

Cavity Nest Materials of Northern Flying Squirrels, *Glaucomys sabrinus*, and North American Red Squirrels, *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*, in a Secondary Hardwood Forest of Southern Ontario

JESSE E. H. PATTERSON^{1,3}, STEPHEN J. PATTERSON², and JAY R. MALCOLM¹

¹Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, 33 Willcocks Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 3B3 Canada

²Hummingbird Services, 251 Queen Street South, Suite 523, Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 1L7 Canada

³Present address: Department of Biological Sciences, University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4
Canada

Patterson, Jesse E. H., Stephen J. Patterson, and Jay R. Malcolm. 2007. Cavity nest materials of Northern Flying Squirrels, *Glaucomys sabrinus*, and North American Red Squirrels, *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*, in a secondary hardwood forest of southern Ontario. *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 121(3): 303-307.

Through deployment of artificial nest boxes, we examined the composition of cavity nest materials used by Northern Flying Squirrels (*Glaucomys sabrinus*) and North American Red Squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) in a secondary hardwood forest of southern Ontario, Canada. We collected 32 nests of known species association and found that 85.7% of *G. sabrinus* nests and 77.8% of *T. hudsonicus* nests were constructed almost entirely of shredded bark from Eastern White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*). Mean nest depth across all samples was 12.2 cm and showed no significant difference between species or between spring and summer nests. We review the antiparasitic properties of *T. occidentalis* and suggest that the use of shredded cedar bark by *G. sabrinus* and *T. hudsonicus* to line nest cavities may be a behavioural adaptation, which reduces ectoparasite loads in the nest environment.

Key Words: Northern Flying Squirrel, *Glaucomys sabrinus*, North American Red Squirrel, *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*, ectoparasites, nest box, nest material, nest-protection hypothesis, thermoregulation, Eastern White Cedar, *Thuja occidentalis*, Ontario.