

# Acorns

## A Seasonal Bounty

Acorns are a nutritious source of food, rich in carbohydrates, proteins and lipids. But, acorns ripen and fall only during a few months in the fall, so animals must quickly harvest this seasonal bounty. Many animals utilize a wide variety of plant foods and feed on the acorns when they are available. Others, like ground squirrels, scrub jays and acorn woodpeckers, collect and store acorns for use throughout the year. Mule deer and band-tailed pigeons follow the ripening crop from high elevations to low, extending their harvest period. These animals, together with non-native turkeys and wild pigs, gorge on the acorns to build up a supply of fat to overwinter and prepare for spring births.

### Try This:

Pick out two or three oak trees and check them for acorns. Most trees produce large crops of acorns in two- or three-year cycles, but usually a number of trees in a grove will have a good crop each year.

