

SIGNS OF CHANGE



Rustle, crunch, squirm... What was that?


Splash, flap, sizzle... And that?

Don't worry. It's just a typical day or night in the forest. Lots of activity is normal, each day things like wind, rain, insects, animals, plants and people bring forests alive.

All this activity means forests change daily in subtle, slow ways and sometimes dramatic, quick ways.



Circle the natural activities and underline the human activities:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|
| insects crawling | lightning striking | rain falling |
| snakes hatching | people camping | hikers walking |
| chainsaws cutting timber | saplings growing | fire burning |
| sausages sizzling | scientists researching | log trucks hauling |
| cyclists riding  | logs decaying | wind blowing |
| tourists sightseeing | owls sleeping | fire fighters backburning |
| seeds germinating | tree planting | wallabies hopping |



Pick four activities. How does each activity change the forest? Is the change slow or quick?

Forest managers are always on the look out for change. Why? In order to keep a living thing healthy you need to be aware of its changing needs. Imagine if you were still being fed baby milk. You'd be a bit hungry.

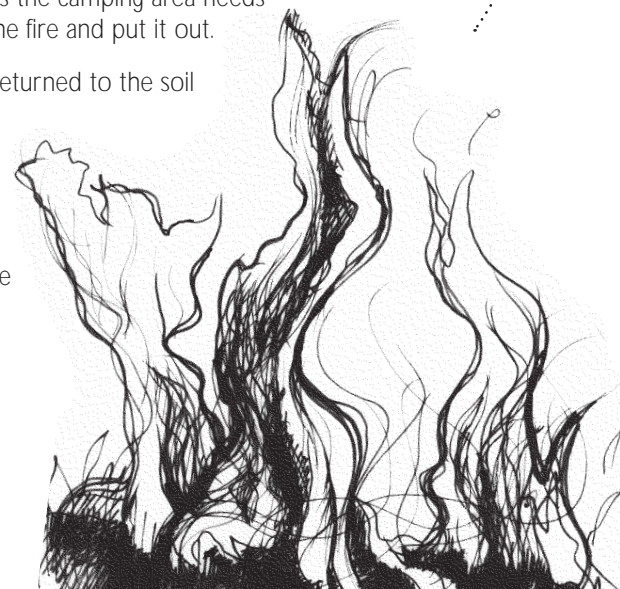
Living things change and how we care for them changes too. Here are some forest examples:

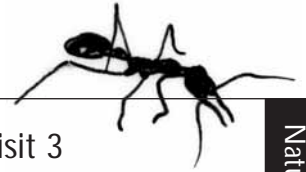
- A threatened owl species moves into a tree in a timber producing area of forest. For forest managers this means timber can't be harvested near the tree or where the owl hunts for food.
- Fire burns towards a camping area. For forest managers this means the camping area needs to be evacuated and a back-burn started to burn back towards the fire and put it out.
- A log decays. For forest managers this means nutrients are being returned to the soil and as the log ages and hollows it provides habitat for wildlife.



To see signs of change try keeping a *nature journal*. It's as easy as visiting the same place a few times and recording what you see.

Leave a few weeks between visits. At the end of three visits compare your notes. Has anything changed? Imagine doing this over 10 years. What changes might you see?

If you can't get to a forest, try your garden.





Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3
Date Time of day Season Weather Temperature Light (eg bright, shaded)	Date Time of day Season Weather Temperature Light (eg bright, shaded)	Date Time of day Season Weather Temperature Light (eg bright, shaded)
Describe the place you are in:	Describe the place you are in:	Describe the place you are in:
Shrubs - Are there grasses, ferns or small bushes? Are the shrubs spiky or soft?	Shrubs	Shrubs
Trees - Do a rubbing of a leaf. Name the trees if you can.	Trees	Trees
Wildlife - Look for scratches, nests and droppings; listen for calls and squirms. Which animal might live here? 	Wildlife	Wildlife
Smell	Smell	Smell
Soil - Lick your finger: dip it into the soil and rub this page. Is the soil dark or light, sandy or full of clay, wet or dry?	Soil	Soil
Insects - Draw them and describe what they are doing.	Insects	Insects
Fire - Are there any signs of fire?	Fire	Fire
People - Are there any around? What are they doing?		People

