

Build a Brush Pile for Wildlife Habitat

from USDA NRCS: *Managing Wildlife Habitat for Fish and Wildlife*

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/16/nrcs143_010130.pdf



Brush piles should be constructed with heavy material at the base (A) with increasingly finer material on top (B and C) to provide cover for small mammals, reptiles and other wildlife.

Small mammals, amphibians, reptiles and other wildlife of the forest floor use brush piles for escape, resting and nesting cover.

Base materials

Effective brush piles are built on a base of coarse materials so openings are available at ground level for wildlife movement.

A few piles of large rocks at least 12 inches wide and 2 feet tall, and several crisscrossed logs at least 6 feet long and 6 inches in diameter make good brush pile bases. Stumps can also make good bases.

Pile materials

Progressively smaller limbs and brush are piled onto the base until the brush pile is about 6 feet tall.

Living brush piles can be made by partially cutting small trees near the base and pushing them to the ground using the bark left intact at the base as a hinge. The partial severing of the tree allows it to remain alive, providing dense live foliage near the ground.

C. Reva