

1982

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Investigations

M. A. Byrd

The Center for Conservation Biology

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PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: Virginia PROJECT NUMBER: EW-1-6
PROJECT TYPE: Research and/or Inventory STUDY NUMBER: IV
STUDY TITLE: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Investigations JOB NUMBER: IV-A-1,
IV-A-2,
IV-A-3
PERIOD COVERED: July 1, 1981 - June 30, 1982

JOB IV-A-1
OBJECTIVE: To determine distribution and abundance of the red-cockaded woodpecker in Virginia.

JOB IV-A-2
OBJECTIVE: To obtain information on behavior, food habits, nesting success, and limiting factors for the species in Virginia.

JOB IV-A-3
OBJECTIVE: To make recommendations designed to maintain and increase this species in Virginia.

SUMMARY:

Surveys for the location of active red-cockaded woodpecker sites were continued. Seven active nests were located of which six were successful. Nine young were produced for an average of 1.28 young per active nest. Twenty-two known adults were located which gave a total known population in late June of 31 individuals.

SURVEYS:

Surveys were continued to locate active red-cockaded woodpecker sites. Aerial surveys were made over several areas of the City of Suffolk which includes the former county of Nansemond. Several promising areas were located which had not previously been seen during the ground surveys. These areas will be checked thoroughly on the ground during the winter.

All areas on which birds had previously been seen were resurveyed for activity.

Population and Nesting Studies

All areas which contained cavity trees were checked several times for woodpecker activity through the use of tape recordings at all sites.

A tape recording of two of the vocalizations of woodpeckers was played at each site during April when birds had established territories. Response to the recording was immediate and continuous. It is believed that the use of a recording prior to the initiation of nesting has no adverse effect on the birds and provides an excellent technique for the location of active sites.

As a result of the use of this technique, seven active nests were located, a single individual respectively located at a seventh and eighth site, and two individuals at a ninth site. Following the breeding season, a tenth site was located for the first time in Southampton County. Colonies and productivity are indicated below in Table 1.

Table 1. Productivity of Red-cockaded woodpeckers in Virginia, 1982.

Topographic Quadrangle	No. of Adults	Productivity	No. of Young	No Nest Located
Manry	2	Unproductive	0*	
Manry	3	Productive	2	
Manry	1	-	-	**
Manry	3	Productive	1	
Yale	2	Productive	2	
Sebrell	2	Productive	2	
Sussex	2	Productive	1	
Sussex	2	Productive	1	
Buckhorn	2	-	-	***
Whaleyville	1	-	-	****
	20		9	

* - Nest Abandoned ** No nest found - probably a single bird *** - No nest found but thought to be present **** - Area logged.

Six of seven active nests were successful in which nine young were produced for an average of 1.28 young per active nest. The birds located in Southampton County probably nested there in 1982. There were, therefore, 22 known adults and 9 young in June for a total known population of 31 individuals. In 1981, the known number of adults was 18 with a minimum of 12 fledged young. Although production was lower in 1982, the total population appears to have remained stable.

Foraging Studies

Previous studies of foraging behavior have been concerned with the nature of the substratum used for foraging and whether there are foraging differences between the sexes.

Studies were conducted through the winter on foraging range of clans with emphasis on the territory required rather than the substratum utilized. Clan foraging behavior has also been followed through the spring and summer of this year. Foraging data presently are being analyzed and will be presented in a future report.

TARGET DATE FOR COMPLETION: June 30, 1983

STATUS OF PROGRESS: On Schedule

SIGNIFICANT DEVIATIONS IN PROGRESS: None

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continue with remaining project plans

COST THIS SEGMENT: Federal \$1999.50: State\$666.50: Total \$2,666.00:

PREPARED BY: Mitchell A. Byrd

APPROVED BY: Jack W. Raybourne
Chief, Division of Game

DATE: August 1, 1982

R. H. Cross, Jr.
Executive Director