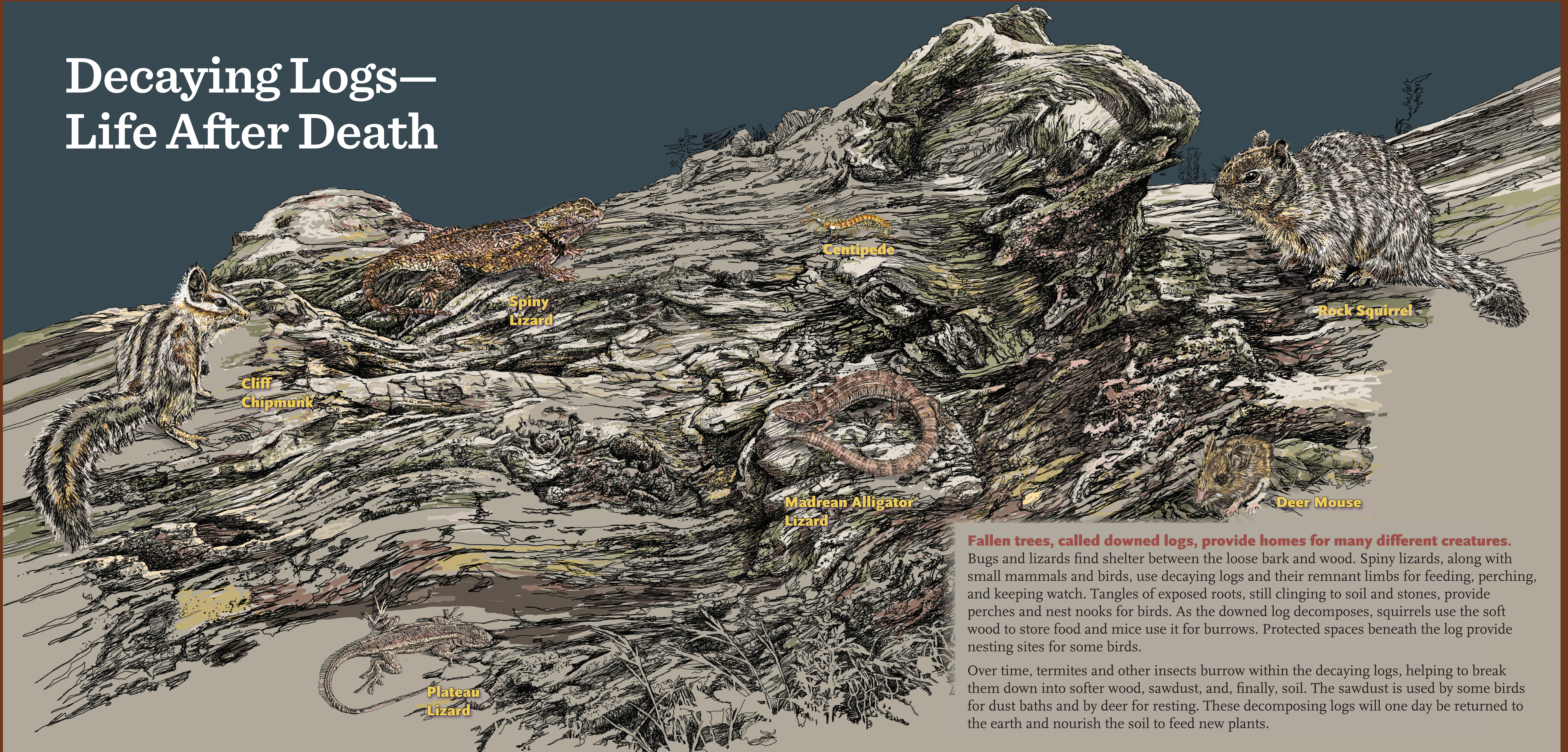


# Decaying Logs— Life After Death



**Fallen trees, called downed logs, provide homes for many different creatures.**

Bugs and lizards find shelter between the loose bark and wood. Spiny lizards, along with small mammals and birds, use decaying logs and their remnant limbs for feeding, perching, and keeping watch. Tangles of exposed roots, still clinging to soil and stones, provide perches and nest nooks for birds. As the downed log decomposes, squirrels use the soft wood to store food and mice use it for burrows. Protected spaces beneath the log provide nesting sites for some birds.

Over time, termites and other insects burrow within the decaying logs, helping to break them down into softer wood, sawdust, and, finally, soil. The sawdust is used by some birds for dust baths and by deer for resting. These decomposing logs will one day be returned to the earth and nourish the soil to feed new plants.