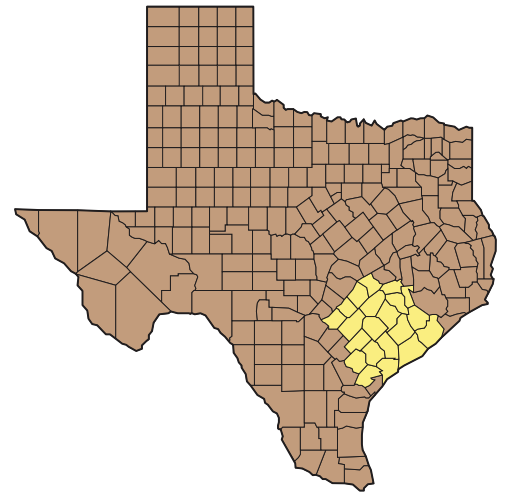


Common Browse Plants Utilized by White-Tailed Deer in South-Central Texas

White-tailed deer eat the leaves, twigs, seeds, and fruit of a wide variety of plant material. They choose vegetation based on palatability, seasonal availability, vegetation abundance, precipitation, and overall health of the habitat. When deer browse, they tend to select the most tender growth first, usually the twig tips and new leaves. When forbs are abundant, the deer's diet may be primarily forbs for that time period. By observing which plants deer are eating on your property, it is possible to get a better feel for deer population and overall health of your habitat. This brochure is intended to help landowners identify vegetation that white-tailed deer prefer.



FIRST CHOICE — Plants eaten whenever found by deer, regardless of season.



Alabama Supplejack/Rattan Vine
Berchemia scandens
green vine; small leaves with parallel-veins evident below; slender branching stems; blue-purple fruit



American Beautyberry
Callicarpa americana
shrub; opposite deciduous leaves; orange/brown to gray bark; purple berries in clusters around stem in fall



Bois d'arc
Maclura pomifera
medium-sized tree; also yellowish-green fleshy fruit on female tree; stems have milky sap



Bristle Greenbrier
Smilax hispida
vine; green bark with numerous black needle-like prickles; leaves shiny green above, paler below



Cedar Elm
Ulmus crassifolia
tree; leaves with serrated edges and prominent veins below; brown slender twigs, bark sometimes with flattened ridges; winged seeds



Deciduous Holly
Ilex decidua
small tree; twig tips eaten by deer anytime; small tree; deciduous spatulate leaves; light gray to white bark; red berries ripen in fall



Hawthorn species
Crataegus spp.

small tree; many species; twigs usually with slender thorns; scaly gray outer bark, reddish-brown inner bark; spring white flowers



Netleaf Hackberry
Celtis laevigata

tree; gray bark with conspicuous warty bumps; leaves pale green asymmetrical at base; late-summer orange to brown/red berry



Poison Ivy
Rhus toxicodendron

can be small shrub or hairy-stemmed vine; leaf clusters in three; reddish leaf stems; small whitish berries



Roughleaf Dogwood
Cornus drummondii

shrub or small tree; olive-green leaf rough above, fuzzy below; reddish stems; fall berries; moist soils



Sawtooth Greenbriar/'Catbriar'
Smilax bona-nox

vine; green bark with green recurved "cathook" prickles; smooth shiny green 3-lobed leaves, can be variable



St. Andrew's Cross
Ascyrum hypercoides

multi-branched small shrub with reddish stems; small leaves often growing beneath larger ones; tiny yellow summer blooms



Texas Sophora
Sophora affinis

shrub 2-5m; called Eve's Necklace; fuzzy leaves; fragrant pink bonnet-shaped blooms; black-beaded bean



Trumpet Creeper
Campsis radicans

climbing vine or shrub to 10m; opposite leaves with serrated edge; orange tubular flowers



Virginia Creeper
Parthenocissus quinquefolia

high climbing vine with adhesive tips; 5 leaflets emerging from one point on stem

SECOND CHOICE — Plants selected when first choice is unavailable.



Water Oak
Quercus nigra

large tree; also called a “turkey-foot” oak due to leaf shape; leaves vary in shape, often on same branch; usually found in moist to wet soils



Bumelia
Bumelia lanuginosa

small tree; also called woolybucket bumelia and gum elastic; leaves shiny green above, fuzzy or woolly below; thorns



Dewberry species
Rubus spp.

prickly vine; 3-5 leaves in cluster; white flowers; black fruit in late spring and summer



Farkleberry
Vaccinium arboreum

small tree; oblong evergreen leaves wedge-shaped at base; bell-shaped white flowers; black berries in winter



Huisache
Acacia farnesiana

shrub or small tree; paired thorns; fragrant yellow spring flowers prized for nectar; seeds in solitary compartments in fat seed pod



Live Oak
Quercus virginiana

small to large tree; evergreen; usually oblong-shaped leaves; acorns usually in clusters of 3 to 5



Macartney Rose
Rosa bracteata

thorny evergreen shrub; white flowers in the summer; leaves dark green above, paler and hairy below



Mustang Grape
Vitis mustangensis

woody vine; leaves green to gray-green above with fuzzy whitish hairs below; grapes turn dark purple when ripe



Post Oak
Quercus stellata

moderately-sized tree; deeply lobed leaves with no points; acorns in fall

THIRD CHOICE — Plants eaten as a last resort.



Western Soapberry
Sapindus saponaria

tree to 15m; long alternate leaves; gray to red bark may break into reddish scales; yellow grape-like berries in fall



Yaupon
Ilex vomitoria

shrub or tree; small evergreen leaves; gray twigs; shiny red berries in fall and winter



Blackjack Oak
Quercus marilandica

small tree to 10m; broadly-lobed stiff leaves with bristle at tip; leaf veins conspicuous; acorns ripen in 2 years



Coralberry
Symphoricarpos orbiculatus

small shrub with shreddy reddish bark; leaves opposite; coral red to pink berries in fall



Eastern Red Cedar
Juniperus virginiana

evergreen tree; reddish-brown bark flakes off in strips; reddish-brown twigs; bluish berries



Hercules Club/Prickly Ash
Zanthoxylum clava-hercules

rounded shrub or small tree; also called toothache tree; reddish thorns and leaf stems; opposite leaves



Honey Mesquite
Prosopis glandulosa

shrub or tree; twigs with 2 inch long thorns; yellow summer blooms; seeds in flat bean pods



Laurel Greenbriar
Smilax laurifolia

vine; strong prickles; evergreen leaves leathery green to yellow green above



Peppervine
Ampelopsis arborea

vine; clusters of 5 leaflets; leaves shiny green with raised veins above, lighter green and hairy below; reddish stems at joints; black berry



Photos courtesy Pauline Singleton, Mary Ann Schubert and TPWD staff.

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