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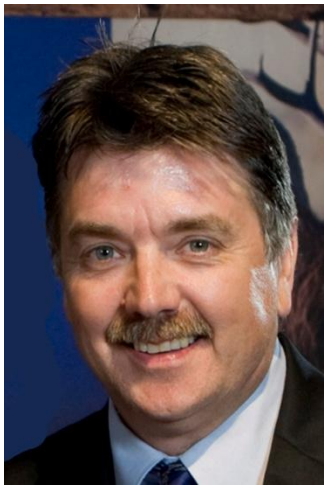
FORESTRY, WILDLIFE & FISHERIES UPDATE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011

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UT Names New Director of the Forest Resources Research and Education Center and Arboretum



The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture has chosen Dr. Kevin Hoyt, a senior forestry analyst and sustainable forest manager from Crossville to serve as director of the UT Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center and Arboretum.

Hoyt is no stranger to the UT Institute of Agriculture, having received his Bachelor of Science in Forest Management, Master of Science in Forestry and a Ph.D. in Natural Resources all from the University of Tennessee. In addition, he has worked as an adjunct faculty member for the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries. His most recent experience is with Huber Engineered Woods, LLC, in Spring City.

Dr. Bill Brown, dean of UT AgResearch is pleased that Dr. Hoyt could join the UT AgResearch team. "Kevin brings a wealth of experience in industry that will benefit our students and research programs and his familiarity with sustainable forestry practices will continue to advance the Center's traditions of environmental stewardship," Brown said.

Regarding his appointment, Hoyt is thrilled. "Being named as the new Director of the UT Forest Resources AgResearch and Education is truly an honor and fulfills my lifelong goal of working in public outreach, education and for the advancement of natural resources research at my alma mater," he said. Hoyt added, "Following Richard Evans in this position is truly a humbling experience given his long tenure in the position. I hope to build on his foundation and legacy in sustaining the Center's future programs and initiatives."

Evans is retiring after 39 years of service to the University. He knows Hoyt well and is pleased to have him take the reins as the Center's director. "I think Kevin's experience and talents will represent the University well, and I am looking forward to working with him through the transition," he said. Evans plans to reside in Clinton and is also looking forward to staying engaged as an Arboretum volunteer. "And I plan to spend a little more time fishing and with the grandchildren," he said.

ONCE AGAIN, PEN-RAISED QUAIL ARE NOT THE ANSWER!!

Craig Harper, Professor, Wildlife Management

I continue to get requests for information regarding pen-raised quail. Many people want to see more quail and reestablish populations of bobwhites. However, releasing pen-raised birds is not the answer! Years ago (1930's – 1950's), state wildlife agencies throughout the country hatched and pen-raised millions of bobwhites. Upon release, they were to bolster and reestablish quail populations. **All** of these efforts failed. Millions of dollars were spent. Wildlife managers learned a lot in the process. Since, much has been learned in the private sector about raising pen-raised bobwhites. However, **efforts to keep them "wild," feeding programs, soft-release techniques, etc. have not led to a single reestablished population**.

Pen-raised quail lack behavioral characteristics of wild birds. This should not be surprising as pen-raised birds are domesticated stock, which have been selected over time to be docile enough to survive in pens and raised in a most unnatural way. Many of these domesticated birds will not nest, and some that do will not incubate their clutch. It has also been noted for a pen-raised female to incubate her clutch and, upon hatching, simply walk off and leave the brood. Without the hen, chicks die quickly, either from exposure, starvation, or predation. In short, **pen-raised quail have never been found to be able to sustain a population**. In addition to the behavioral traits, mortality among pen-raised bobwhites is **extraordinary**. This is understandable as the birds have not learned to avoid or escape predators by the proper rearing of a wild adult hen or cock bird. They are relying on innate instincts, which are obviously lacking after generations of domestication.

Although behavioral issues can be problematic, some pen-raised bobwhites have been found to reproduce, nest, and raise a brood if they are released where some wild quail still persist. However, **domesticated birds should never be released where wild birds still persist**! Pen-raised birds readily associate with wild birds. In fact, they interbreed. This is not good; research has shown the genetic integrity of a wild population may be sacrificed after only 2 years of releasing pen-raised birds just prior to the nesting season.

Another problem associated with pen-raised bobwhites is transmission of diseases into the local wild population (if one exists), which can lead to increased mortality for native birds. Domestic quail are raised under the same conditions as other poultry, such as chickens and turkeys, and are subject to many domestic poultry diseases.

Regardless of the problems associated with pen-raised bobwhites, these birds would not persist to re-establish a population even if reproduction and mortality were not a problem. The real problem is they do not have an adequate place to live; **that is, the habitat is not suitable**. Have you ever wondered why the native birds are no longer there, or why the population is not increasing?!? If native birds are present, why would releasing domesticated birds cause the population to increase if the current wild population cannot increase on its own?!? The environmental pressures that are limiting population growth have not been removed. If the area does not currently support bobwhites, there is a reason.

Many factors have contributed to declining quail populations: 1) habitat destruction (quail can't live in shopping centers, parking lots, and subdivisions, so there is less area available), 2) changing land-use practices (large "clean" farms with no suitable cover; conversion of row-crop farming to pastures and hayfields of tall fescue and bermudagrass), and, yes, 3) increased numbers of predators (nobody traps anymore). We have also learned that habitat improvement on relatively small properties (less than 1,000 acres) surrounded by poor bobwhite habitat may not help bobwhite populations. A landscape effort is needed. That doesn't mean you should not try to improve habitat for bobwhites and other wildlife that use

early successional habitat, but it does accentuate the importance of working with your neighbors and trying to impact as large of an area as possible.

Over the past few years, several research projects have studied and identified what we need to do to bring quail back to appreciable numbers. **Every study points to habitat**—improving habitat conditions to once again favor the year-round needs of bobwhites is the key to restoring bobwhite populations. Not pen-raised birds.

For information on improving habitat for bobwhites and how to receive cost-share assistance, contact your county Extension office, regional TWRA office, or local NRCS office.

"INCLUDED SAPWOOD" IN EASTERN RED CEDAR

Adam Taylor, Associate Professor, Forest Products

Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is a common tree species in Tennessee. The wood is valued for its beauty, workability and pleasing odor. It is often used for fence posts and outdoor furniture because of its natural resistance to rot and insect attack. It is also commonly used as animal bedding.

As with all naturally durable woods, only the heartwood of Eastern red cedar contains the chemicals that protect the wood against fungi and termites. The sapwood (light colored ring of wood under the bark) is not resistant and is often cut away from wood that will be exposed outdoors. The familiar reddish purple color (and characteristic odor) of the heartwood indicates the presence of the protective chemicals. In addition to the dark colored heartwood and the light colored sapwood surrounding it, there are often streaks of pale wood running through the red heartwood portion. This is called "included sapwood" or "white ring." It is not clear what causes this abnormal wood to form but it is very common in eastern red cedar.



Webwood.com

TENNESSEE FOREST STATISTICS

Wayne Clatterbuck, Professor, Silviculture and Forest Management

The most recent statistics (2008) for the forests of Tennessee have been released by the Forest Inventory and Analysis unit of the USDA Forest Service. A few of the highlights are outlined and discussed below.

- Tennessee remains about 52 percent forested with about 14 million acres of forest land. The amount of forest land has remained steady since the early 1960s. Thus, to date, the acreage of forests in Tennessee has not decreased for the last 50 years. Although, some forests have been lost to urbanization, abandoned agricultural lands have reverted back to forests compensating for forests lost. In Tennessee, most of the growth of urbanized centers (Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, Jackson, Clarksville, Tri-cities) has been on former agricultural lands, not forests.

- About 8 billion trees (greater than 1 inch in diameter) are estimated to be growing in Tennessee, nearly 1,300 trees for each person living in the state.

- Tennessee remains a dominant hardwood state with 91 percent of the forest land considered a hardwood forest type.

- Approximately 83 percent of the forest land (11.5 million acres) is owned by private forest landowners.

- On the average, about 408,000 forested acres are disturbed each year. Timber harvests occur on 230,000 acres while natural disturbances (wind – tornados, ice, and fire) disturb 180,000 acres annually.

- Forest growth in Tennessee is about 1.1 billion cubic feet per year. Harvesting removes 406 million cubic feet (38%) each year and about 314 million cubic feet (29%) dies naturally in the forests each year. Thus, about 360 million cubic feet of growth accumulates in the forest each year. Net growth (growth – mortality) exceeds removals by 88 percent or a ratio of 1.88 to 1. Of the total stand volume of forests in Tennessee, about 1.5 percent is removed each year.

- The forests in Tennessee are maturing and becoming larger. More than 9 million acres are in the sawtimber size class (greater than 12 inches in diameter). These larger and presumably older trees contribute to higher mortality rates as well as being more susceptible to insects and disease. Deteriorating forest health in mature to overmature stands is a concern for forest management.

For more information on present forest trends in Tennessee, refer to the following source.

Source: Oswalt, C.M.; King, C.R. 2011. Tennessee, 2008 Forest Inventory and Analysis Factsheet. E-Science Update SRS-032. Asheville, NC: USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 5 p.

TREE GRADE: THE KEY TO HARDWOOD VALUE

Wayne Clatterbuck, Professor, Silviculture and Forest Management

The profitability of hardwood timber management depends on the capacity of the forest to produce high-value wood products such as high grade sawtimber and veneer. These products require trees that are straight, have a diameter of at least 12 inches and preferably more (measure at 4.5 feet above ground level) and have few defects such as knots or rot. A sawlog with few defects (high grade) may have twice the value of a medium grade log and several times the value of a low grade log of the same size (refer to table below). The same amount of time is required to grow a low grade tree as a high grade tree. Thus, timber management should focus on growing high quality logs for greater profitability. Growing the more valuable species on the proper sites and appropriate management strategies for spacing and stocking are required to produce high grade trees.

Prices paid for logs of different species and grade from a Tennessee sawmill in 2007.
All values are in dollars per thousand board feet, scaled using the Doyle Rule delivered to the mill.

	Walnut	Red Oak	Poplar
High Grade	$800	$500	$350
Medium Grade	$400	$350	$220
Low Grade	$200	$250	$150

Buyers and sellers use three factors to determine the value of a log: grade, scale; and species. Grade is a measure of the quality of the log and the lumber that will come from the log. Log grades are used to predict the proportion of various grades of lumber that will be produced in a log. Scale is a measure of the quantity of lumber within a log. Different species can be used for different products and have inherently different values based on preferences (supply and demand) of products. Even relatively minor differences in grade and species can mean a very different value for logs.

How do you determine if your forest can produce high-grade hardwood trees? The presence of high-grade trees is a good indicator. However, if high-grade trees are absent, the forest may still have the potential to produce them. Although hardwoods will grow on virtually any soil, good hardwood growth occurs on the better productivity sites. In general, creek and river bottoms, coves and lower portions of slopes have moist, well-drained and deeper soils suited for hardwood growth. On most upland sites, timber profits from hardwood management will be low no matter how much money is invested or time expended. For these more infertile or droughty sites, pines will usually outperform hardwoods in terms of volume and value.

Hardwood forests can be managed profitably with the highest values coming from large, high-grade trees of desirable species. Well-planned regeneration practices to favor desirable species and thinning to accelerate the growth of future crop trees assist in growing high-grade, high-value and more profitable trees. Because tree grade is the key to hardwood timber value, careless or unplanned tree cutting can damage timber and seriously reduce profits. Before carrying out a timber harvest, contact a professional forester or you county Extension office for information and assistance.

Sources: Taylor, Adam. 2007. *A Hardwood Log Grading Handbook*. UT Extension PB1772.
Dubois, Mark. 1996. Alabama Cooperative Extension Service ANR-581.

BY PLAN OR BY CRISIS

David Mercker, Extension Specialist, Forestry

Traveling around the state following the recent high winds and tornadoes has been revealing. Very widespread, trees are torn/twisted/toppled. In discussing the situation with one of the Tennessee Division of Forestry District Foresters, he shared something that is worth repeating, "We manage forestland either by **plan** or by **crisis**. Either way, forests will be managed. "

The point is valid and one that foresters have long understood. Forestlands should be managed professionally and deliberately. A forest management plan establishes landowner objectives, recommends prescriptions to achieve those objectives and creates a timetable of implementation. Normally those prescriptions include well-timed timber harvests. When timber is harvested following the prescription of a professional forester, landowners have much more control over the process and the return on investment is more favorable.

Not so when trees are harvested as a result of crisis. When a stand of timber is damaged by tornado or high wind, the salvage sale must occur immediately, before rot and stain begin. A reasonable estimate is that 75 percent of the timber value will be lost following the disturbance. Consider only half the volume is likely salvageable, and the other half has lost *half* its value. Too, interest among prospective timber buyers is low for a couple of reasons: (1) logging is dangerous and with slow productivity and (2) usually there is a high volume of timber available (all at once), so why bid when there is *enough to go around*?

Prudent landowners manage their forest by plan, not by crisis. Holding timber as security for when financial times get bad is normally not the best action. Each year, the odds increase of a wind-origin tragedy occurring. A commonly accepted estimate is that two percent of all forestland will undergo a major disturbance every year. Expanding this implies that within 50 years, all forestland will experience it.

By plan or by crisis . . . forests will be managed.

Landowners who have recently experienced storm damage to their timber may be eligible for a casualty loss. Refer to the following publication for a better understanding of the process:

Mercker, David. 2011. When tornado Strikes: steps to claim a timber casualty loss. W261. The University of Tennessee Extension. https://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W261.pdf

TREE DISPUTE!

Larry Tankersley, Extension Associate, Forestry

Earlier this year, I was contacted by retired wildlife professor, Boyd Dearden, who provided the following pictures.



The tree to the right of the red line belongs to the home owner on the right, the red line is the property line.

The owner of the house on the left is not happy with debris from the tree falling on their house and in the yard.

Another photo of the two houses and the property line between them.



The tree is clearly the re-sponsibility of the home owner on the right, even the portion that extends beyond the vertical property line into the neighbor's yard/airspace.



This third photo again shows that a large portion of the subject tree is over the neighbor's side of the line.



This photo of our subject tree (now on the left) is from the backyard looking down the property line.

The resolution to our situation is that the non-owner is allowed to trim the tree out of his/her air space as long as the resulting pruning does not unduly harm the tree.

Referring to the last picture, I would advise the tree owner to offer to remove the lower two or three branches that ultimately extend over the neighbor's house. The higher branches do not appear to be directly over the house and removing them even back to the property line would remove an unhealthy proportion of the tree and it would look contrived.

It is important to note that flowers, leaves, fruit and discarded branches are typically considered "general nuisance" and are not generally consider the responsibility of the tree owner.

For more information on "Neighbors and Trees" see UT Extension publication:
https://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP687.pdf

INCOME TAX DEDUCTION FOR TIMBER CASUALTY LOSS

Linda Wang, National Timber Taxation Specialist, USDA Forest Service, Updated June 2011

Timber damaged by hurricane, fire, earthquake, ice, hail, tornado, high wind and other storms are "casualty losses" that may allow timberland owners to claim a deduction on their federal income tax returns. But in many cases the specific requirements on loss calculation set by the tax law and rules may actually result in low or no deductions.

Tip: It is important to weigh the cost of hiring professional forestry and/or appraisal services to establish the required tax records against the potential tax savings before proceeding.

Determining the Amount of Casualty Loss

Deductible casualty loss for timber held for business or investment purpose is the smaller of *the adjusted basis of timber* and *the difference of the fair market value immediately before and after the casualty*. Salvage sale is reported separately.

An Example
A tornado damaged your woodland tract. Before the tornado, the fair market value of the timber was $10,000. But after the storm, the timber is worth only $1,000. So the FMV loss of your timber is $9,000 ($10,000 - $1,000). Assuming your timber basis is 5,000, *the amount of casualty loss deduction is only $5,000, not $9,000*.

Calculating the Adjusted Basis

The key ***for most cases is to figure out the adjusted basis of the standing timber. There is no deduction allowed if the basis is zero***

The key for most cases is to figure out the "adjusted basis" of the timber. Generally, the cost of a property (standing timber here) is termed "basis" in tax. The "*adjusted basis"* is the original basis reduced or added by adjustments over the term of ownership (e.g., new purchase or timber sale).

The original basis for:

- purchased timber property is the purchase price and related costs (such as legal fee and timber cruises).
- gifted timber property is the donor's adjusted basis in most instances.
- inherited timber property is the *fair market value* (or alternative value if so elected) on the date of death (or alternative valuation date).
  If you have not determined the basis of your timber at the time of acquisition, you may use the current volume, growth over the years, and timber price at the time of acquisition to establish it retroactively (IRS Timber Casualty Loss Audit Technique Guide). Use Form T to document your timber basis.

What You Need from Your Forester

To establish the timber basis and appraise the fair market value loss of the timber immediately before and after the casualty, you may need to consult a professional forester to determine the relevant *timber volume* in thousand board feet, cords or tons and *timber prices.*

"Single Identifiable Property"

Treasury regulations require that casualty loss is determined with respect to the "single identifiable property". This can be the "timber block" (even if only a portion of it is actually damaged) if you keep the timber tax records (account) together for the block. For example, you own a tract with 100 MBF of pine sawtimber ($4,000 basis) kept in one account. A fire destroyed 20 MBF. The adjusted basis for the casualty loss determination is $4,000, not just $800 ($4,000 x 20 MBF/100 MBF). But the loss valuation must also be appraised for the entire tract/block, which can cost more.

Where to Report the Casualty Loss

Casualty losses are claimed first on Form 4684. For timber investment property, the loss is then entered into Schedule A of Form 1040. For timber business property, the loss is entered on Form 4797.
Form T should also be prepared, although you may or may not be required to file it.
(see filing instruction on Form T).

What If a Net Gain Is Realized from Salvage Sale

You have a taxable gain when the salvage sale exceeds the adjusted basis of the timber and the sales expenses. But you may elect to postpone paying taxes on the gain if the proceeds are reinvested in timber such as planting trees, purchase of timberland and stock (at least 80%) of the timber corporations.

Tax Pointers

Appraisal Fee and the Cost of Photos:

- Appraisal fees and the cost of taking photos are not part of the casualty loss deduction. They are deductible expenses claimed as miscellaneous itemized deductions (subject to the 2% adjusted gross income reduction).
- Any cleanup costs after the casualty are not casualty loss.

When to Claim the Loss:

- In general, you can deduct a casualty loss only in the tax year in which the casualty occurred.
- However, for federally declared disaster area, you may elect to apply the casualty loss in your prior year's tax return. Compare your current year and last year's tax bracket and any expenses in amending the prior year's tax return.

Special Rules for Damage to Your House and Landscape Trees:

- The initial casualty loss deduction, first calculated as the smaller of the fair market value loss and the adjusted basis, is then reduced by $100 per casualty event and 10% adjusted gross income to arrive at the allowable amount of loss.
- Insurance, reimbursement and salvage value must be subtracted from the casualty loss.
- Report such casualty loss as an itemized deduction (Line 20, Schedule A of Form 1040, for 2010)
- If you don't take itemized deduction, a casualty loss on personal-use property such as your house and landscape trees is lost.

Note: Combine the house and the landscape trees as one property for calculating the loss (Reg. §1.165-7).

Tips on Tax Records for Proof

- Gather information about the casualty (time, nature of the event and the area affected).
- Take photos as quickly as possible after the casualty.
- Document the federal or state assistance or payment received.
- Gather legal, insurance, and ac-counting papers, if necessary, from the court, title company, the bank, or the insurance company to establish ownership and possible insurance claims if any.

It is important that you have records that support your casualty loss deduction, but do not attach them to your return.

- Forest management records such as management plan .
- Carefully document the appraisals from the hired services by professional foresters and/or appraisers.

Recommended Readings

1. USDA Forest Service Publication: ***Forest Landowners' Guide to the Federal Income Tax***, Chapter 5 (Cost Considerations), Chapter 6 (Income Considerations) and Chapter 8 (Casualties, Thefts and Condemnations), available free on-line by key words search using the book's title.
2. National Timber Tax Website: www.timbertax.org/getstarted/casualty
3. The IRS website: http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc515.html
4. The IRS Timber Casualty Loss Audit Technique Guide, April 2011.
5. IRS Publication 547: *Casualties, Disasters, and Thefts*
6. IRS Publication 584: *Casualty, Disaster, and Theft Loss Workbook (Personal-Use Property)*
7. IRS Publication 584B: *Business Casualty, Disaster, and Theft Loss Workbook*
8. A tax preparation software can be an effective tool for casualty loss calculation and form selection, saving you time.

Disclaimer: This material is not legal, tax and accounting advice. Pursuant to the IRS Circular 230 rules, any U.S. federal tax advice contained here is not intended or written to be used for the purpose of avoiding penalties under federal tax laws, or promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any transaction or matter addressed herein.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT CALENDAR FOR AUGUST

Craig Harper, Professor, Wildlife Management

Wildlife Notes

Bluebirds are hatching their third nests
Young bats learn to fly
Chipmunks are bearing their second litter
The bobwhite population is probably at its annual peak in August
American kestrels begin migrating into Tennessee by late August
Bullfrogs, green frogs, cricket frogs, and gray tree frogs are calling throughout TN
In West TN, you might also hear green tree frogs, bird-voiced tree frogs, and barking tree frogs
Cicadas are "calling"

Habitat Management

Prepare new cool-season plots for fall planting
- spray existing sod with glyphosate herbicide (such as Roundup-2 quarts per acre)
- amend soil according to soil test recommendations
- incorporate (disk or plow) lime and fertilizer into root zone of plot
- refer to *A Guide to Successful Wildlife Food Plots: Blending Science with Common Sense*, PB1769, for additional information on seeding rates and management recommendations

Spray and/or mow perennial forage food plots for weed control if necessary
- refer to *Appendix 2* in *A Guide to Successful Wildlife Food Plots: Blending Science with Common Sense*, PB1769, for additional information on seeding rates

Spray undesirable woody plants in early successional habitat
- multiflora rose, privets, sericea lespedeza, sweetgum, green ash, and *Alanthus* are examples of undesirable woody plants in early successional habitat
- Roundup, Garlon 3-A, Arsenal, Cimarron, and PastureGard should be considered
- refer to *Chapter 6* and *Appendix 4* in *Native Warm-Season Grasses: Identification, Establishment, and Management for Wildlife and Forage Production in the Mid-South*, PB 1752, for additional information

Begin silage chopping or strip-mowing dove fields as they mature

Top-sow winter wheat in late August to attract doves and provide forage for white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and other wildlife through fall and winter

Burn old-fields to stimulate forbs and reduce grass dominance (late August)

Don't cut native grass hayfields past mid-August
- winter cover provided by native grasses is the primary usefulness of native grass hayfields for wildlife

- if you hay past Mid-August, there will not be enough regrowth to provide sufficient winter cover
- refer to *Chapter 3* in *Native Warm-Season Grasses: Identification, Establishment, and Management for Wildlife and Forage Production in the Mid-South*, PB 1752, for additional information on using native warm season grasses as forage for livestock

Plant firebreaks (late August) and other disked strips not left for natural vegetation. Annual cool season grains (such as wheat and oats) along with annual legumes (crimson and arrowleaf clover and Austrian winter peas) are excellent choices.

Begin flooding fields for migrating blue-winged teal and local wood ducks

Finish planting wild millet and buckwheat around beaver sloughs and other areas that will be flooded in November for ducks

Construct/repair dikes and water-control structures for flooding fields/woodlands for waterfowl this fall/winter

To provide high-quality habitat for many amphibians, maintain flooded areas throughout the summer and restrict cattle access.

Maintain cattails and other emergent vegetation around ponds **if amphibians are a focus** and fish are present (fish are significant predators of amphibian eggs and tadpoles)

- **if the pond is managed for fish**, pond edges should be deepened to approximately 18 inches and emergent vegetation should be removed

Wildlife Management/Population Management

Conduct survey for white-tailed deer using infrared-triggered cameras

- one camera for 100 acres, spaced systematically throughout property
- prebait with trace mineral salt and shelled corn for one week
- after prebait week, continue baiting sites and taking pictures for 2 weeks
- refer to *Quality Deer Management: Guidelines for Implementation*, PB 1743, for information on calculating deer density estimates

If bats are in your attic, don't close them up now

- young are still present, but will be flying soon
- if you close them up, they will die and produce a terrible odor
- maternal colonies will be leaving for hibernation before too long
- close all outside openings to attics as soon as the bats leave
-

Blackbirds begin flocking later in August

- don't allow them to roost in the trees in your yard; if they start, they'll form a habit
- repel them with noise makes consistently until they stop returning in the evening (shotguns, firecrackers, banging metal pans together)
- be persistent
- refer to *Managing Nuisance Animals and Associated Damage Around the Home*, PB624, and visit http://icwdm.org for additional wildlife damage management information

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