

# RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER

*Dryobates borealis*

**ID TIPS** Small woodpecker with black and white ladder striped back and a white cheek. Males have a tiny, nearly invisible, red streak or “cockade” at the upper border of the cheek.

**SONG** The best known call of this very vocal woodpecker is the raspy “sklit” it gives when disturbed.

**HABITAT** Open-understory pine forests, particularly longleaf pine, maintained by periodic fires. Mature pines are required for cavity creation.

**NEST** Nesting from late April to July in excavated cavities in living pines, with 2-4 eggs laid in the breeding male’s roost cavity. RCWs live in family groups of 2-5 adults, usually one female, working together to raise young.

**FOOD** Primarily insects and other arthropods found on and under the bark of pine trees, including ants, termites, bark beetles, wood roaches, and centipedes. To a lesser extent they also eat seeds and fruits.

## ACTIVITIES & STRATEGIES

Maintain large open stands of mature pines with very little growth in the mid-story.

Use regular prescribed burning and manage to a low basal area (40-70).

Consider enrolling in the Safe Harbor Program.

## EXAMPLE SCENARIO

Thin a pine stand to a 70 basal area, use herbicides to reduce hardwood mid-story, and burn on a two-year rotation.

For prescribed fire in known RCW areas, burn around cavity trees prior to burning the bigger unit to minimize fire impacts to these trees.



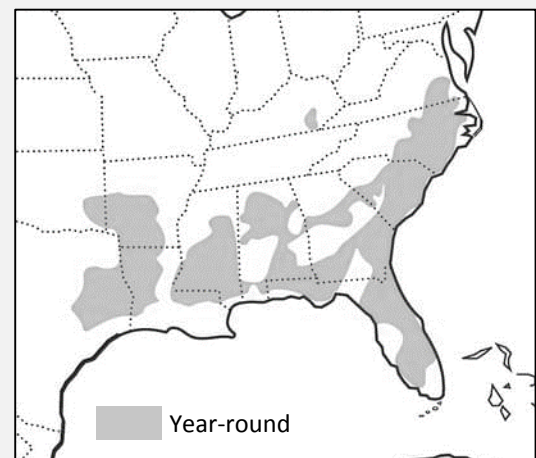
## CONSERVATION STATUS

Federally endangered

## FOREST USE AT A GLANCE

Open pine savannas

## SPECIES RANGE



## DID YOU KNOW?

A family of RCWs excavates multiple cavities within their territory. It may take 2-6 years to complete one cavity in a living pine tree.