

# Other Important Ecosystems

## YOUNG FOREST

### What is Young Forest?

Young Forest ecosystems are dry to moist coniferous-dominated forests that are 40-80 years of age. The tree canopy has started to develop. Woody debris, standing dead trees, and fallen logs are almost absent and tree diversity is typically low. Often, tree density is higher in young forests and they are more difficult to walk through.

### Where are Young Forests located?

Young Forest ecosystems are not specific to terrain or elevation and are found in various areas throughout the Islands. They are the most common forested ecosystems in the Islands Trust Area.

### Associated Species

#### Animals

*Black-tailed deer (in gaps), Deer mice, small birds, cavity-nesters are typically absent, Douglas squirrel*

#### Plants

*Douglas-fir, grand fir, Oregon grape, salal, bigleaf maple, red alder, sword fern, salmonberry, red elderberry, oceanspray*



### Why are Young Forests important?

Young Forest ecosystems are future Mature and Old Forests. The diversity of plants and animal species that a forest is able to support increases as it matures and ages. The preservation and careful management of Young Forest ecosystems will ensure development of Old Forests.

### How can we protect Young Forests?

Careful management is important to maintain mature forests as buffers to adjacent sensitive ecosystems and allow development into Old Forest.

- Limit development within or adjacent to Mature and Old Forest stands
- Minimize edge effects by maintaining patches of forest rather than isolated trees
- Restrict recreational, livestock and pet access, especially during nesting and breeding seasons
- Actively control invasive species
- Allow natural disturbances to occur

In some cases, active management may be required, including thinning of trees and other forest restoration activities.



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