

# A snag-dependent wildlife community

Every tree eventually dies, and its ecological value continues long after the last leaf falls. Weakened trees attract beetles that lay their eggs in the bark; their larvae bore into the wood or behind the bark and help the wood decay. Woodpeckers chop into the tree to feed on the beetle larvae, and they excavate in the rotting wood to create nest and roost cavities. These cavities later become homes for secondary cavity dwellers, such as bats, squirrels, and various small birds. Woodpeckers also transport fungal spores to dead and dying trees. These fungi help break down the nutrients in standing and downed trees, recycling them back into the soil to support the next generation of trees and shrubs.

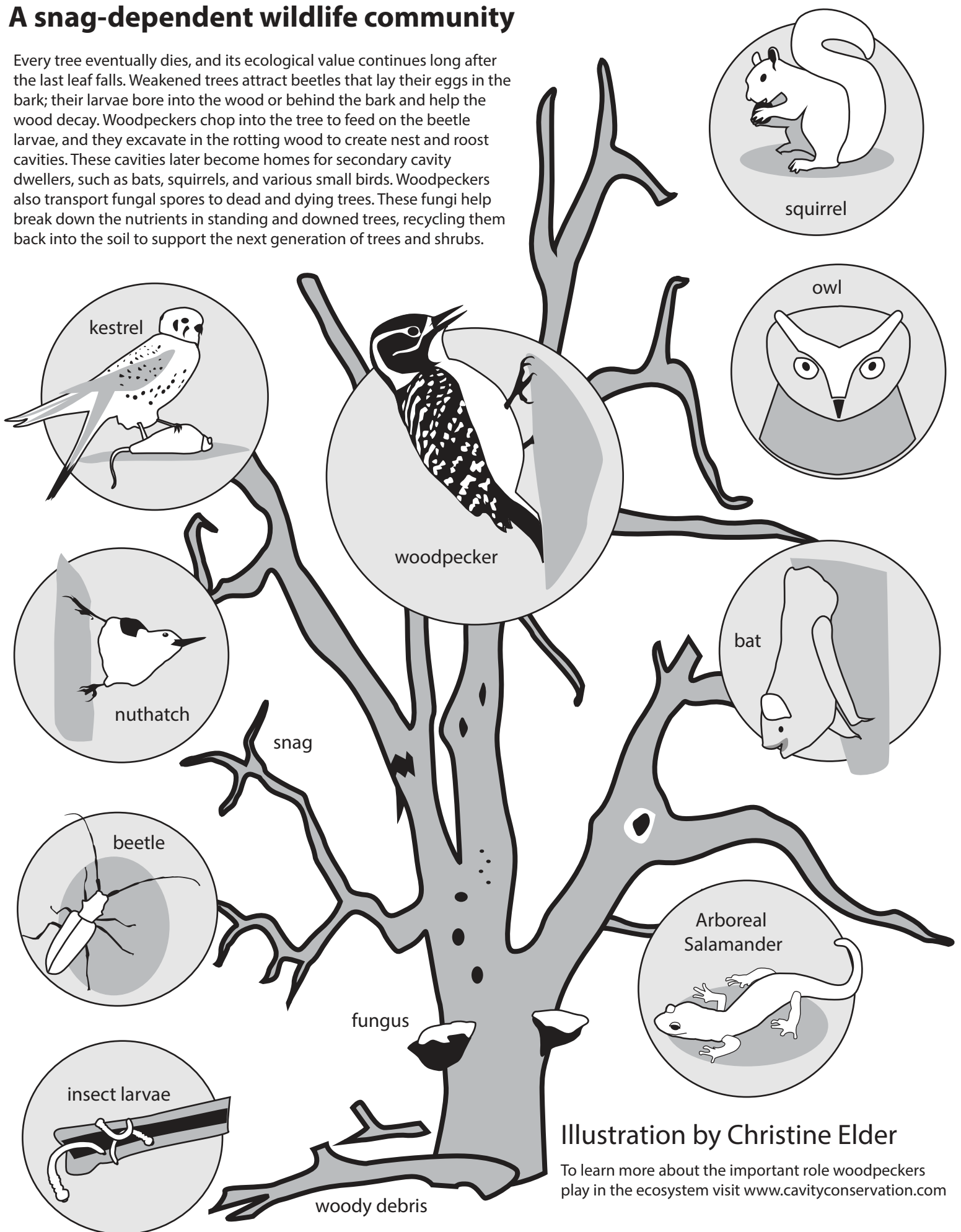


Illustration by Christine Elder

To learn more about the important role woodpeckers play in the ecosystem visit [www.cavityconservation.com](http://www.cavityconservation.com)