

# Snag Decay Classes

## Nine Class Method: Hunter 1990

Hunter, M.L. 1990. *Wildlife, Forests, and Forestry: Principles of Managing Forests for Biological Diversity*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. 370 p.

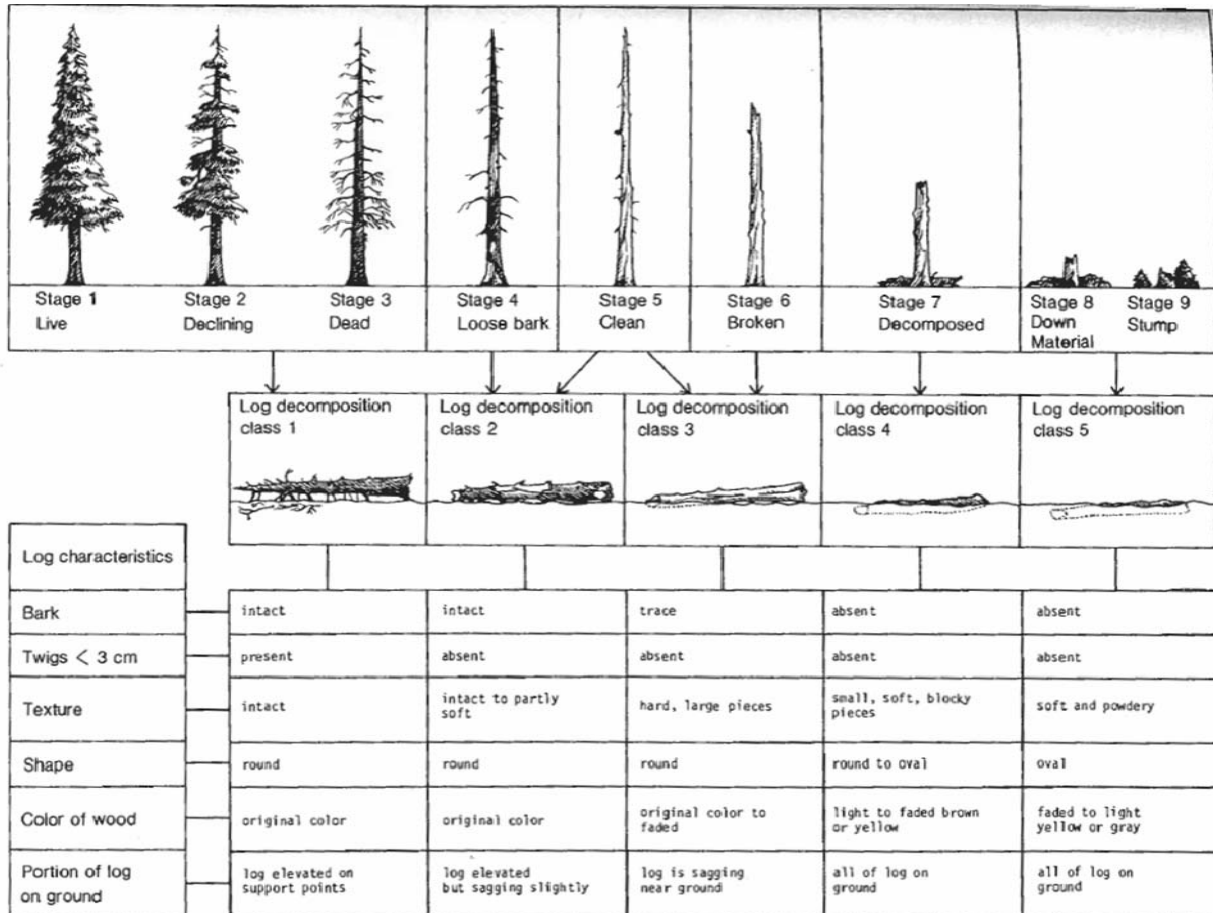


Figure 10.1 and Table 10.2 The gradual decay of snags and logs can readily be seen in many external changes. Note that when a well-decayed snag falls, it enters an advanced stage of log decomposition. (This figure and table are based on a description of the decay of Douglas-fir snags and logs as adapted by Maser et al. 1979, and Thomas et al. 1979c, from Fogel et al. 1973.)

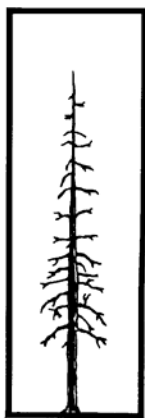
## Snag Decay Classes

### Five-Class Method: Thomas 1979

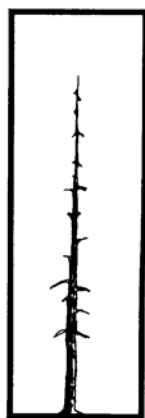
The pictures and descriptions below are adapted from: *Wildlife Habitats in Managed Forests of the Blue Mountains of Oregon and Washington (Agriculture Handbook No. 553). Jack Ward Thomas. September 1979. USDA Forest Service.*

### SNAG DECAY Classes:

| Code | Bark                 | Heartwood Decay       | Sapwood Decay     | Limbs               | Top Breakage                           | Bole Form         | Time Since Death |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------|------------------|
| 1    | Tight, intact        | Minor                 | None to incipient | Mostly Present      | May be present                         | Intact            | 1-5 years        |
| 2    | 50% loose or missing | None to advanced      | None to incipient | Small limbs missing | May be present                         | Intact            | > 5 years        |
| 3    | 75% missing          | Incipient to advanced | None to 25%       | Few remain          | Approx. $\frac{1}{3}$                  | Mostly intact     | > 5 years        |
| 4    | 75% missing          | Incipient to advanced | 25% +             | Few remain          | Approx. $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ | Losing Form, soft | > 5 years        |
| 5    | 75%+ missing         | Advanced to crumbly   | 50% + advanced    | Absent              | Approx. $\frac{1}{2}$ +                | Form mostly lost  | > 5 years        |



Class 1  
Dead / recent



Class 2



Class 3



Class 4



Class 5