

terminate in the sterno-tracheal at the distance of 2 twelfths from the bifurcation. There are no inferior laryngeal muscles. The rings of the trachea, which are firm, and but slightly compressed, are about 50 in number; the bronchial half rings about 15.

According to Mr. TOWNSEND this species is found from the Rocky Mountains to the shores of the Columbia river.

THE DOWNY WOODPECKER.

+*PICUS PUBESCENS, Linn.*

PLATE CCLXIII.—MALE AND FEMALE.

The Downy Woodpecker, which is best known in all parts of the United States by the name of Sapsucker, is perhaps not surpassed by any of its tribe in hardiness, industry, or vivacity. If you watch its motions while in the woods, the orchard, or the garden, you will find it ever at work. It perforates the bark of trees with uncommon regularity and care; and, in my opinion, greatly assists their growth and health, and renders them also more productive. Few of the farmers, however, agree with me in this respect; but those who have had experience in the growing of fruit-trees, and have attended to the effects produced by the boring of this Woodpecker, will testify to the accuracy of my statement.

This species is met with, during summer, in the depth of the forest, as well as in the orchard or the garden. In winter it frequently visits the wood-pile of the farmer, close to his house, or resorts to his corn-crib, where, however, it does little damage. I have found it pretty generally distributed from the lower parts of Louisiana to Labrador, and as far to the westward as I have travelled. It seems, in fact, to accommodate itself to circumstances, and to live contented anywhere.

About the middle of April it begins to form its nest, shewing little care as to the kind of tree it selects for the purpose, although it generally chooses a sound one, sometimes, however, taking one that is partially decayed. The pair work together for several days before the hole is completed, sometimes perhaps a whole week, as they dig it to the depth of a foot or sixteen inches. The direction is sometimes perpendicularly downwards from the commence-

ment, sometimes transverse to the tree for four or five inches, and then longitudinal. The hole is rendered smooth and conveniently large throughout, the entrance being perfectly round, and just large enough to admit one bird at a time. The eggs, commonly six in number, pure white, and translucent, are deposited on the bare wood. In the Southern and Middle States, two broods are raised in the season; farther north seldom more than one. The young follow their parents through the woods, in company with Nuthatches and Creepers, and seem at all times lively and happy. Their shrill rolling notes are heard at a considerable distance, as well as those which they use when calling to each other. Their food, during summer, consists of insects and their larvæ; but, at the approach of autumn, they feed on fruits of various kinds, especially small grapes, and the berries of the poke-weed. The extensile portion of the tongue of this species, as well as of *Picus varius*, *P. villosus*, and *P. querulus*, is cylindrical or vermiform, while the extremity, or tongue itself, is linear, flat above, convex beneath, with projecting edges which are serrated backwards, the tip pointed.

The flight of the Downy Woodpecker, like that of the other species, is performed by glidings and undulations, between each of which it utters a single click note; and, although usually short, is capable, on occasion, of being protracted. The bird is by no means shy or suspicious, and scarcely pays any attention to man, even when standing close to the tree on which it is at work. Towards winter many individuals migrate southward, and spend their time in the immediate neighbourhood of the planter's dwelling.

I have observed that during their stay in the Floridas, Georgia, and the Carolinas, their breast and belly are so soiled by the carbonaceous matter adhering to the trees, in consequence of the burning of the grass at that season, that one might be apt to take a specimen in that state, as belonging to a different species.

DOWNY WOODPECKER, *Picus pubescens*, Wils. Amer. Orn., vol. i. p. 153.

PICUS PUBESCENS, Bonap. Syn., p. 46.

PICUS (DENDROCOPUS) PUBESCENS, *Downy Woodpecker*, Swains. and Rich. F. Bor. Amer., vol. ii. p. 307.

DOWNY WOODPECKER, Nutt. Man., vol. i. p. 576.

DOWNY WOODPECKER, *Picus pubescens*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. ii. p. 81; vol. v. p. 539.

Male, $6\frac{3}{4}$, 12.

Breeds from Texas to Labrador, and northward to lat. 58°. Common throughout the interior to the eastern bases of the Rocky Mountains. In every district a constant resident.

Adult Male.

Bill longish, straight, strong, tapering, compressed, slightly truncated and

cuneate at the tip; mandibles of equal length, both nearly straight in their dorsal outline, their sides convex; nostrils basal, oval, covered by recumbent bristly feathers. Head of moderate size, neck of ordinary length, body robust. Feet rather short, strong; tarsus strong, scutellate before; two toes before and two behind, the inner hind toe shortest; claws strong, arched, very acute.

Plumage soft, with rather disunited barbs, slightly glossed; wings large, the third and fourth quills longest; tail longish, cuneate, of ten tapering stiff feathers, worn to a point.

Bill bluish-black; iris dark red; feet bluish-green; claws light blue, black at the end. The top of the head is black, as are a broad band behind the eye, another below the cheek, as well as the shoulders, wings, and tail; there is a bright red narrow band on the occiput. A band over the eye, and meeting on the hind neck; another from the base of the upper mandible, passing under the eye, and down the neck; six bars on the wings, and the greater part of the middle of the back, together with the three lateral tail-feathers on each side, white, the latter marked with black spots. The lower parts in general are dull white.

Length $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches; extent of wings 12; bill along the ridge $\frac{19}{12}$; tarsus $\frac{3}{4}$.

Adult Female.

In the female, the red band on the head is wanting, the place occupied by it in the male being white. The lower parts are brownish-white.

In a male preserved in spirits, the width of the mouth is $4\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths, the tongue is $8\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths long, its horny part $3\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths, slender, tapering, flat above, furnished on the edges with a single row of rather strong deflected bristles, about 12 in number. The hyoid bones converge on the top of the head as usual, but do not proceed farther forward than opposite the centre of the eye, terminating at the distance of 4 twelfths from the base of the bill, in which respect they contrast strongly with those of the Hairy Woodpecker. The œsophagus is $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, its width scarcely 1 twelfth, it being in its contracted state narrower than the trachea; the proventriculus enlarges to 3 twelfths. The stomach is elliptical, $7\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths long, $5\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in breadth, its muscles well developed; the epithelium thin, tough, rugous, and of a reddish-brown colour. It is filled with farinaceous vegetable substances of a whitish colour. Intestine of moderate length, wide, 8 inches long, its width at the upper part 2 twelfths. No cœca. Trachea 1 inch 5 twelfths long, its breadth nearly 1 twelfth; its contractor muscles moderate; its rings about 50; the bronchial half rings 12. The salivary glands are of large size.

THE RAMPING TRUMPET-FLOWER.

BIGNONIA CAPREOLATA.

This species is met with only in the Southern Districts. It is rather rare in Louisiana, but abounds in Georgia, Alabama, and the Floridas. The flowers are destitute of odour. Humming-birds delight to search for food in them, as well as in those of other species of the genus.

GAIRDNER'S WOODPECKER.

†PICUS GAIRDNERII, *Aud.*

(Not figured.)

This curious little Woodpecker is so very similar to *Picus pubescens* in form, size, and colour, that one can scarcely distinguish it, its affinity to that species being as strict as that of *Picus villosus* to *P. canadensis*. Its bill is slightly stronger; but the greatest difference is found in the toes, which are very much larger, as will be seen from the following measurements.

	Picus Gairdnerii.	Picus pubescens.
Tarsus,	$\frac{7\frac{1}{2}}{12}$	$\frac{7}{12}$
Hind toe,	$\frac{2\frac{1}{2}}{12}$	$\frac{2}{12}$
Its claw,	$\frac{2\frac{3}{4}}{12}$	$\frac{2\frac{1}{2}}{12}$
Second toe,	$\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$	$\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$
Its claw,	$\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$	$\frac{4}{12}$
Third toe,	$\frac{5\frac{3}{4}}{12}$	$\frac{5}{12}$
Its claw,	$\frac{5}{12}$	$\frac{4}{12}$
Fourth toe,	$\frac{7}{12}$	$\frac{6}{12}$
Its claw,	$\frac{4\frac{3}{4}}{12}$	$\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$

These differences may appear slight, and were there intermediate gradations, would be of no value, but I find that eight individuals of *P. pubescens* present no material deviation from the above measurements, while my specimen of *P. Gairdnerii* may be at once distinguished by the greater

length especially of the outer or reversed toe. Its bill is also considerably thicker at the base, although otherwise similar. Another difference presents itself in the relative length of some of the quills, the fifth being longest in *P. Gairdnerii*, the fourth in *P. pubescens*.

GAIRDNER'S WOODPECKER, *Picus Gairdnerii*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. v. p. 317.

Length, $6\frac{8}{12}$; wing, $3\frac{10}{12}$.

Columbia river.

Adult Male.

Bill longish, straight, strong, tapering, angular, slightly compressed, and at the tip truncate; mandibles of equal length, both straight in their outline, the ridge of the upper very narrow, its sides sloping, the lateral ridge nearer the margin; the nostrils linear-oblong, basal, concealed by tufts of reversed bristly feathers.

Head of moderate size, ovate; neck short. Feet short, rather strong; tarsus with a few large scutella before, thin-edged behind, with a series of large scales along the inner side; two toes before, two behind, the fourth or outer reversed toe considerably longer than the third, the first very short; claws strong, much compressed, well curved, very acute, those of the third and fourth toes nearly equal and largest.

Plumage very soft and blended; feathers of the middle part of the back very long and downy. Wings large, rounded, the first quill eight-twelfths long, the second an inch and seven-twelfths longer, the third seven and a quarter twelfths longer than the second, and three-quarters of a twelfth shorter than the fourth, which is slightly exceeded by the fifth, the sixth a little shorter than the fourth; secondaries very broad, truncate. Tail rather long, cuneate, of ten feathers, of which the lateral are eight-twelfths shorter than the middle, all more or less slit at the point.

Bill greyish-blue, somewhat dusky above; feet bluish-grey; claws light blue, dusky at the end. The top of the head is black, as are a broad band behind the eye, part of the loreal space, a band below the cheek, as well as the scapulars, wings, and four middle tail-feathers; there is a band of white over each eye, enlarging on the occiput and terminating in a broad band of bright crimson running across that part; another white band from below the eye, curving behind the ears, nearly meeting on the hind neck; the wings barred with squareish spots of white, and tipped with the same, there being on the outer webs of the third and fourth primaries five spots on the outer and four on the inner web; most of the coverts are also tipped with a white spot; a broad band of white down the middle of the back, the lateral tail-feathers are white, with two bars of black toward the end, and the base of

the inner web of the same colour; the next feather is similar, with more black at the base, and on both webs; the next black, with the terminal half of the outer web, a bar on the inner, and its tip white; the lower surface is white, but much soiled and of a dull greyish-brown tint, the lower tail-coverts with a slightly dusky spot toward the end.

Length to end of tail $6\frac{8}{12}$ inches; bill along the ridge $\frac{8\frac{1}{2}}{12}$; wing from flexure $3\frac{10}{12}$; tail $2\frac{1}{2}$.

Between this and *P. pubescens* there is no difference as to colour, only the spots on the wings of the latter are much larger. Most individuals of *P. pubescens* have the same number of spots on the longer quills, but others have an additional pair.

A figure of this species will, if possible, be given at the end of the work.

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER.

+PICUS QUERULUS, *Wils.*

PLATE CCLXIV.—MALES AND FEMALE.

This species, which was first described by WILSON, is found abundantly from Texas to New Jersey, and inland as far as Tennessee. Pine-barrens suit it best, and it is nowhere more numerous than in those of the Floridas, Georgia, and South Carolina, where, at any time of the year, one is sure to be saluted by its peculiar note, or to see it busily and cheerfully engaged in searching for food, or flitting from one tree to another.

In quickness of motion it approaches more to the Common or Banded Three-toed Woodpecker, than any other with which I am acquainted. It glides upwards and sidewise along the trunks and branches, on the lower as well as the upper side of the latter, moving with astonishing alertness, and at every motion emitting a short, shrill and clear note, which can be heard at a considerable distance. While on wing it also emits this note at the commencement of each curve of its undulated flight. Often when alighted it issues a tremulous note, which is also short, sharp, and shrill, and during the love-season its cries resound through the pine-woods. Near Bayou Sara in



J. C.

Downy Woodpecker?

1. Male. 2. Female.



Audubon, John James. 1842. "The Downy Woodpecker, *Picus pubescens*, Linn. [Pl. 263]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 4, 249–254. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319378>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125069>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319378>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/319378>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Biodiversity Heritage Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: NOT_IN_COPYRIGHT

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.