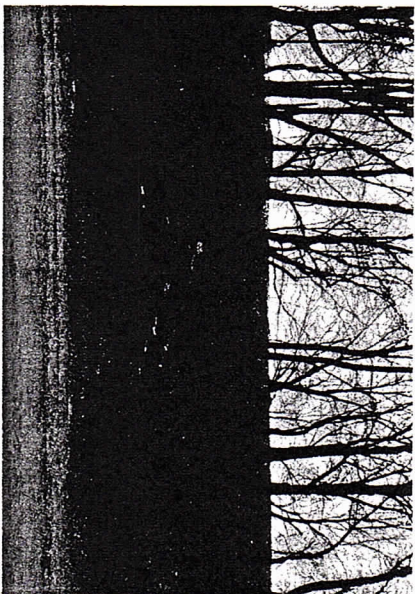
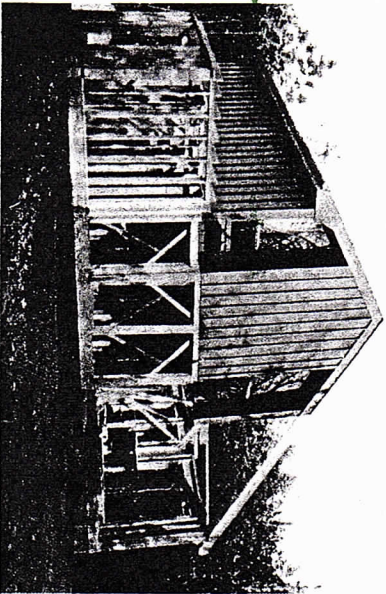


## Apartment for Rent?



The clearing of shrubs, bushes, dead wood, and leaves from a wooded area leaves little more than the canopy. With so many functional elements removed, it is much less attractive to wildlife; it is no longer a self sustaining woods. It is an artificial environment that requires regular tending; it is a park.



If wildlife could do us a similar service, they might offer a 2nd story apartment but with the 1st floor gutted: no kitchen, no bedroom, no nursery; no walls, no stairs, no living room furniture, no carpet.

## Resources

### Organizations

- American Horticultural Society  
[www.ahs.org](http://www.ahs.org)
- Ecological Landscaping Association  
[www.ela-ecolandscapingassn.org](http://www.ela-ecolandscapingassn.org)
- Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District  
[www.dutchess.ny.nacdn.net](http://www.dutchess.ny.nacdn.net)  
(845) 677-8011
- Institute of Ecosystem Studies (IES)  
[www.ecostudies.org](http://www.ecostudies.org)  
(845) 677-7600
- National Arbor Day Foundation  
[www.arborday.org/backyardwoods](http://www.arborday.org/backyardwoods)
- Stony Kill Environmental Education Center (of the NYS DEC)  
[www.dec.state.ny.us/website/education/stonykil.html](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/education/stonykil.html)  
(845) 831-8780
- Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club  
[www.watermanbirdclub.org](http://www.watermanbirdclub.org)

### Publications

- The American Gardener, Jan/Feb 2005  
Habitat gardening - "Turning the Garden into a Community"
- "Backyard Woods"  
National Arbor Day Foundation
- "Managing Your Forest for Timber and Wildlife!" - NYS DEC
- Voices of the Land, Chelsea Green Publishing, pp 20-24:  
"Tidiness is Not a Virtue"  
Dr. Charles Canham of IES
- Peterson Field Guide to the Birds

## Dead Trees And Brush...



## What to do?

By Barry Haydasz, Town of Stanford CAC, 2007



# In a word, "Nothing"...

...at least until their benefits and your goals have been compared.

The term "forest" evokes images of tall trees with sun streaming through; we tend to overlook the saplings in between, the shrubs down below, the birds that forage among them and the insects that they seek. But these are all inter-related components of a forest. So too are the dead logs and decaying leaves; the water, the soil itself; and all the creatures that assist in the process of decomposition, returning nutrients to the soil... to feed those trees.

## Services

A line of brush may provide privacy between neighbors, buffer road noise, prevent erosion, act as a wind break, or give shelter to the birds that visit your feeder.

A dead tree may be

a perch for a hawk, a den for a raccoon, or a home for honey bees. These often

unsung ecosystem services should be carefully weighed when considering



more familiar landscape services such as "unattractive tree and brush" removal, "woodland enhancement", or "clean up".

## Goals

Explore articles on Habitat- or Wildlife-friendly gardening. Seek out a specialist in Natural or Ecological Landscaping and discuss your goals. A DEC Forester can visit your property free of charge and help you develop a plan to achieve your objectives and ensure your forest's health. Some resources are on the back of this brochure.

# Bushes and Shrubs

## Food

Berries of bushes, brambles and small trees are important wildlife food. The foliage at this level is important to deer, too. Birds which eat caterpillars are only one bite removed from the foliage, as well.



Spicebush swallowtail is named for it's caterpillar's food plant

## Shelter

Bushes, shrubs and small trees form the layers between the canopy and the forest floor. If it is difficult to see or walk through, all the more desirable is it to wildlife!



Male cardinal in a thicket.

Dutchess County, NY has 138 species of breeding birds. 65 - almost half - nest within 25 feet of the ground. Of them an amazing 40 nest on or near the ground. Generally, they can't do so without cover.

- Brown thrasher
- Hermit thrush
- Veery
- Ovenbird
- Eastern Towhee
- Dark-eyed junco

Instead of removing dense vegetation, consider a meandering path through it where you can take a spring morning walk and have coffee with the birds.

Further, sparing the chipper and leaving brush piles creates shelter from predators for small animals such as rabbits, chipmunks, and birds - and covered with snow, shelter from winter wind and cold.

# Dead Trees

"If you are lucky enough to have a fallen or standing dead tree..." , enthuses the Habitat Gardening article of the Jan-Feb 2005 issue of The American Gardener , "... wildlife will soon colonize it"

Wildlife is a part of the landscape. Landscaping techniques to attract wildlife include thoughtful plantings, but even easier: by simply leaving things... like dead trees.

We all associate owls and woodpeckers with dead trees. But raptors and flycatchers love to perch on them, and many of our favorite song birds nest and raise their families in dead trees, too.

- Black-capped Chickadee
- Tufted titmouse
- White-breasted nuthatch

In fact, Dutchess county has about 24 species of cavity dwelling birds!

## Not just for the birds

Raccoons, martins, red & flying squirrels live in hollows. Old root systems, especially upturned, are starter homes for burrowing creatures such as foxes, woodchucks and skunks.



A fallen log is "...a wonderful natural centerpiece for fern and moss gardens." Inside and underneath, lichens, fungi, insects and other creatures aid in decomposition and the return of nutrients to the soil. These small creatures in turn feed larger ones, such as this yellow-spotted salamander. An old log is a world unto itself, and ultimately, along with the fallen leaves, is food for the forest itself.

