

Northern Flicker



Photo: Scott Knecht

IDENTIFICATION AND CALL Large brownish woodpecker with dark bars and spots on back, whitish or buff breast with black spots and a black crescent mark on upper breast. White rump visible in flight, red patch on nape, yellow wing linings, and a black “mustache.” Call a loud, repeated *flicka-flicka-flicka*, also a loud *peough* call. Found statewide.

NEST Usually excavates nest cavities in dead/diseased trunks and large branches. Placement determined by suitability of soft wood, but many cavities between 20–25’ high. Prefers aspen in northern forests. Uses natural cavities.

FOOD Forages primarily on the ground for ants and other invertebrates near forest edges or along roads.

TERRITORY SIZE Can range up to 60 acres but may concentrate in smaller foraging “hotspots” of 2–3 acres.

FOREST CONDITION Uses a wide range of open forest types but prefers more open, wetter areas near swamps or recently flooded areas lacking dense grass or ground cover. Prefers larger snags (>12” DBH), but will excavate cavities in dead branches or diseased live trees. Important “keystone” species because large percentage of excavated nest cavities later used by many other wildlife.

FOREST HABITAT ASSOCIATION Prefers *Northern Hardwood* and *Oak Pine*, but will use Northern Mixedwood forest.

HABITAT AGE CLASS Will use *older* forest (dominant trees 70-100 years old and 10-16” diameter), *intermediate* forest (dominant trees 20-70 years old and 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 Retain current and future large snags. More open park-like woods preferred, especially if habitat for ants, which are a preferred food source. Will use younger forest if snags present.