

Why Do Forest Animals Live Where They Do?

Different forest animals need different types of habitat to meet their food, water and shelter needs. Some prefer the vegetation associated with young, open forests. Others need habitat features like snags or fallen logs found in more mature forests. Some animals are found in forests of any age. As forests grow and mature, the resident wildlife will change as the habitat structure changes.



Young, Open Forests

Young, open forests occur following disturbances such as fire or logging. Shrubs, grasses and young trees emerge first.

Who's here: mountain bluebird, Rocky Mountain elk and chipping sparrow



Middle-Aged Forests

The trees in a middle-aged forest have outgrown weaker trees and other vegetation. The canopy is open enough for the growth of ground vegetation that some animals prefer.

Who's here: American black bear, yellow-pine chipmunk and Swainson's thrush



Mature Forests

Mature forests contain large trees and have a complex canopy, a highly developed vegetation understory and fallen logs and snags that provide habitat for some animals.

Who's here: hoary bat, red squirrel, American marten and northern goshawk



Animals live in young, middle-aged or mature forests, depending on their specific habitat needs.



Learn more at www.idahoforests.org