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HABITAT ACREAGE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER
By T. A. Beckett, III

The Red-cockaded woodpecker (*Dendrocoptes borealis*) is one of numerous species of wildlife in habitat trouble. It is still considered common by some knowledgeable persons but it should remain on the endangered list. There is no species that we can more safely state is headed for extinction than this highly specialized and localized woodpecker. The main factor working against continuing this bird on the endangered list is the ease with which it may be found due to its habitat.

The Red-cockaded is a non-migratory species. It is sedentary in that individuals may be found for several years within a rather small area. My current studies indicate that the species has a relatively long life in favorable habitat. One of the most perplexing questions currently needing answering is - what is the minimum habitat in which the species can exist? This paper will not attempt to furnish any of these answers but will simply show that a certain number of clans of birds are found in an area that meets the need to isolate them from possible intrusions by adjacent birds.

This study represents a small segment of over 3 years' work in locating over 200 clans, study information from about 300 trees, and color banding about 200 birds. I know of no other North American species of bird that can be handled under wild conditions on a year-round basis as the need arises. I know of no other species about which so little information is in print and even that small amount is often in error.

The nomenclature used in this manuscript follows the proposed terms set forth in the published Symposium on the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, 1971, edited by R. L. Thompson.

To date there has been no factual information regarding the support timber and habitat needed by the Red-cockaded woodpecker in relatively "natural habitat." I know of no primitive areas, not altered by man, on which a study of this type might be based. It is true that possibly 1 or 2 colonies might be selected in isolated areas but these would be far from the type conditions under which the species came into existence.

This study is based on banding and observation periodically on a year-round basis covering a little over 3 years. Some first