

## Sally Snag

Hello, I'm Sally Snag. I've enjoyed a wonderful life on the Chattahoochee National Forest as a Southern Red Oak. I've lived 100 years and I might have lived longer had it not been for the bad storm we had back in '82. You see lightning struck me and then it was just one thing after the other. Bugs smelled my fresh sap before I had a chance to heal and they attacked with a mighty vengeance. Then birds came to eat the bugs and they pecked out this big cavity you see in me. (Point to it) Do you have cavities? I hope you never have any as big as mine! That would take some dentist to fill a cavity this big.

Soon after the bugs arrived, there was a drought. Do you know what a drought is? It is a time when it just doesn't rain. I could not get enough water. Trees have to have lots and lots of water. I was so stressed out, I could not recover. You would be too if you had bugs eating on you and birds pecking on you and you couldn't get anything to drink! I put up a good front though. For the next two years I put on leaves and even had a bumper crop of acorns. In fact they were the best seeds ever! Soon the high winds came and broke my weakened crown and my top came tumbling down to the forest floor. Then, I became a snag.

Now some people think of snags as DEADWOOD, of not being worth much anymore. True, I can no longer provide lumber for houses, or even shade for a house, but you can LEARN a lot by studying me. In nature, nothing is wasted. I provide homes for lots of animals and insects. I even recycle! Do you recycle? I recycle a little differently than you. I return nutrients back to the soil so new growth, and new trees can spring forth. So many critters live in snags that they are sometimes called "Animal Inns". Kind'a like motels for animals. Now in case you are wondering what kind of animal might live in a snag, reach in my cavity and find out. Pull out one of my residents and read about that special critter.

***Optional at the end of entire program.*** *Most animals prefer snags rather than man made structures for their homes but too many people think snags are ugly or dangerous and cut them down. If a dead tree isn't a threat to your house or car—leave them alone. In fact, do like other good stewards and use them in your landscape. Stop by our exhibit and see how this can be done.*