

American Woodcock



Photo: Fyn Kynd

IDENTIFICATION AND SONG Plump, round forest-dwelling bird with long bill, virtually no visible neck, short legs, and mottled cryptic coloration. Numbers peak during fall migration. Nasal peent call heard at dusk along with a twittering wing sound during flight displays. Found statewide.

NEST Scrape in dead leaves on the ground.

FOOD Primarily invertebrates on forest floor and in soil, including insects and earthworms, rarely plant material. Old agricultural sites are often ideal habitat for earthworms, which were introduced in the 18th century.

TERRITORY SIZE Males defend small areas within singing grounds, with multiple males sharing a ¼ to ½ acre opening with little or no cover, within 300' of patches of dense shrubs used for daytime cover.

FOREST CONDITION Complex mix of small openings and younger forest in early stages of regeneration (<20 years old) for singing and displays; patches of dense shrubs for daytime cover; and young, dense sapling stands for raising young. Different habitat used at different times of year and day.

FOREST HABITAT ASSOCIATION Will use Northern Hardwood, Oak Pine, and Northern Mixedwood forest.

HABITAT AGE CLASS Will use *intermediate* forest (dominant trees 20-70 years old, 5-10" diameter) or *young* forest (dominant trees 0-10 years/0-25 years old and <1"/1-5" diameter).

HABITAT FEATURES



LAYERS Light gray lines divide overstory (>30'), midstory (6-30'), and understory (<6'), and are not to scale

← **BIRD** Layer where bird typically seen and/or where male typically sings

← **NEST** Typical nest type and height

Generalized graphic depicting forest type, age, layer, and any special features where the bird and nest are typically found.

MANAGEMENT NOTES Maintain or create forest matrix with mix of openings and young forest in early stages of regeneration (<20 years old) preferably near shrubby wetland (FMI, timberdoodle.org).