

## Woodpeckers

**Issue – Using houses for loud drumming to attract a mate, looking for food, or excavating a nest cavity. Causing damage to siding or roofing, or just being noisy!**

**Suggestions-**

- ▶ Leave dead or decaying trees up so they can use these instead of a house as a drumming site. (Drumming is used for attracting a mate. If they have had success in an area they are more likely to return the next year).
- ▶ Hang strips of Mylar scare tape, or floating Mylar balloons in front of the area of activity.
- ▶ Put up a hawk or owl decoy in the area.
- ▶ Hang aluminum pie pans horizontally along ropes outside a window, with a string coming in the window. If drumming is heard, pull on the string causing the pie tins to move and clatter.
- ▶ Create barriers where woodpeckers have been active by covering or wrapping the gutter, downspout, or other site with a sheet, tarp, burlap, etc.

**Issue – searching for food and damaging siding or roofing.**

**Note –** When woodpeckers are searching for food their drumming pattern is not restricted to one spot on the house. They typically make light taps to search for grubs under the surface. If they are persistent, it may mean you have an insect infestation, which needs to be treated.

**Suggestions-**

- ▶ Use the first four suggestions listed under Drumming (above).
- ▶ Use repellents that are aromatic and are a taste deterrent for the woodpecker, but won't harm it.

**Issue - Excavating for a nest or roost site and damaging siding or roofing.**

**Note -** This would be a round opening about the same width as the woodpecker. Scaring birds away from a nest with eggs or young in it is illegal, so first check the nest before proceeding with suggested solutions. If the nest is active, wait till the birds have left the nest (normally mid-June), then seal the opening to prevent other birds using the cavity.

**Suggestions –** if the woodpecker is just beginning to excavate a nest cavity-

- ▶ Use the scare tactics suggested under Drumming (above)
- ▶ Provide a nest box designed for woodpeckers as an alternative site. A nesting woodpecker is often territorial and will keep other woodpeckers out of the area.

