

When Cutting Firewood, Remember...There's Life in Dead Trees

Kas Dumroese

A healthy forest needs dead trees. Sounds a little funny, doesn't it? Dead trees play at least two key roles in maintaining forest health - one while they're standing and one after they've fallen. How are dead trees important?

As dead trees fall down and decompose, the nutrients stored in them are slowly released back into the soil by the activity of fungi and bacteria. These nutrients can then be used by other trees. Downed logs, especially those partially buried by duff or soil, act as moisture reservoirs. Salamanders and other amphibians seek shelter in the moist wood of

This information first appeared in Woodland NOTES, Vol. 4, No. 1.

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