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Abstracts

FEATURE ARTICLES

EFFECTS OF SEX AND AGE ON SURVIVAL OF NORTHERN FLICKERS: A SIX-YEAR FIELD STUDY

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Abstract. Although many forestry management strategies rely on population estimates of indicator species such as woodpeckers (Picidae), empirical estimates of demographic parameters within this taxon are few. We used program MARK to assess influences of age and sex on apparent survival of adult Northern Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) from a six-year mark-recapture study. The top model suggested no differences in apparent survival between the sexes with an overall survival estimate of 0.43 (95% CI: 0.38–0.48). Other models suggested that recapture efficiency differed between the sexes (males: 0.89; females: 0.80), perhaps because males were more philopatric to nest sites. We suggest that high parental investment by male flickers relative to other taxa such as passerines may lead to relatively equal mortality rates between the sexes, rather than the common pattern of female-biased mortality. Survival rates relative to age were constant at least up to the age of three years. Overall, flickers appear to have lower survival than some other woodpecker species and may invest relatively heavily in current reproduction.

Key words: *Colaptes auratus, demography, survival, woodpecker.*