

A DEAD TREE IS MUCH, MUCH MORE THAN A NURSERY!

You may already know that cavities in dying and dead trees may be nurseries for about eighty species of birds and many other wildlife in North America, but have you ever observed their usefulness to birds in other ways? These examples may deliver some surprises. Spend some time observing dead trees and you may discover others! To learn more about the habitat value of dead trees and how some may safely be retained explore: CavityConserveration.com.



They're not competitors, and not exactly friends, but this Osprey and Peregrine Falcon agree on one thing. A tree with an unobstructed view gives them an edge in hunting and guarding their territory.

Photo by Joe Chandler



When you've evolved to breed and travel in colonies, a preferred convention site is one that accommodates everyone and keeps them in view. Individuals can then track and learn from the foraging success of others.

Photo by Joe Chandler



Think about this. How detectable are you if you look like wood? Perhaps the screech-owl chose a doorway in this dead tree so she could sleep more soundly!

Photo by Joe Galkowski



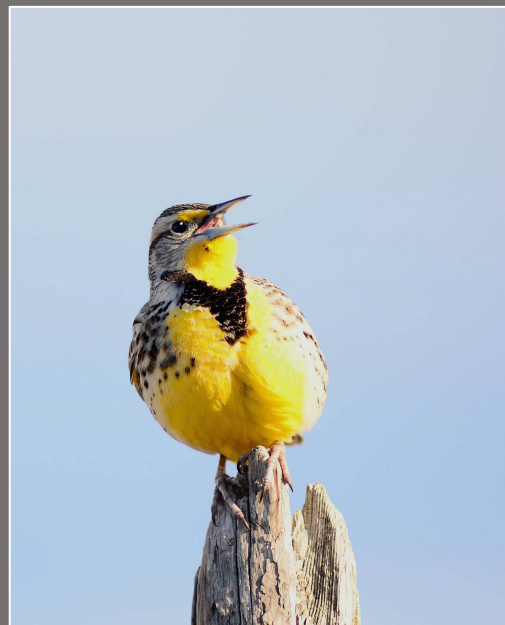
A resting perch with a view over a river serves a dual purpose for the Belted Kingfisher---a dining table. While enjoying its meal, it can maintain a look out for predators so it too, doesn't become someone's lunch.

Photo by Andrew Morffew



These trees are chosen by vultures for their high, elbow-wide spaces. So do deep diving birds like cormorants who have water-absorbing feathers. Why? It is here these sun worshipers can warm and dry their wings to make them better flyers.

Photo by Sandrine Biziaux Scherson



To lure the lady nearby, the best advertising post is high and has no leaves. This Western Meadowlark knows he can be seen from all directions the moment he unfurls his heart in song.

Photo by Rich Bohn

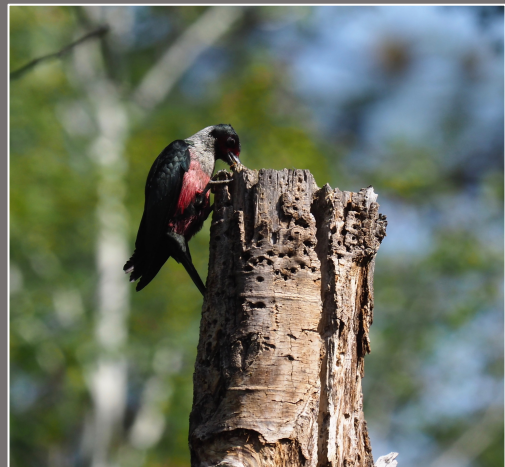


It takes numerous small snacks to make a meal. The Downy Woodpecker, like many other insectivorous birds, knows that foraging in a dead tree is a good strategy. Humans have a term for this---‘economy of effort.’

Photo by Peggy Honda

When decay reshapes wood into small saucers and grooves, a bird recognizes a handy anvil---just the kitchen tool it needs for crushing large seeds and the exoskeleton of its victims. It also doubles as a place to store them!

Photo by ParadiseBirding.com



A bird needs to wipe, clean and shape its bill. When it’s time, a dead limb is a good napkin, scrub brush and file. But that’s not all. It is a substrate for spreading scented preen-oil to lure a mate!

Photo by Peggy Honda

Whether birds take a wet or dry bath, yoga positions seem part of the routine. Wings, necks and legs need ample room to lift and stretch so birds can clean every nook and cranny and keep their feathers flight-ready.

Joe Chandler



No tax deductions apply in Nature. A dead tree freely donates all its remains to the wildlife community. Specific residents above and below ground are designed for different jobs: to dismantle, re-purpose or convert its nutrients to humus.

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If a stream or lake is its final resting place, a prostrate tree offers a couple of benefits. It's a dry spot to nap when your tummy is full, and you can cuddle with mom at the same time.

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Though the grasshopper and field mouse wish the American Kestrel no hunting advantages beyond what he already possesses, this handsome falcon shows why even the last remnants of a tree stump is better than removing it completely.

Don Mammoser



What's true of us as we age also applies to trees. Beauty becomes less about appearance and more about the intrinsic value we retain. For safety and other reasons many of us have to leave our home, but like old trees, sometimes we just need a little extra care to remain where we are

.

Please always ask, 'Does the tree need to be removed completely?'

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