

Name: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Sheet: Crater Lake National Park Habitat Assessment

✓ Fledglings

Provide information about the location and habitat components found at the this site.

Crater Lake National Park Habitat Assessment:

Habitat components found at this site:

Food: *Insects, seeds, and plants*

Water: *Open water in the caldera, also some pockets of snow*

Shelter: *Tree canopy area*

Space: *Lots of open space between trees*

Using your observation skills, walk through the habitat and search for these specific mixed conifer forest habitat aspects. Place a tally mark next to each aspect each time you observe it. If there is anything interesting you come across, write a description of your findings. You will discuss the habitat assessment results at the end.

Mixed Conifer Forest Habitat Aspect	Tally	Description of Interesting Observations
Snags (dead trees)		
Fallen logs		<i>There are fallen logs in the picnic area</i>
Tall pine		<i>Tall pines dominate the habitat</i>
Thick native shrub layer		
Forest edge habitat (where forest meets an open area)		<i>There is open space in between stands of whitebark pine</i>
Small diameter trees (less than 8 inches diameter)		
Evidence of heavy snowfall		<i>Many of the Mountain Hemlocks had the J shaped "pistol butt" trunk and small delicate needles and branches to prevent snow accumulation.</i>
Animal Sightings		<i>Clark's Nutcracker, Red Crossbill, Gray Jay, Pine Siskin, red squirrel</i>
Signs of management		<i>Saw research team monitoring for white blister rust, interpretive signs and trails, animal proof trash and recycling cans.</i>
More management needed		<i>Saw a family on a picnic feeding ground squirrels</i>

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Using the information on the previous page answer the following questions.

1. Which habitat aspect did you find the most of? Why do you think this is the case?

The aspect I found the most of were fallen logs and tall pine trees. The fallen logs looked like they had been left there which is a good sign.

2. How many snags did you come across during your observation? Why are they important to this type of habitat?

I came across three large snags. Snags are an important aspect to mixed conifer forest habitat because they provide essential habitat to many living things like birds.

3. Did you find any forest edge habitat?

There were several open subalpine areas in between stands of whitebark pine and mountain hemlock.

4. Was there any evidence of winter adaptations to heavy snow fall and long winters? What evidence did you observe?

There were some signs of post-fire. I saw fallen logs that had been charred and some of the snags had been blackened at the base.

5. What wildlife did you encounter the most of? Did you observe a diverse amount of birds and other animals? Was there any wildlife missing from the habitat?

There were several different bird species in the canopy of the whitebark pine. Many were feeding on the pine seeds, opening the cones with their bills. I saw several Clark's Nutcrackers flying over head, maybe coming to and from their cache sights. The red squirrel was also fun to see. We did not see any bear or large mammals, but I suspect them to be in parts of the Park that are not visited by large numbers of tourists.

6. Given your assessment results, do you feel that this mixed conifer forest habitat is healthy or do you think more management is needed? Why?

I think that it is healthy and it was great to see the research team conducting surveys for white blister rust. There were also several interpretive panels and trails. However, there was a family feeding the red squirrel, a sign can be installed to help educate the public and the dangers of feeding the wildlife.