

Station 7: Dead Wood

Dead trees, often referred to as "snags" when standing, play a crucial role in ecosystems. They serve as important habitats for a variety of wildlife. Birds, bats, and insects often nest in or use the cavities created in decaying wood. This habitat is especially vital for species that rely on dead or dying trees for breeding and shelter.

As dead trees decompose, they return valuable nutrients to the soil. This process supports the growth of new plants and maintains soil health, fostering a diverse array of life in the ecosystem. Dead trees support a unique community of organisms, including fungi, bacteria, and insects that thrive on decaying wood. These organisms contribute to nutrient cycling and provide food for other species, enhancing overall biodiversity.

Fallen trees can help prevent soil erosion by stabilizing the ground and promoting water retention. Their root systems, even after death, can hold soil in place and reduce runoff. Dead trees continue to store carbon, which helps mitigate climate change. As they decompose, they release carbon slowly back into the atmosphere, contributing to the carbon cycle. Overall, dead trees are essential components of healthy ecosystems, supporting a wide range of species and contributing to ecological processes.

