

Good practices for biodiversity

Conservation of wildlife trees

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More than just deadwood!

In natural environments, wildlife trees – living, decaying and dead trees containing cavities – are crucial to a vast range of organisms. Their holes, decomposing wood and bare branches play a vital role, complementing that of healthy trees. They serve as roosts and shelters as well as feeding and reproduction sites for many wildlife species.

In its nature parks, the city preserves wildlife trees and keeps parts of their main branches safely in place. This initiative is part of the ecosystems management program.

Inhabited cavities

In areas targeted for bird inventories, there are more than 600 wildlife trees. Bird nests in tree cavities represent one fifth of total nests in nature parks. Woodpeckers, owls and other birds of prey are wildlife trees' main occupants, but squirrels, raccoons and voles are also found there.

These structures support wildlife for 20 or 30 years before returning to the earth in the form of organic matter, continuing the life cycle.



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Information on the significant contribution of wildlife trees has been made available to the general public, to inform visitors who may be surprised that these strange-looking dying trees are not removed from nature parks.

Tips for project success

- Aim at a density of 15 wildlife trees per hectare to support nesting birds;
- Vary the species, sizes, diameters and stages of decay to promote biodiversity;
- Leave woody debris on the ground to better meet the needs of a diverse wildlife population;
- Keep dead and decaying trees at a safe distance from trails and activity areas;
- Inform visitors about the initiative

This initiative contributes to the 2030 biodiversity objectives, particularly:

- the protection of biodiversity through a network of protected areas (target 2);
- resilience and climate change adaptation (target 6);
- increased public access to green and blue spaces and ecosystem services (target 10);
- the integration of biodiversity protection into planning processes (target 13);
- the availability of information (target 18).

* 2030 Action Targets set in the Zero Draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework