



Dead or Alive?

When beavers flood tree habitat and cut down trees, they foster healthy and more diverse ecosystems.

When tree roots are drowned by the creation of a beaver pond, the standing dead trees are still teeming with life. They host many different organisms, from tiny bacteria, fungi, and insects to birds and small mammals, who use the trees for food and shelter.

When a beaver cuts down an aspen, poplar, or willow, the plant is still alive. The root systems remain intact and can sprout new shoots in response to beaver activity. A healthier forest habitat is created with a diversity of tree heights and ages. This modified forest creates a varied environment that benefits beavers as well as other wildlife.

Try It!

Look for holes in the standing dead trees and think about what birds, mammals and insects might use them and how.

Image courtesy of Rose Ratliffe