

A Wildlife Tree Committee Initiative



WHO SHOULD USE THIS PAMPHLET?

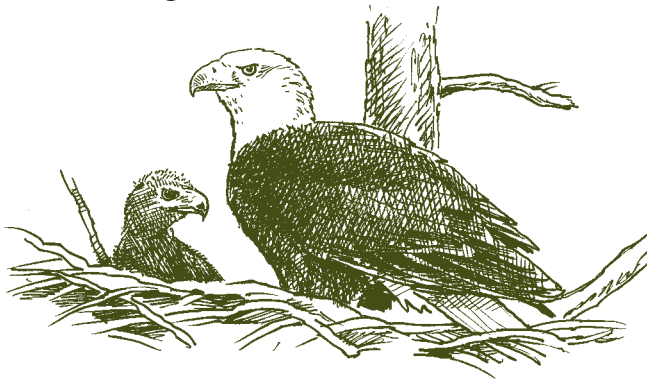
A variety of groups or individuals interested in wildlife and the protection of wildlife habitat can use this pamphlet. These include:

- forest workers in government and industry
- woodlot owners
- private landowners
- recognized environment, conservation and natural history groups.

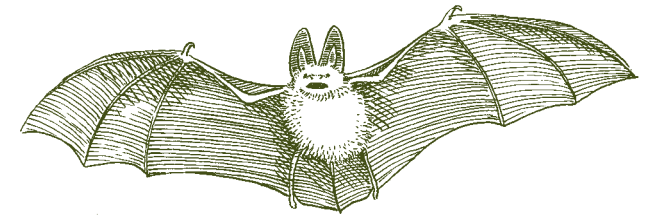
WHY READ THIS PAMPHLET?

Your Safety May Depend On It

In British Columbia more than 90 species of wildlife, or approximately 16% of the province's birds, mammals, and amphibians depend on wildlife trees. Old, dead, and decaying trees are used by wildlife for nesting, food, shelter, denning, roosting, and perching. As such, wildlife trees are a vital component of natural forests. Many of these trees may be unsound with loose overhead branches and bark. Assess these factors carefully prior to any hammering or vibration which could bring loose material down. **If in doubt, your safety comes first.** Seek advice from experienced fallers or contact the Wildlife Tree Coordinator for names of qualified wildlife/danger tree assessors.



Because of their dry wood, some of the best wildlife trees are also very desirable as fuel to firewood cutters. Wildlife trees found along forest edges and near roads are especially vulnerable. Posting a sign is one way of helping to protect trees for wildlife.



WHAT MAKES A GOOD WILDLIFE TREE?

- Select standing large diameter trees which have the majority of their original height, some lateral limbs and branches.
- Select trees which show evidence of animal use, including nests and nest holes, feeding notches, squirrel middens (piles of discarded tree cones), and fresh wood chips at the tree base.
- If the tree is still alive (contains some green foliage), choose a tree which is as large as possible **and** shows some visible external defect such as a forked or broken top, cracked trunk, or fungal conk.
- If possible, select trees located in areas along streams, gullies or ravines, or near marshes, lakes, and forest meadow edges.
- Select trees which fit the above criteria and which you feel **are at risk of being cut down**. These trees would therefore benefit by having a wildlife tree sign attached.
- If a tree is located in an area which is likely to receive use by people (i.e., along a roadway), choose trees which present a **minimal safety risk** to persons who may be in the area. Trees should be leaning away from, or be on the downhill side of, roadways or other areas of potential human activity.

ATTACHING SIGNS

- Signs are for both private and public land.
- Before placing any wildlife tree signs, permission must be obtained from the landowner on private lands, and Ministry of Forests or Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks on public lands.
- If you would like to start a wildlife tree signing program in your area, contact your local Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks office or Ministry of Forests district office.
- Once a suitable tree has been selected, the yellow wildlife tree signs should be positioned so that **anyone wishing to cut the tree will be alerted (i.e., place sign at breast height)** but in such a way that it will not detract from the visual landscape.
- Use two nails to attach each wildlife tree sign to the tree trunk. Nails should be of sufficient length to penetrate at least 3 cm into the woody stem.
- If monitoring is requested by the land owner, then information as described below should be collected. This information will aid in developing and maintaining a data base on wildlife trees in your area as well as providing good baseline information on tree life cycles and related wildlife use. The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and the Ministry of Forests support wildlife tree research projects in various areas of the province.



SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

Date: Year _____ Month _____ Day _____
 Drainage (1) _____ UTM# (2) _____ E _____ N _____
 Location (3) _____
 Tree species (4) _____ Diameter (5) _____ cm
 Height (6) _____ m % bark remaining _____
 Living (7) _____ Dead (8) _____
 If dead, probable cause of death (9) _____
 Does this tree have a broken top: Yes No
 Was this tree topped: naturally mechanically
 If mechanically, indicate method: cut explosives or
 stumped (10)
 Date of stumping (11) Year _____ Month _____
 Wildlife use: (12) _____ Estimated/Measured/Observed
 Cavity nests: size (cm) height from ground (m) active/inactive (species)

 Open nests: Yes No Active: Yes No
 Species nesting: _____
 Feeding: Yes No Type of feeding: _____
 Evidence of other wildlife use: _____

 Additional comments: _____

 Sign posted by: _____
 Representing: _____
 Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks or
 Ministry of Forests contact: _____

NOTES

- (1) Indicate the drainage in which the tree is located. If this drainage is a small tributary to a main system, note both the main system and the tributary.
- (2) Record the UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) grid number for the location of the tree. This number can be obtained by contacting local Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks or Ministry of Forest offices.
- (3) Describe the general location of the tree using as many landmarks or indicators as possible (i.e., 3 km above confluence of stream X, etc.).
- (4) Indicate tree species if known. If stem cannot be identified, record as unknown.
- (5) Indicate stem diameter (at breast height).
- (6) Estimate tree height.
- (7-8) Indicate whether tree is live or dead. Mechanically stumped trees that do not have live foliage are considered dead even though they may be a freshly cut live tree.
- (9) If known, indicate how the tree died (i.e., fire killed, insect, disease, girdled, etc.).
- (10) Some wildlife trees have been created by feller buncher or saw to simulate a high stump. This information will be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this technique.
- (11) If available, it is important that the date on which the tree was stumped be noted. This will allow the "evolution" of the stump as a wildlife tree to be followed.
- (12) Describe wildlife use as completely as possible. Indicate animal species if known, but record as unknown if you are unsure.

For additional information about
Wildlife Trees please contact:

Wildlife Tree Coordinator
 Resource Stewardship Branch
 Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
 P.O. Box 9338, Stn Prov Govt
 Victoria, B.C. V8W 9M1

