



# Wildlife Journal

Washington Region

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## Building the Herd - Mineral Salts for Blacktail Deer

Leased hunting lands allow the hunter to participate in the management and health of the animals within the leased area. Minerals are important dietary components for deer, just like they are for livestock, and they contribute greatly to overall health and antler development. In the spring and summer when fawns are growing rapidly and antlers are developing, many trace elements and

minerals are metabolized by the animals. If you place a mineral lick somewhere



on your lease, bucks, does and fawns will all learn to visit your mineral lick to gain

these important nutrients. Thus the mineral lick should be established in June so that they are available while antlers are growing and fawns are in a rapid growth phase. Your local animal feed store will have a bag of livestock mineral salts you can use or you can purchase special blends from your favorite hunting supply store.

Find a location just off a main trail where you can dig a hole twice the depth of a bag

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## Sources of commercial antler builders.

Ask your seed supplier for seed best suited for our local area.

[www.antlerking.com](http://www.antlerking.com)

[www.cabelas.com](http://www.cabelas.com)

[www.evolved.com](http://www.evolved.com)

[www.plantbiologic.com](http://www.plantbiologic.com)

[www.whitetailinstitute.com](http://www.whitetailinstitute.com)

[www.wildgameinnovations.com](http://www.wildgameinnovations.com)

*Rayonier has not tested these products and does not endorse these vendors they are simply provided for your convenience. We would love to hear your experience using mineral salts and antler builders.*

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**For more information  
contact Rayonier Western  
Forest Resources  
360.533.7000.**

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of mineral salts laid flat. Lay the bag in the hole, slice through the bag and pull out a cup or two of mineral salts. Cover the bag with dirt and a little duff and then sprinkle the mineral salts on top of the area. Deer will soon detect the minerals and begin digging for them. You can also buy small flat blocks of mineral salts for deer. Just follow the manufacturer's directions.

Do not set out large cattle mineral blocks as these tend to scare blacktail deer, although

whitetail deer seem to be fine with them. Blacktail deer prefer a more natural source of minerals.

Once deer locate your mineral lick, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have taken steps that will enhance the health of the deer population. You have also created a great spot to set up a trail camera that will allow you to watch the antler development on that big one that you hope to bag this fall.

