

Keep a Log Book: Here's Why



Time to log those observations while staying home and safe.

During these “stay at home” times, people are drawn to their outdoor surroundings. But instead of changing them with a rake and saw, simply enjoy the outside world. Keep a log book!

Take walks, sit, listen and observe the activity outdoors. Start a log book or journal to record what a single down tree means to wildlife, or how leaf litter is the winter home for emerging fire flies. Don't “clean up” these important habitat sites, as “messy areas” provide critical shelter and food for wildlife.

Dead trees provide vital habitat for more than 1,000 species of wildlife nationwide. They also count as cover and places for wildlife to raise young. By some estimates, the removal of dead material from forests can mean a loss of habitat for up to 20 percent of animals in an ecosystem. **Wildlife species use nearly every part of a dead tree in every stage of its decay for things such as:**

A Place to Live—Many animals, including birds, bats, squirrels and raccoons make nests in hollow cavities and crevices in standing deadwood.

A Food Source—By attracting insects, mosses, lichens and fungi, deadwood becomes a gourmet restaurant for wildlife looking for a snack.

A "Crow's Nest"—Higher branches of snags serve as excellent look-outs from which wildlife such as raptors spot potential prey.

A Hiding Place—The nooks and crannies of deadwood are put to good use by squirrels and other wildlife looking to store food.

It doesn't matter whether a dead tree is standing and serving as an insect smorgasbord for woodpeckers, or laying on the forest floor and providing a silent passageway through the noisy leaf litter for hunting red foxes and habitat for amphibians, every woodland needs and benefits from them. They not only provide unique habitat and habitat diversity, they also are part of the natural order that all successful forest stewardship programs strive to promote.

Log in your observations and don't mess with the natural world.

Or, for more of a recording, consider making a wildlife video like this amazing one about one dead down log!

[One Log and Wildlife Video](#)

Ever Wonder...

Where the Term “Log Book” Came From?

Two different nautical accounts give explanations to the origin of this term. One story says that sailors wrote information on wooden boat shingles, then bound them into a book, hence “log book.”

The other story gives details on how early sailors used a log to measure their speed at sea. Sailors would throw a log off the bow of their boat, then count the time it took for the stern to pass by the log. If the boat was 100 feet long and it took 10 seconds to pass the log, then they would record their speed of 10 feet per second in the “log book.”



Rachel Carlson, renowned conservationist, recorded environmental observations which led to her book “Silent Spring,” heightening environ-



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