

# Yellow-bellied Sapsucker



Photo: Richard Fournier

**IDENTIFICATION AND CALL** Smaller black-and-white patterned woodpecker with black bib and pale yellow wash on breast, red forehead and throat, and long white stripe along wing. Call a repeated nasal mew or a squealing quee-ah. Drumming more irregular and slower than other woodpeckers, often in bursts of five rapid taps followed by slower double taps, sounding like Morse code. Found statewide.

**NEST** In tree cavity with small entrance. Often uses live hardwood trees with heartwood decay that makes excavation easier.

**FOOD** Feeds on sap from a variety of woody plant species, insects, fruits, and seeds. Drills neatly organized rows of sap wells along trunks.

**TERRITORY SIZE** Variable, 2.5–7.5 acres.

**FOREST CONDITION** Prefers high percentage of shade-intolerant species, especially larger aspen, alder and birch. Requires hardwoods with central decay column or snags for nest cavities.

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

**HABITAT AGE CLASS** Prefers *older* forest (dominant trees 70-100 years old and 10-16" diameter), but will use *intermediate* forest (dominant trees 20-70 years old and 5-10" 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 larger snags and potential snags or live trees with decay, especially aspen and birch. Will use intermediate forest if snags are present.