

Dead standing trees in Farm Forestry

This factsheet provides guidance for landholders and forest managers on managing dead standing trees in Farm Forestry under the Northern and Southern NSW Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice.

How do the Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice protect dead standing trees?

The Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice (PNF Codes) include dead standing trees under tree retention requirements in Section 8.2-Protection of habitat and biodiversity. Refer to the PNF Code applicable to you to determine how many dead standing trees can contribute to the total number of hollow bearing trees retained in your forest. Also refer to Appendix A: Listed species ecological prescriptions for listed species with additional habitat tree retention requirements.

What is a dead standing tree?

A dead standing tree for the purposes of PNF is a standing dead tree that has hollows, and the bark is fully separated from the sapwood, the tree is greater than 30cm in diameter, and the tree is over three metres tall. Hollows often form in dead trees over time from natural processes such as wind, fire, rain, lightning strikes and impacts from insects, fungi and bacteria. Dead standing trees contain hollows which provide important habitat to a variety of fauna within the forest ecosystem.



Figure 1: Dead Standing Tree

Why are dead standing trees important?

Many fauna species rely on the hollows in dead standing trees for food, shelter, roosting and breeding. Fauna that use hollows in dead standing trees range from insects, birds, mammals and reptiles. Some examples include the pale-headed snake (*Hoplocephalus bitorquatus*), Brown treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*), Varied sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) and Turquoise parrot (*Neophema pulchella*).

How can I tell if a tree is dead?

Assessing if a tree is dead can often be difficult particularly after a fire or drought periods. Some trees might look dead but given time can grow back. To assist in determining if a tree is dead or alive consider the following visual signs:

- Does the tree have any foliage? Check for living leaves, buds or growth.
- Are there signs of epicormic growth? Epicormic growth is the growth of new shoots in response to damage or stress. Epicormic growth emerges from dormant buds along the trunk and branches. Epicormic growth is usually visible after a bushfire; however, it may take several months to appear.
- Does the tree have bark present? If not, look for other signs the tree is alive as some tree species will shed and regrow bark as they age.
- Have limbs fallen off the tree? This can be a sign that the tree is dead, over-mature or that it is still alive but experiencing water stress.
- If you scratch the surface of the tree or break a branch does it appear green or moist inside? If the tree has dried out this could indicate it has died.

Further resources

www.lls.nsw.gov.au/farm-forestry-resources



Figure 2 (top): Large dead tree with hollows



Figure 3 (bottom): Epicormic growth are usually vertical branch growth along existing branches

We're here to help

Find us online: www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Call us: 1300 795 299 and ask for an officer to advise

you on Private Native Forestry

Email us: pnf.info@lls.nsw.gov.au

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