



Downy Woodpecker

- The adult downy woodpecker is the smallest woodpecker in North America and can be found year round just about everywhere except the arid southwest. It is about the size of a half a submarine sandwich – 5.5 to seven inches long. It usually weighs less than a pound.
- Males feed high in trees; females feed lower on the tree. They form pairs by taking turns drumming on dead limbs.
- Males and females work together to dig out a nest cavity in a dead limb or tree at last a foot off the ground.
- The birds camouflage the entrance with fungus or lichen.
- The female lays four to five eggs. Both parents fill their bills with insects to feed the chicks. The young leave the nest about 20 to 25 days after hatching and may follow the parents around for a few weeks.
- Downy woodpeckers visit parks and forests, orchards, wooded areas, bird and suet feeders. They are often seen with nuthatches and chickadees.
- Downy woodpeckers are noisy! They drum on trees during breeding season and their call is a shrill whinny.
- These woodpeckers have a long white stripe down their backs; it's the one bit of coloring that distinguishes them from hairy woodpeckers. The male has a small red patch on the back of his head.
- The woodpeckers are very acrobatic. They hitch themselves down and around a tree trunk looking for insects and often balance on slender tree branches.



Peter de Wit