

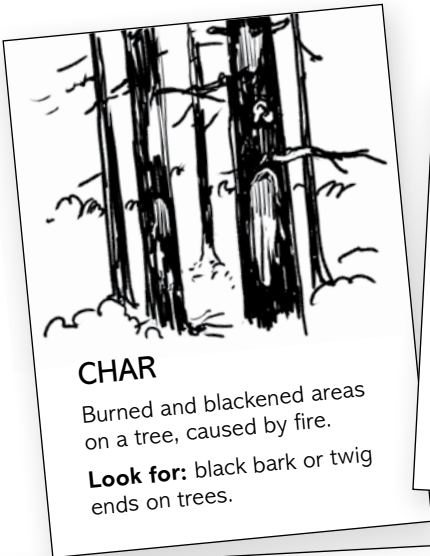
# DETECTING PAST FOREST FIRES

Fires are a natural and necessary part of Oregon's forests. They:

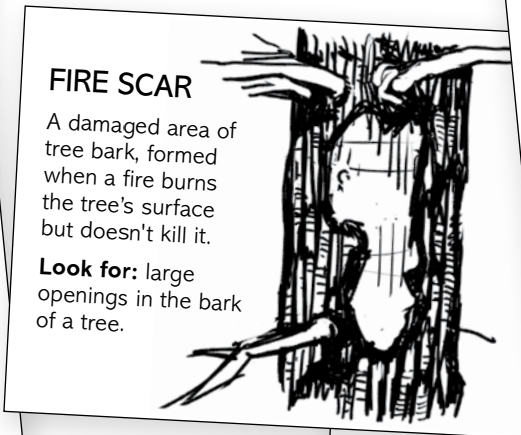
- form openings in the forest that enable a variety of plants to grow
- create standing dead trees (called snags) that many animals rely on for food and shelter
- help fire-adapted plant species\* reproduce by opening their cones or triggering their seeds to grow

\*Being "fire-adapted" means having behaviors or characteristics that enable an organism to live, or even thrive, with repeated fires.

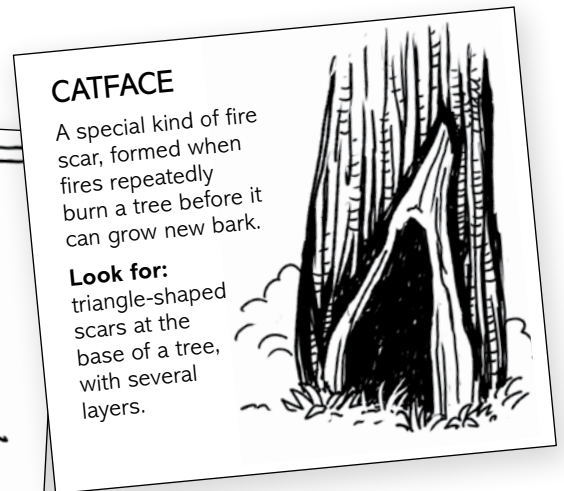
**Directions:** Look for evidence of past fires in a forest area.



**CHAR**  
Burned and blackened areas on a tree, caused by fire.  
**Look for:** black bark or twig ends on trees.



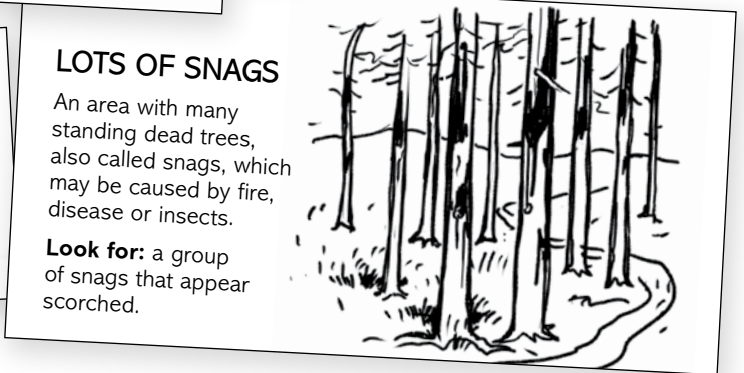
**FIRE SCAR**  
A damaged area of tree bark, formed when a fire burns the tree's surface but doesn't kill it.  
**Look for:** large openings in the bark of a tree.



**CATFACE**  
A special kind of fire scar, formed when fires repeatedly burn a tree before it can grow new bark.  
**Look for:** triangle-shaped scars at the base of a tree, with several layers.



**FIRE SCAR ON STUMP**  
Growth rings on tree stumps or fallen logs that tell the fire history of an area.  
**Look for:** blackened areas within the growth rings.



**LOTS OF SNAGS**  
An area with many standing dead trees, also called snags, which may be caused by fire, disease or insects.  
**Look for:** a group of snags that appear scorched.

**Questions:**

What evidence do you see of the forest recovering from past fires?

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How might fire have helped this forest?

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