. Examples are clovers, vetches, peas and alfalfa. Legume plants in strong stands may produce the equivalence of approximately 300 lbs. of ammonium nitrate or 90 lbs. of nitrogen per acre. This level of productivity can only be obtained through the use of inoculants. These <u>live</u> microorganisms should be applied immediately prior to seed planting. Some type of sticker or adhesive such as a sugar water, soda pop or commercial sticker should be used. Inoculants should be stored in a dry, cool place until used and upon application be incorporated into the soil as soon as possible.

We recommend always including a legume in your planting mix, especially clover.

Wildlife Plantings
Spring / Summer

Plant Species	Seeding Rate/ Lbs. Per Acre	Broadcast /Row Cropped/Drilled	Inoculant Yes / No	Planting Dates	Planting Depth	Annual or Perennial	Targeted Wildlife	Wildlife Benefit	Comments / Suggestions	Soil Tolerance	Maturation
Lespedeza:											
Bicolor	10/8	B/D	Yes	Jan./Feb.	1/4-1/2"	P	D,Q,T	forage, insects	good cover for quail, heavily browsed by deer	widely adapted	Sept.-Oct.
Kobe	35	B	Yes	Oct.-March	1/4-1/2"	A	D,Q,T	seed, forage	excellent reseeder	widely adapted	Sept.-Oct.
Sericea	30	B	Yes	Oct.-March	1/4-1/2"	P	D,Q,T	seed, forage	good cover for quail	widely adapted	Sept.-Oct.
Thunbergii	10/8	B/D	Yes	Jan./Feb.	1/4-1/2"	P	D,Q,T	seed, cover, insects	deer don't readily browse	widely adpated	Sept.-Oct.
Millet:											
Browntop	30/20	B/D	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	W,D,Q,T,DV	seed, insects	excellent seeder	well drained	65
Cattail (Pearl)	30/20	B/D	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	Q,DV,W,T	seed, insects, cover	long lasting seed head	well drained	70
Dove Proso	25/15	B/D	No	May/June	1/4-1/2"	A	Q,DV,T,W	seed, insects	persistent seed	well drained	70
German	30/20	B/D	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	Q,DV,T,W	seed, insects, cover	persistent seed	well drained	75
Japanese	25/20	B/D	No	May/June	1/4-1/2"	A	Q,DV,T,W	seed	excellent for waterfowl	moist	70
Peas/Beans:											
Catjang cowpea	20/15	B/D	Yes	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	insects, forage, seed	deer may over browse	widely adapted	July-Aug.
Iron &Clay cowpea	85/20/60	B/R/D	Yes	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	insects, forage, seed	deer may over browse	widely adapted	July-Aug.
Partridge pea	20/10	B/D	Yes	Oct.-Feb.	1/4-1/2"	A	T,Q	insects, cover, seed	plant fall/winter, comes up in early spring	widely adapted	Sept.-Oct.
Wildlife pea	50/15/25	B/R/D	Yes	May/June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,Q,T	insects, seed, forage	deer may over browse	well drained	July-Aug.
Sesame (Beene)	10/5	B/R	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	DV,Q	seed, insects	excellent seeder	well drained	85-100
Soybeans	40/60	R/D	Yes	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,Q,T	forage, insects, seed	deer may over browse	well drained	120
Velvet beans	30	B	Yes	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T	forage	deer may over browse	widely adapted	120
Miscellaneous:											
American Jointvetch	20	B	Yes	April/May	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	can tolerate wet conditions	fertile soils	October
Alyceclover	30	B	Yes	May	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	forage, insects	good nutrition, plant in combination with cowpeas	moderate to well drained	September
Bahia grass	20	B	No	April/May	1/4-1/2"	P	D,T,	insects, erosion control	permanent	widely adapted	July-Sept.
Buckwheat	50	B	No	May	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q,DV	seed, forage, insects	heavily browsed by deer	widely adapted	45-80
Chufa	50/35	B/R	No	June	1/2-1"	P	D,T,W	tuber	number one crop for turkey	sandy /sandy loam	100-120
Corn	12	R	No	April-June	1/2-1"	A	D,T,Q,DV	seed, insects, cover	a weedy corn field is better shredded after mature	sandy loam to clay	100-120
Dwarf Essex Rape	10	B/D	No	April-July	1/2"	A	D	forage	turnip like plant grazed by deer	widely adapted	75
Egyptian Wheat	12/8	B/R/D	No	April-June	1/2-1"	A	T,Q,DV,W	seed, insects, cover	great for quail	widely adapted	90-105
Hairy Indigo	10	B	No	April/May	1/2"	A	T,Q,D	seed, insects, forage	very hardy	widely adapted	July-Aug.
Peanuts	25	R	No	May/June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,T,Q	insects, seed, cover	deer may over browse	well drained sandy loam	120
Sunflower	25/10	B/R	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	DV,Q,T	insects, seed, cover	excellent for dove and quail	well drained	100
W.G.F. Sorghum	25/10/15	B/R/D	No	April-June	1/4-1/2"	A	D,DV,T,Q,W	insects, seed, cover	excellent seed production	widely adapted	110

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Food Plots

Spring/Summer

Spring/summer food plots are highly recommended to provide supplemental forages for all kinds of wildlife. Studies have shown that summer can be the most stressful time of the year for wildlife. The droughty dog-days of summer coincide with poor forage quality and reduced availability. Succulent spring growth has been reduced to dying or rank vegetation of limited nutritional value. The autumn bounty of hard and soft mast has yet to arrive and wildlife nutritional needs often go unfulfilled. Spring/summer food plots can provide large amounts of high quality forage throughout the summer as well as carry wildlife into the fall.

Fall/Winter

Sportsmen have traditionally established cool season food plots or "oat patches" to concentrate and harvest deer. However, they have ignored the many additional benefits associated with a sound winter forage program. Not only do fall/winter food plots aid in the harvest of game but they also increase and enhance the available forage during the winter stress period. Cool season food plots are very beneficial to bucks in the dead of winter. Native forage quality is low this time of year as are buck body reserves. These fall/winter

food plots can increase buck survival by providing an easy, nutritious food source. They can also provide early spring forage for doe now heavy with young. Legumes, especially clovers, are high in digestible protein and last well into late spring. Combinations of cereal grains and legumes can be planted in order to provide forage for an extended period of time.

No-Till Planting

Since the late 1980's, wildlife biologists from Temple-lnland and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service have field tested the No-Till planting method for both cool and warm season food plot establishment. Our findings have been especially favorable to warm season plantings of various combinations such as Iron and Clay cowpeas, American Jointvetch, and Alyce clover. Cool season plantings of clover, ryegrass, and hairy vetch have also been quite successful. However, cereal grains such as oats, wheat, and Elbon rye have not responded well to the No-Till planting method, as these seeds require deeper covering. Periodic site preparation, once every 3-5 years, may also be required on certain soil types in order to control turf grasses such as common Bermuda.

The theory behind the No-Till planting method is based upon the thatch of grass that covers and protects the seed. This thatch creates a barrier that preserves soil moisture and protects the seedling from intense sun, wind, and early frosts. The No-Till planting method also minimizes soil disturbance which can lead to erosion or the encouragement of unwanted annual weeds and grasses.

No-Till planting provides the sportsman an easier method of establishing food plots at reduced costs. For example, a mower or weed trimmer may be used instead of a tractor and disc. The best method for No-Till planting is seeding and fertilizing the target area and then mowing the grass and weeds to provide a thatch cover. Furthermore, combination plantings have been shown to be more successful than single seed plantings. For more specific information about your area, contact the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife, or the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Soil Testing

Soil testing or analysis for nutritive content and pH is a valuable tool in the management of wildlife, especially with regards to forage production. Soil tests indicate existing levels of such essential nutrients as nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, as well as levels of acidity, expressed as pH. Recommendations derived from analysis will include amount and ratio of fertilizer for specific crops as well as quantities of agricultural lime necessary to correct pH problems. Rates are often expressed on a per acre basis.

Samples taken for analysis should be representative of the area to be planted, relatively free of organic matter such as grass and leaves and labeled for future identification. While a large volume of soil may be accumulated during the sampling process, it is important to remember that only a small amount is necessary for analysis, usually a cup or less.

Analysis or test of soil may be obtained at either Texas A&M University or Stephen F. Austin State University soil laboratories. Your local County Extension office or Soil Conservation District office can assist you by supplying soil cartons, sampling instructions and information sheets prior to sampling. They can also assist with the interpretation and application of results.

Remember: Don't guess---Soil Test. You can afford it!

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