

Teaching material on Biodiversity Conservation

Titel: The black woodpecker – A forest dweller

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Level: primary school

Type of material: Information with individual task

Aim: To sensitize students to the situation of the woodpecker and animals which re-use its hollows, protection of the black woodpecker and its habitat

Information for the teacher (references)

Information about the black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*)

NABU-Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. -(o.J.)- Der Schwarzspecht-

(<http://www.nabu.de/aktionenundprojekte/vogeldesjahres/1981-derschwarzspecht/>)(downloaded 19.11.2013)

Bild Schwarzspecht

(<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schwarzspecht.jpg>)(Zugriff) (downloaded 19.11.2013)

The black woodpecker – a forest dweller

Hello, I'm the black woodpecker and my feathers are shiny black. I have a red crown on the top of my head but my female conspecifics just have a red patch on their necks.

My beak is pronounced, very strong and slightly yellowish and my eyes are pale yellow. Best of all I like to eat larvae, ants and beetles, but from time to time I eat spiders and small snails. I rarely eat berries and fruits.

I prefer old beech trees as a breeding and sleeping place. I usually choose a tree that is more than 100 years old. That tree must be stable enough for me to construct a spacious nesting hollow.

It takes 23 to 28 days to build a new hollow. Mainly this serves as a roost and my wife and I have to build a new one about every three years. Usually we make the entrance first, which is only a few centimetres deep, and later we expand this to make a big hollow. With my spacious hollows I can create a living environment for more than 60 animal species.

Known re-users of my hollows are squirrels and many small bird species. Even wasps use my hollows for reproduction. Many species of bats use the abandoned hollows during summer and also for overwintering.

Over time, a collection of animal excrements and decaying wood forms at the bottom of old rotting hollows; this is a popular living environment for many specialized beetle species.

Black woodpecker Profile

Draw the black woodpecker

Appearance:

Food:

Roost:

Time taken to make the hollow:

Name three animals which use the hollow after the black woodpecker:

Think about a way to protect the living environment/forest, so the woodpecker can build hollows in the future:

(Tip: use the internet for information!)