



This week, we're doing a deep dive into our episode: [The Stumpisode](#).

Imagine you're standing in the middle of a forest and your arms break off.

Suddenly your insides hollow out.

Your skin turns hard and rough.

Humans think of you as dead, like a ghost.

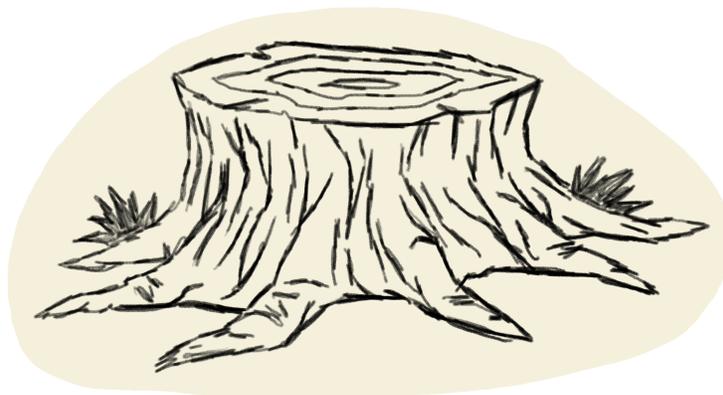
But the birds and insects and rodents know the truth about you.

Inside, you are brimming with life. You birth babies.

You fight fire. You can even catch time.

What are you now?

You have become a stump.



In our "[Stumpisode](#)," we went on a *Tour de Stumps* with Scottish artist, writer, and tree lover [Dr. Amanda Thomson](#). Like most of us, Amanda didn't

notice stumps growing up, until one day she stumbled upon a stump - a snag, actually, which is a standing dead tree - that made her see these overlooked structures differently. Suddenly she started noticing all the dead trees in the middle of the forest. She took pictures of them, drew them, made films about them, and started time with scientists who taught her how much life these dead trees hold within them.

First Amanda takes us to rural Illinois to meet Tyler Funk and “the Magic Stump.” Then to West Virginia to see a former stump home for two brothers who share a name with a very famous chip. And lastly to Wales, to see what stumps can tell us about an ancient human civilization

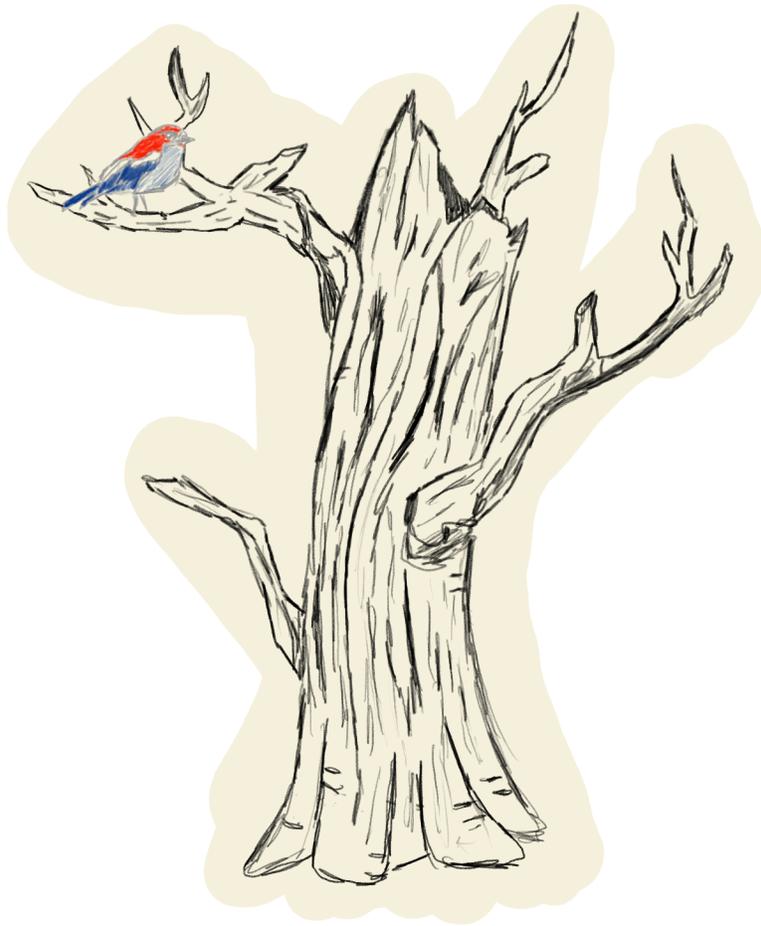


DID YOU KNOW...

Snags are homes to:

- Over 85 species of **birds**.
 - Predatory birds make snags a perching place for hunting.
 - Smaller birds rest and court.
 - Some examples include **owls, red-tailed hawks, wood ducks, wrens, nuthatches, chickadees, tufted titmice, and eastern bluebirds**
- Numerous **insects**.
- The insects attract predators - **woodpeckers** - who then make cavities in the tree.
- Small mammals like **squirrels, chipmunks, opossums, rabbits, otters, foxes, shrews, and mice** use natural cavities or those created and abandoned by woodpeckers to store their winter food.
- Snags are good for **bats** because the lack of canopy in a snag allows for sunlight to warm it up and thus the bat pups are cozy and can grow a lot faster.
- Pollinators like **bees** use the tunnels made by insect borers to make their nests.
- Butterflies like **mourning cloaks, eastern commas, and question marks** (real butterfly names) hibernate in tree hollows and gaps in loose bark.
- Snags also provide support for climbing vines and for **lichens, mosses, and mushrooms**.

- After they rot and fall on the ground, they're now called logs but they're STILL a home! Now, the log becomes home for **fungi**, **earthworms**, **larvae**, **toads**, and **skinks**.



SONGS

Did you know every Terrestrials episode has original songs? This episode features the song [S.T.U.M.P.](#) by our songbud Alan Goffinski.

You can find all our original songs on the [Terrestrials Songs Page](#).

BEHIND THE SCENES

Check out the making of this episode!



TRIVIA

Guess the answers to the questions below, or quiz your friends, students, family etc!

1. What class of creatures need stumps to live?

- A. Saproxylic
- B. Arboreal
- C. Aquatic
- D. Nocturnal

2. What is NOT a way organisms use dead trees?

- A. Fungi slurp up crucial nutrients like a wood smoothie.
- B. Wasps chew up the deadwood to make nests.
- C. Beetles lay their babies inside.
- D. Birds polish their beaks to a shine on the bark.

3. What percentage of deadwood does a forest need to be healthy?

- A. 20%
- B. 30%
- C. 40%
- D. 50%

4. How are prairie falcons different from other raptors when they hunt for prey?

- A. They grab the prey in their talons.
- B. They spit on the prey to distract it.
- C. They catch the prey in a net.
- D. They punch the prey with their fists.

5. What was special about the Wales ghost trees?

- A. They were glowing in the dark.
- B. They were believed to be alive and moving.
- C. The area used to be a human civilization.
- D. They could absorb sound.

Answer key: ADBDC



WANT TO KEEP LEARNING?

- Read more about the [Pringle brothers](#).
- Watch Bob Dolgan's documentary about Tyler Funk and "[The Magic Stump](#)."
- Read Amanda Thomson's book "[Belonging: Natural histories of place, identity and home](#)."



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