

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER
(*PICOIDES DORSALIS*)

Navajo/Federal Statuses: NESL G4 / MBTA; not listed under the ESA.

Distribution: Breeding range extends throughout AK and Canada to northeastern U.S., and south through most western states to eastern NV, central AZ, and southern NM. On Navajo Nation, known only from the Chuska Mountains, and low potential for Black Mesa and Navajo Mountain.

Habitat: Nests and winters primarily in spruce, fir, aspen, or mixed-conifer forests (and possibly adjacent ponderosa pine habitats) above 2,400 m (8,000 feet) elevation; ideal conditions have mature or old-growth stands, fire-killed trees, 42-52 snags per 40 ha (100 acres), and/or large numbers of bark-boring beetles. Nest is placed 1½-15 m high in a stump or dead/dying conifer or aspen.

Similar Species: Only woodpecker on Navajo Nation with 3 toes (all others have 4), barred sides, and males have yellow crown; Lewis's Woodpecker has red face-patch, pinkish belly, and wide gray collar; Acorn Woodpecker has red crown, white eyes and rump; Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers have white backs and eye-stripes, and males have red patch on back of head; Northern Flicker has spotted breast, red mustache, and black chest band; Williamson's Sapsucker males have yellow belly, red throat, and white wing and rump patches, while females have brown head, white rump, and white-black striped back; Red-naped Sapsucker has white wing patches, and red, white, and black striped head.

Phenology:

- e.APR-e.MAY: courtship, nest-building
- e.MAY-l.JUN: egg laying, incubation (11-14 days)
- m.MAY-m.JUL: nestling period (22-26 days)
- e.JUN-m.AUG: fledging of young (young remain with adults)
- e.JUL-m.SEP: growth and independence of young (≥30 days post-fledging)
- >m.SEP: over-wintering

Survey Method: ≥1 pedestrian survey with high-power optics during 15 APR-15 JUL for individuals, or year-round for potential habitat.

Avoidance: No activity within 0.2 km (¼ mi) of active nest site during 1 MAY-1 AUG; buffer may be less depending on activity type and duration, but not less than 0.1 km; no habitat alteration year-round within 0.2 km of nest site (=12 ha or 30 acre).

References:

- Leonard, D.L., Jr. 2001. Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*). In *The Birds of North America*, No.588 (A.Poole and F.Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA. (description p.2)
- NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2000. Version 1.0. Arlington (VA): NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/>. (Accessed: October 31, 2000).