

Wildlife

Level 2 (Grades 6-8)

Michael Wesco Foundations 4-Life

Bird Habitats

How birds satisfy their habitat needs

Downy Woodpecker

Natural Habitat - Forest

HABITAT -

The Downy Woodpecker is found in deciduous forests all over North America. They can even be found in suburban areas like my backyard. They remain in their habitat year-round, but may migrate to lower elevations or slightly south.



Like most woodpeckers, they are cavity nesters. This means that they make their nests by hollowing out a cavity in tree trunks. In my backyard, my nesting pair have chosen a cavity in a Sassafras tree for their home.



DIET -

Downy Woodpeckers' main diet consists of insects, seeds, and berries. In the winter, these things are harder to find, so I make sure that my backyard nest feeder is always full and ready for my woodpecker friends.



FEATHERY FACTS -

- ✦ The Downy Woodpecker is the smallest woodpecker in North America.
- ✦ Downy nests are later reused by other cavity nesters such as Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows.
- ✦ Male and female Downy Woodpeckers look almost identical, except that the males have a small red patch on the back of their head.

Belted Kingfisher

Natural Habitat - Wetlands

HABITAT -

Belted Kingfishers are commonly found in wetlands across North America. They migrate from Northern parts of Alaska and Canada to as far south as Central America.



To build their nests, they dig tunnels into sand banks along waterways. The tunnels angle at an upward slant. When water rises, this provides an air pocket to prevent their tunnels from flooding and protects their young.



DIET -

Belted Kingfishers are carnivores. Their diet consists of small fish, crustaceans, amphibians, insects, small mammals, and reptiles. They hunt for their food in shallow water, close to the surface.

FEATHERY FACTS -

- ✦ Male and female adults work together to incubate their eggs.
- ✦ They lay 3-8 eggs at a time.
- ✦ They select "watchposts" such as tree stumps or fenceposts close to the water, where they wait and watch for prey.
- ✦ They show reverse sexual dimorphism - typically the female species of most birds is more subdued in color. However, the reverse is true of Belted Kingfishers.



Michael Wesco
Age 13 - Grade 8
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