

Living With Wildlife: WOODPECKERS



ISSUE - DRUMMING ON HOUSES

- Leave dead or decaying trees so woodpeckers can use them as a drumming site instead of a house. They use drumming to attract mates, and if they have been successful, they are more likely to return the following year.
- Hang strips of Mylar scare tap or floating 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 into the window. If drumming is heard, pull the string to make the pie pans move and clatter.
- Create barriers where woodpeckers have been active by covering or wrapping gutters, downspouts, or other affected areas with a sheet, tarp, burlap, etc.
- Use non-toxic repellents that are aromatic and act as taste deterrents for the woodpeckers (e.g., grape seed extract, peppermint oil, etc.).
- Provide a nest box designed for woodpeckers as an alternative site. A nesting woodpecker is often territorial and will help keep other woodpeckers out of the area.



Drumming & Food: When woodpeckers are searching for food, their drumming is not restricted to a single spot on the house. They typically make light taps to search for grubs under the surface. If they are persistent, it may indicate an insect infestation, which needs to be addressed.



Nests/Roosts: This looks like a round opening about the same width as the woodpecker. Scaring birds away from a nest with eggs or young is illegal, so **first check the nest before** proceeding with the suggested solutions. If the nest is active, wait until the birds have left the nest (normally mid-June) before sealing the opening to prevent other birds from using the cavity.