

**HERE'S A PLANTING TECHNIQUE JOHNNY APPLESEED DIDN'T
KNOW
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We are pretty much in limbo as far as the seasons go. Spring is on the wane and summer is knocking on the door. The black flies have put in an appearance in early numbers that seem to portend a higher infestation than usual.

I have frantically been trying to tie up all the loose ends so that when the turkey hunting and fishing gets good I can spend some time at both. So much has been on my mind it seems hard to even think about topics for this column.

One of my problems is I am a total obsessive compulsive and when I get to thinking about (usually very minor or unimportant) projects or events I am hopelessly sidetracked. Call it spring fever or whatever you will, it gets worse in this particular period. The following are prime examples of what I am talking about.

My training and interests naturally compel me to try innovative ways to accomplish things that, as far as I know, have never been tried to propagate certain plant species.

Two such are apple and black cherry trees. Both are excellent food sources for wildlife and the cherry is an eminent commercial species as well.

Apples are excellent wildlife food sources and are few and far between as far as trees go in the wilds of the Adirondacks. From my own and other's experiences, I have learned they are hard to plant and raise to maturity. If the weather doesn't get them, the deer, mice or rabbits will. The solution is obvious to me, but how do you affect it?

You have to have the right species, plant them in great enough numbers so all of the above adversities allow at least a handful to survive.

Last fall I devoted one long afternoon scouring the area for wild trees with fruit and gathering a few apples from each. I then quartered them and placed the pieces in shallow holes in the ground in open sites with what looked to be good soil. I protected them with hardware cloth and marked each with a colored stake. As far as I have been able to determine, none sprouted or grew.

In the case of black cherries, I had a willing ally in brother bruin. I found a huge pile of bear dung full of cherry pits. I lugged it home in a pail with holes in the bottom and left them to the elements all winter. Voila! This spring many had sprouted. I sorted them out, scalped bare

spots in openings in the woods, stuck them under about a half inch of soil and marked the spots with colored stakes. We shall see.

It must go with the turf, because from what I have gleaned from friend Gary's missives, he too likes to experiment with Mother Nature. I remember him writing that he has had little success with leeks. I am having some demonstrable success to date, but will reserve final judgment for a while. Excuse the pun, but the proof of the pudding will come later.

There is no end of the weighty subjects that devour much of my time. One such came up in my musing today. In my line of work I am constantly reminded by the whirring memories of so-called environmental groups of the lasting damage caused by logging.

One need only drive over old Route 28 from Sequoia to the end of Heroux's entrance to see the fallacy in that theory. A word of caution though, do not try to drive it in your car.

The road was abandoned about 1963 and it's hard to believe how nature has started to reclaim the land. Try it instead on your mountain bike.

That's all I have today and I leave you in the hope you may suggest some other heady thought provoking subjects I may pursue. Meanwhile, be on the lookout for some bear dung consisting of apple remains and seeds for me.