Outlook on Lifestyle

Three more types of north Halton woodpeckers

Last week's column dealt with our three most common woodpeckers the downy, the hairy and the common flicker. Three other species of woodpecker also breed in north-Halton.

The yellow-bellied sapsucker is one of these. As its name suggests, the primary food of this woodpeker is sap. These birds drill small holes into trees and then lap up the sapthat is exceded. Small insects that they encounter as they drill, are also included in their diet

From my experience, sapsuckers are generally birds of extensive woodlands. They are more common in central and northern Ontario in forests that contain large numbers of their favorite tree - the white birch - than they are in southern Ontario I've found sapsuckers nesting in Halton Reginnal Forest, northwest of Millon.

An interesting association exists between the ruby-throated hummingbird and the sapsucker. On a number of occasions I've observed hummingbirds in the vicinity of sap sucker drilling operations and suspected that they too were consuming the sap. After consulting reference books I found that this was

indeed the case - that humaningbirds supplemented their nectar diets by feeding at sapsucker holes. They have even been recorded driving the much larger sapsucker away after



Another Halton woodpecker is the red-headed, eastly one of the most beautiful of our native birds. Its head is a brilliant red and the rest of its plummage is sharply defined black and white

The red-headed woodpecker is a bird of open woods and the fieldwoodlot habitat that defines much of southern Ontario. They seem to have an affinity for large trees, particularly oaks, that furnish acorns, and important red-headed food

Once these birds were more common than they are today Their weakness for fruit drew the ire of or-

about a curfew. I reminded him the

He said, "This isn't America, this is

I think constitutional rights are being violated. I have stood on borderguard duty less than 50 feet from the communists to defend these rights. If this guy can stop me from taking a walk, then my being over here is a

If I had the money I'd sue the guy, but I don't -- FREEDOM FIGHTER, WIESBADEN, GERMANY

DEAR FIGHTER -- One of the

chard growers who shot and poisoned them. Red-headed nests carved into creosote-treated telephone poles became death traps for the baby birds and the aggressive introduced starlings moved in and took over nesting sites

Thankfully the red-beaded woodpecker has shown some recent resurgence. I've observed them this year in the farm-woodlot habitat south of Georgetown and most recently at Georgetown Golf Club. While golfing at the club two weeks ago. I paid more attention to a family of these woodpeckers than I did my rapidly burgeoning score

The sixth Halton woodpecker is the pileated, the most impressive member of the group, by virtue of its size. At 16 to 1912 inches in length the pileated's size rivals that of a crow.

These proportions and a large flame-like crest make identification of this bird an easy matter

Pileateds are essentially birds of extensive forest but at times venture close to human habitation . I've observed pileateds along Silver Creek very near Georgetown.

Despite their size and despite the fact that pileateds are fairly common in this area, their retiring

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habits can make them hard to find. Signs of their presence are much easier to come by than the birds themselves Large oblong holes dug out of the trees by their chisel-like beaks are very much in evidence in the woods of north-Halton

Pileateds excavate these holes in search of carpenter ants and grubs. They also forage for insects on rotted stumps, quite close to the ground.

Pileateds are very closely related to the ivory-billed woodpecker. formerly of southern United States. The ivory-billed, even larger and more striking than the pileated now appears to be extinct - a victim of guns and habitat loss.

The strong preference of pileated woodpeckers for deep woods makes them vulnerable to habitat loss as



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DEAR MEG



Soldier defends his right to walk

DEAR MEG - I am a U.S. soldier stationed in West Germany. When 1 rights you are defending is the right to was home on leave. I spent most of own property. The man's trailer park my time in my sister's trailer, which is his private property so he has the is in a park that has security guards right to make rules - about cuts, 24 hours a day. The night before Heft, dogs or midnight strollers - for the my mother and I were out for a walk security and convenience of his tenaround midnight when the manager ants, including your sister I underof the park stopped us and asked what stand your aggravation, but if you we were doing. My mother replied, give the question a little more "Walking," and he started velling thought, I'm sure you'll agree

curfew was for 16-and-under kids and that this is America, which is a free

my trailer park," and he threatened to have my sister evicted.

waste of time.





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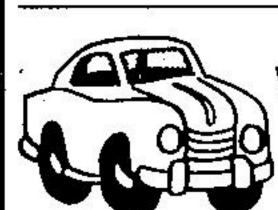
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