

BIRD MONOGRAPHS:

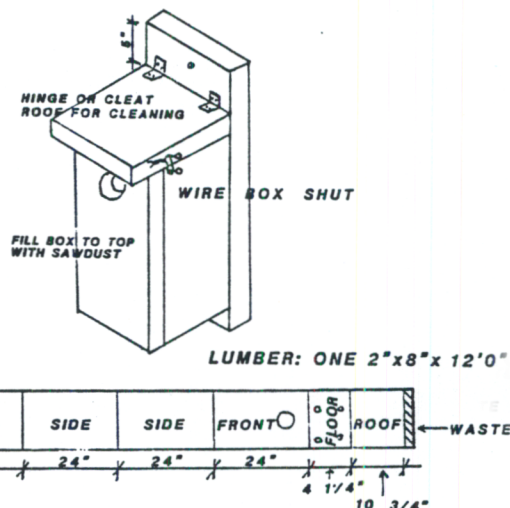
by Donald Wilkinson

NORTHERN FLICKER (*Colaptes auratus*)

- Order:** PICIFORMES **Species:** 27-07-143
Family: PICIDAE - Woodpeckers
Distribution: Three races breed through most of North America, except the Arctic tundra, south to Mexico. Northern population migrates south-east to Florida and Caribbean in fall.
Nest: This is a cavity excavator which chips holes 7.5 cm (3") in diameter with a shaft depth of 30 - 60 cm (12"- 24") deep in trees. It also uses fence posts, building roofs, and nest boxes.
Habitats: Uses open wooded country, cutovers, fields, and deserts.
Eggs: 5 to 10; glossy white.
Diet: Feeds largely on ants as well as other ground insects. Fruit and berries are used by both young and adults from mid summer to autumn.
Song: A piercing "kee-ar". Also "flicka-flicka-flicka" and a long, prolonged series : "wick wick wick wick wick wick"
Size: 32 to 36 cm (12.5 to 14 inches).
Note:



The American Ornithological Union reviewed the evidence for species designation of this species in 1995. It accepted the following colour races or subspecies: the Yellow-shafted Flicker (*C. a. auratus*) found east of the Rockies and the Red-shafted Flicker (*C. a. cafer*) found west of the Rockies and into the Central Plains. At the same time, the Gilded Flicker (*C. chrysoides*), formerly considered part of this group, was split from it. This latter species is found among the saguaro cactus in the Californian desert.



ISLAND TREES

by J. Dan McAskill

Red Spruce (*Picea rubens*) **Height:** up to 35m

Wildlife Benefits: provides food and cover; provides seeds/cones in early fall; provides foraging habitat for foliage gleaners (e.g. chickadees, evening grosbeaks) and bark gleaners (e.g. chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, creepers).

Seasonal Considerations: provides cover year-round; produces seed in mid-autumn to late autumn; cones stay intact and disperse seed as they dry; is quite susceptible to frost damage; has high shade tolerance; excellent riparian zone species where frost is not a problem; tends to have a narrow, columnar form; foliage yellow red.

Comments: Native to the Island; will produce an understory in moderate shade; do not plant in coastal exposure sites; this is one of the characteristic trees of the Acadian forest; susceptible to air pollution, frost, and spruce budworm damage; good seed crops every 3 to 8 years after 30 years of age; hybridizes with black spruce. There is now some debate between geneticists over the degree of separation between this species and the black spruce. Work is underway on genetic finger printing specimens from the extremes of the ranges where only one or the other species is present.