

Why do forest animals live where they do?

Different-aged forests are home to different species

Natural disturbances like fire, wind and disease have kept Oregon's forests in a constant state of change. Human activities such as agriculture, development and timber harvest also change the forest landscape. These disturbances result in a variety of forest ages and habitat features that ensures the abundance and diversity of wildlife.

Some animals do best in young, open stands. Some do best in older forests. Some move from one type to another depending on their needs for food, breeding, giving birth, raising their young, sleeping or escaping predators. For many animals, features such as standing dead trees (called snags) and large pieces of decaying wood found in a particular stand, rather than the age of the stand, are most important.

Young open forest stands

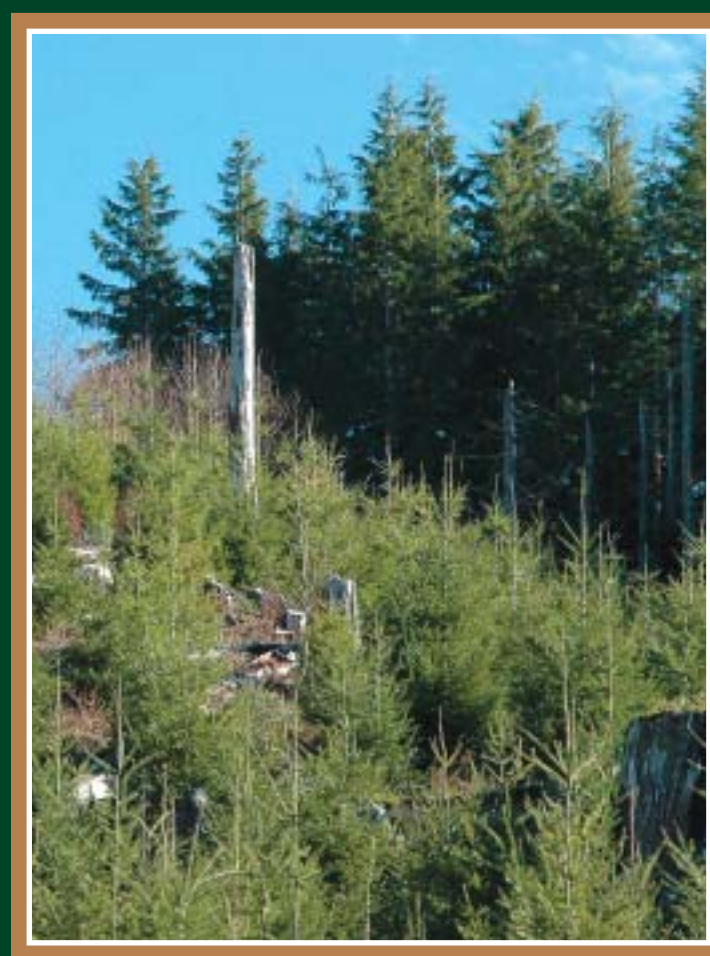
Young forests provide habitat for species that prefer openness and the vegetation found there. This is the first stage of regeneration following a disturbance that has removed most of the larger trees. It is characterized by small trees, herbs and shrubs and may last 15 years or longer. Oregon law requires replanting after timber harvest and that downed wood, snags and some live trees be left after harvest for wildlife – just as they would be after a natural disturbance. Here are some animals found in this type of habitat.

CLOSELY ASSOCIATED

Striped skunk
Badger
Black-tailed deer
Common nighthawk
Western bluebird
American goldfinch
Creeping vole
Chipping sparrow
Northern pocket gopher
Mountain beaver
Deer mouse
Dusky flycatcher
Western jumping mouse
MacGillivray's warbler
Fox sparrow
Lazulli bunting
Spotted towhee



Spotted Towhee



Mountain Beaver



Striped Skunk



Deer Mouse



Black-tailed Deer



Northern Pocket Gopher



Fox Sparrow



Western Blue Bird



Northern Alligator Lizard

GENERALLY ASSOCIATED

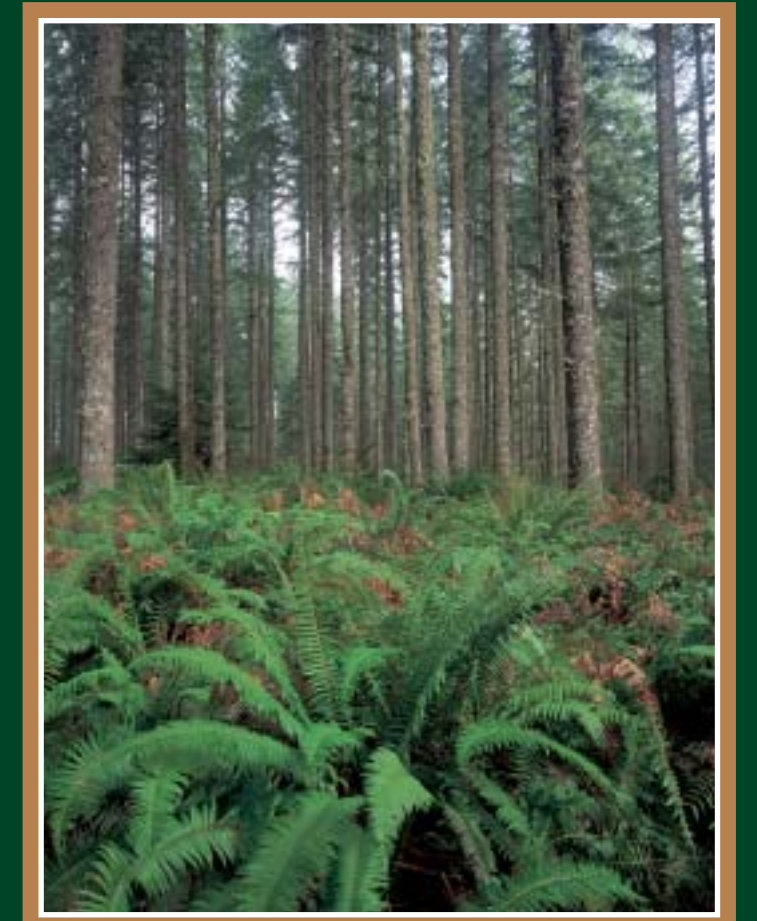
Black bear
Red fox
Song sparrow
Dark-eyed junco
American robin
Ensatina salamander
Long-eared bat
Common garter snake
Rubber boa
Roosevelt elk
Coyote
Raccoon
Cougar
Bobcat
Northern alligator lizard

Middle-aged forest stands

Forests are considered middle aged once young trees have grown to a point where natural crowding eliminates weaker trees and an open forest canopy allows new ground vegetation and the beginning of an understory. Many animals use middle-aged forests, though none prefer it exclusively. Here are some animals found in this type of habitat:

GENERALLY ASSOCIATED

Snowshoe hare
Ruffed grouse
Sharp-shinned hawk
Townsend warbler
Band-tailed pigeon
Black-throated gray warbler
Bushy-tailed woodrat
Swainson's thrush
Gray jay
Douglas squirrel
Coopers hawk
Long-tailed weasel
Martien
Black-tailed deer
Chestnut-backed chickadee
Pacific-slope flycatcher
Red-breasted nutbath
Hermit warbler
Wilson's warbler
Ensatina salamander
Common garter snake
Rubber boa
Pacific tree frog
Winter wren
Roosevelt elk
Coyote
Raccoon
Cougar
Bobcat
Northern alligator lizard
Long-toed salamander



Red-tailed Hawk



Great Horned Owl



Snowshoe Hare



Hairy Woodpecker



Steller's Jay



Douglas' Squirrel



Sharp-shinned Hawk



Chestnut-backed Chickadee

Older forest stands

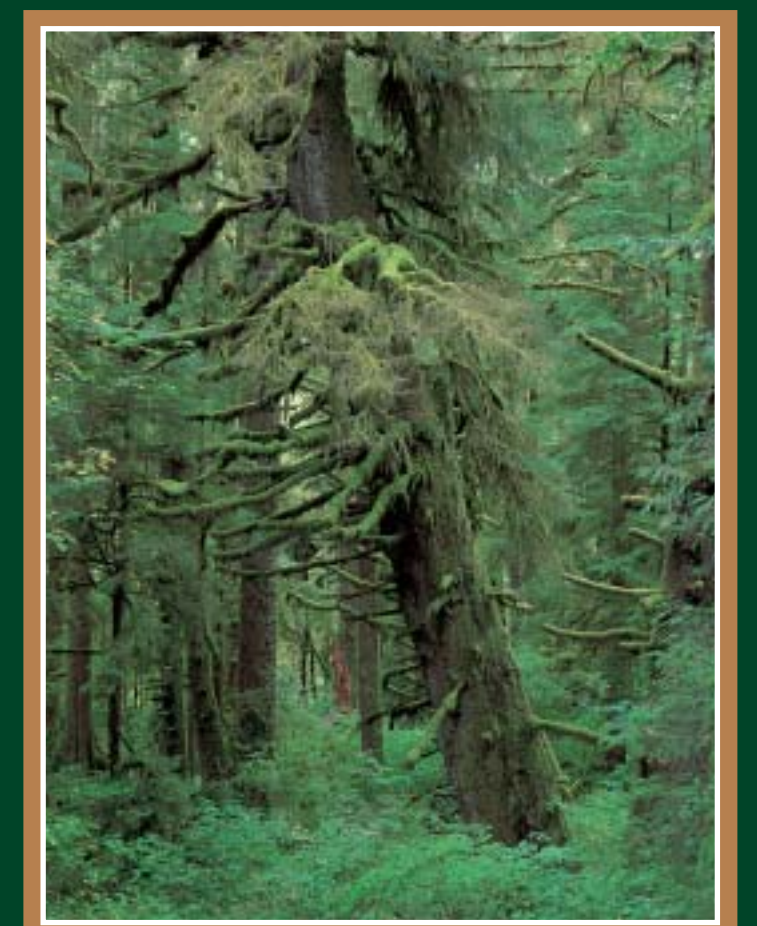
Large trees, a complex canopy and a highly developed understory distinguish older forests, which may take 100 years or more to develop and last for hundreds of years. Some animals benefit from the protection from predators and the shelter from harsh weather that these forests provide. Snags and decaying wood are more abundant in older forests, providing habitat for cavity nesters and animals that feed on insects. Here are some animals found in this type of habitat:

CLOSELY ASSOCIATED

Marbled murrelet
Varied thrush
Pileated woodpecker
Pygmy nutbath
Vaux's swift
Spotted owl
Red tree vole
Northern goshawk
Northern flying squirrel
Oregon slender salamander
Cooper's hawk
Pine siskin
Hoary bat



Northern Flying Squirrel



Red Tree Vole



Spotted Owl



Vaux's Swift



Oregon Slender Salamander

GENERALLY ASSOCIATED

Fisher
Martien
Black bear
Spotted skunk
Brown creeper
Myotis bat
Douglas squirrel
Red-breasted nutbath
Chestnut-backed chickadee
Ensatina salamander
Pacific-slope flycatcher
Hermit warbler
Rubber boa
Pacific tree frog
Roosevelt elk
Coyote



Pileated Woodpecker



Marbled Murrelet



Hoary Bat