

GREEN ASH

GRAY FOX

The **green ash** is a hardwood tree. The young **seedlings are good food for white-tailed deer.**

Large green ashes provide good homes for many species of wildlife. **Birds and mammals eat the seeds produced by green ashes.**

**Gray foxes** make their dens in old fallen trees, hollows in trees, or in underground burrows. They will **eat small mammals like mice, squirrels, and rabbits.** The gray fox also will eat insects, berries, and nuts.

BLACK  
BEAR

LARGEMOUTH  
BASS

**Black bears** mainly **eat vegetation** like twigs, buds, leaves, roots, nuts, fruits, grubs, and beetles. Sometimes, other **small mammals** are eaten. Black Bears are good at catching **fish** and climbing trees. Human garbage also can attract bears, which can lead to problems for bears and humans.

Largemouth bass can be found in freshwater habitats. **Largemouth bass feed mainly on other fish, crawfish, frogs, and aquatic insects.** As their name suggests, if it fits in their mouth, they will eat it!

NORTHERN

BOBWHITE

FIRE

**Northern bobwhites live in open pine forests and meadows** that do not have a lot of thick underbrush. They are small, and must be able to move between clumps of grass and shelter easily. They **eat small seeds, berries and insects**. **Fire helps to maintain their habitat** by decreasing the amount of dead underbrush and allowing healthier grasses and forbs to grow, which increases seed production.

Fire creates a lush understory of nutritious plants valuable to wildlife. **Prescribed fires** are started by resource management professionals to **improve habitats for plants and wildlife**. **Fire makes nutrients in the soil available** for plants to use, and burns all the dead plants that block sunlight for new plants. **Fire can damage hardwoods** like red maple and sweetgum.

**BLACK  
CHERRY**

NORTHERN

CARDINAL

**Black cherry** trees produce **fruit** that **is eaten by birds** and other animals. **Birds help spread black cherry trees** by dropping the “pits”, or cherry seeds, where they travel. The larvae of some moths eat the leaves. Insects visit the fragrant blooms. **Deer** and rabbits will often **eat the thin bark,** twigs, and buds.

**Northern Cardinals eat grass, tree, and flower seeds.** In North Carolina, these birds do not migrate. They **need sturdy trees** in which to make their nests and plenty of shelter from the cold winter. Northern Cardinals often visit bird feeders.

FLOWERING  
DOGWOOD

MALLARD

**Flowering dogwood** is a small tree. The bright red berries do not ripen until fall, so they are a **good food source for birds** during the fall and winter. Birds also make their **nests** in flowering dogwood trees.

**Mallard** is a species of duck found in North Carolina. They find **seeds, nuts, grains, snails, and aquatic plants** under water. **Baby ducklings are prey** for snakes, rats, and other predators.

FUNGUS

S U N

**Fungi** are similar to plants except they **do not have chlorophyll** (k-lor-o-fill). Without chlorophyll, fungi cannot make their own food. Fungi have many different forms and absorb their food from other plants and animals. By doing this, **fungi help breakdown decaying plants and animals**, and speed up decomposition. Deer will eat some types of fungi.

The sun is the beginning of all food webs. **Plants**, the primary producers in our food web, **get the energy they need to grow from the sun**. Without the sun, most plants and animals would not survive.

Great Blue  
Heron

LEOPARD

FROG

Great blue herons have long legs and slender beaks, which come in handy when looking for prey. **Great blue herons hunt for fish, frogs, aquatic salamanders, snakes, and insects** in shallow waters. These large birds can be found near fresh and salt water habitats.

The leopard frog inhabits shallow freshwater areas along lakes, ponds, and slow running streams. **Leopard frogs** primarily **eat insects**, but will also feast on **spiders** and **snails**. They escape predators by jumping into the water and making sharp, quick turns that take them to safety.

**GRASSHOPPER**

***SPIDER***

**Grasshoppers are insects** with large back legs that they use for jumping. Insects have 6 legs and 3 body segments. Grasshoppers also have big eyes and large chewing mouthparts. **Grasshoppers eat** the leaves and stems of **many different plants**, including grasses, trees, shrubs, and forbs. Sometimes grasshoppers will even eat other insects!

**Spiders** have 8 legs and 2 body segments, so they **are arachnids** (a-rack-nids). Spiders are not insects. All spiders are predators, **feeding mainly on insects and arthropods**. Spiders produce venom that is used to subdue their prey before they are eaten. Not all spiders spin webs.

**RED-TAIL  
HAWK**

**BLACK RAT  
SNAKE**

The **red-tail hawk** is a **bird of prey**. It uses its keen eyesight to spot prey on the ground, like **mice and other rodents**, while it soars through the air. Red-tail hawks also will hunt **snakes**. These hawks make their **nests in tall trees** or on rock ledges, and will search for prey from tall trees at the edge of open areas.

**Black rat snakes** are good climbers. They use this skill to search for **birds, eggs, and mice to eat**. Sometimes, hawks will swoop in and capture the snake while it is raiding a bird's nest! Black rat snakes also eat small snakes and lizards.

**BLUE JAY**

**WHITE-FOOTED  
MOUSE**

The **blue jay will eat nuts, seeds, some berries, and bird eggs.** This is a large bird that can be very aggressive around backyard feeders. Blue jays also **store nuts** (like acorns) in tree hollows and in the ground. These nuts are often forgotten, and they sprout into new trees!

**White-footed mice** are active year round. Their nest sites are often surrounded with **black cherry pits.** They also eat **nuts, seeds, caterpillars, and other insects.**

BLACK  
LOCUST

WHITE OAK

**Black locust** is a hardwood tree covered in small spines. **Birds like to nest in black locust** because these spines help protect their nests from predators. **Seed pods remain on the tree** during the winter, **providing food for birds** and small mammals. Insects often attack young seedlings.

**White oaks** are hardwood trees. Deer eat small seedlings. Birds will make their nests in small and large trees. Many insects and fungi feed on white oaks. The **acorns ripen and fall off the tree every year** and are a good **food source for deer, turkey, squirrels,** and other wildlife.

**LONGLEAF  
PINE**

**WHITE-TAILED  
DEER**

Small longleaf pines are good cover for wildlife. **Big longleaf pines are good nesting sites for woodpeckers** and other birds. The **seeds** produced by longleaf pines (pinecones) **are food for squirrels and birds. Longleaf pines are very fire tolerant.**

**White-tailed deer** use tall grasses and trees for cover. They **like to eat acorns, nuts, grasses, and berries.** They will also eat young sapling trees. White-tailed deer can be a problem in urban areas by eating the plants in flowerbeds and gardens.

**RACCOONS**

**S O I L**

**Raccoons** are nocturnal, or active at night. During the day, they **nest in hollow trees**, old dens, or abandoned buildings. Raccoons like to **eat grubs, insects, eggs, seeds, nuts, berries, small mammals...** almost anything! They are common in urban habitats, and easily get into garbage cans.

**Soil provides a growing place for plants**, and a home for some wildlife. Soil **stores nutrients, minerals and water**. Soils can be damaged by digging animals and eroded, or washed away, when no plant cover is present.

**RED**

**OAK**

**BLUESTEM**

**GRASS**

The **acorns** of red oaks **ripen and fall off the tree every other year. Deer, turkeys, squirrels,** and other animals **eat the acorns.** Deer will also eat small seedlings. **Red oaks** also **host** many different types of **insects, fungi, and rots.** Birds will makes their nests in red oak trees.

**Bluestem grass** grows in bunches that can create **good cover for wildlife.** Some **songbirds and small mammals will also eat the seeds** that are produced on long, slender spikes. Bluestem grass **grows best in areas that have been burned by fire.**

ROTS

YELLOW-BELLIED

SAPSUCKER

Rots harm trees by slowing growth and killing parts of the tree. The **holes created by rots become good homes for wildlife.** Insects that feed on the decaying wood attract birds.

Yellow-bellied sapsuckers are part of the woodpecker family. They bore holes into trees, which causes the sap to ooze down the tree. **Yellow-bellied sapsuckers then lick up the sticky sap and any insects that were trapped. This can harm the trees,** and leave easy points of entry for fungi and diseases.

Prairie  
Warbler

**WILD  
TURKEY**

**Prairie warblers** are very small birds, less than 5 inches long! They **eat insects and some small seeds**. Prairie warblers like to forage **in the lower branches of trees or in brushy areas**. They can be found in open woodlands and overgrown fields.

**Wild turkeys** make their nests on the ground and roost in trees or tall shrubs at night. They like to **forage for seeds, berries, acorns, and insects in grassy areas and forests**.