Wildlife Trees & Dangerous Trees

Identification and Management

For more information about wildlife trees and dangerous trees, contact:

The local **Forest Service District Office**

or

Wildlife Tree Coordinator
c/o Resource Stewardship Branch
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
PO Box 9338, Stn. Prov. Gov't.
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9M1

Telephone: (250) 356-7719

Ministry of Forests
Forest Practices Branch

BC Environment

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD of BRITISH COLUMBIA

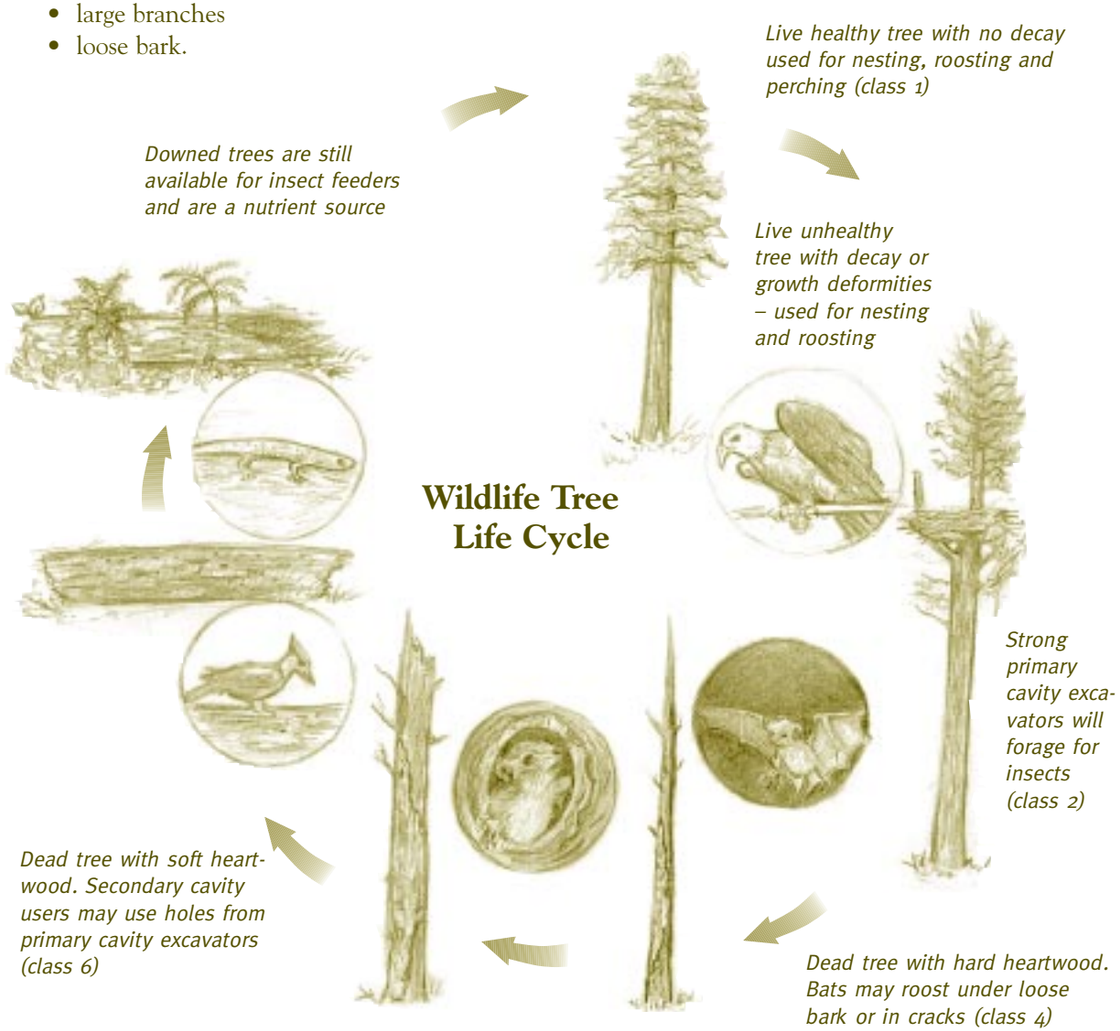
FOREST RENEWAL BC

Wildlife Trees

A wildlife tree is any standing tree, dead or alive, with special characteristics that provide habitat for wildlife. Some of these characteristics are:

- large size (height and diameter)
- hollow trunks
- broken tops
- large branches
- loose bark.

Woodpecker cavities, nest sites and birds perching on the branches are obvious signs of wildlife use. Bat guano under loose bark, or bear fur around a hollow trunk are less obvious signs of use.



Dangerous Trees

Wildlife trees are an essential part of forest biodiversity; however, some of the attributes that make these trees valuable habitat, also make them dangerous to workers.

In the past, the term "snag" was synonymous with "dangerous tree." With recent changes in WCB regulations, a dangerous tree is now defined as:

…any tree that is hazardous to workers because of:

- *location or lean*
- *physical damage*
- *overhead hazards*
- *deterioration of limbs, stem or root system*
- *a combination of the above.*

A dangerous tree surrounded by a forested no-work zone can be kept on a worksite.

The size and shape of a no-work zone will depend on the condition of the site and the dangerous tree. In this example, a leaning tree on a hill, the majority of the no-work zone will be downslope.

A roadside tree assessed as dangerous can be modified to remove the dangerous part or be cut down.

A wildlife tree assessed as safe does not require a no-work zone.

To ensure safety around potentially dangerous trees, an assessment, performed by a qualified assessor, is carried out to:

- assess the risks associated with the site and the planned activities
- assess the defects on any dangerous tree
- determine appropriate safety procedures.

If the combination of site, planned activities and the state of the tree means the tree in question is a dangerous tree, there are three options:

1. remove the tree
2. modify the tree to remove the danger (e.g., remove a dead top)
3. establish a no-work zone around the tree.

A dangerous tree can be made part of a wildlife tree patch, or surrounded by a "no-work zone." The size and shape of this reserve area reflects the possible areas that would be impacted if the tree were to fall.