

Acorn Woodpecker

The Consummate Collector

“Waka, waka, waka”, the scolding call of the acorn woodpecker fills the oak woodlands with sound. These communal birds constantly call to members of their extended family and to warn off competing clans. Territories are established around granary trees where the woodpeckers store their food and share nest cavities. Aptly named, acorn woodpeckers collect acorns and store them in soft-barked trees. In this area, the foothills pine is their favorite granary tree. The woodpeckers excavate a hole in the bark, and then hammer in a single acorn. One tree can contain thousands of holes, the work of generations of woodpeckers. Each fall, the communal family fills the empty holes with the current crop of acorns and feeds on the supply throughout the year.

Try This:

Listen for the characteristic call of the acorn woodpecker and follow the sounds to their granary tree. This foothills pine is too young to be used by the birds, but look for the tall, lanky mature pines in the surrounding oak woodland.

