



Northern Flicker

Colaptes auratus

Description

Everybody in Calgary is likely familiar with the springtime call of the Northern Flicker; it's that long, loud, rapid "laughing" call. This is often accompanied by drumming, on a tree or your chimney cap! That's the male letting the other Flickers know that he's in the neighbourhood, this is his territory and he's looking to start a family. Northern Flickers are a medium sized bird and are Alberta's only brown woodpecker. They have a black crest shaped 'bib' in front, black scalloped plumage, and a white rump that flashes when they are in flight. There are two colour forms for the Flickers in Alberta: the red-shafted has red under its tail and wing feathers, a red moustache (malar mark) on the male and a brown head; and the yellow-shafted form has yellow under the tail and wing feathers, and a black moustache on the males' greyer head with a red crescent at the back (male and female).

If you find an injured or orphaned wild bird or animal in distress, please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society hotline at **403-239-2488**, for tips, instructions and advice, or look at the website at **www.calgarywildlife.org** for more information.

FUN FACTS

- > Most woodpeckers are not migratory but the flicker is protected under the Migratory Birds Act.
- > Northern flickers are often spotted on the ground eating beetles and ants.
- > Flickers use their long curved beaks to dig out food and lick them with their barbed tongues.
- > Flickers live where there are trees available for nesting, usually utilizing dead or decaying trees.



Contact Us

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