

## Study Questions

“[Hole Sweet Hole](#)” by Mary Hoff. Published in the May–June 2021 *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, or read the story online at the DNR website. ([www.mndnr.gov/young\\_naturalists/hole](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists/hole)).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. True or false: The wood at the center of a tree is called heartwood.
2. Put a “P” next to the primary excavators. Put an “S” next to the secondary users.

Pileated woodpecker

Marten

Barred Owl

Chickadee

American kestrel

Carpenter ant

3. Describe the three main steps in the development of a cavity nest.
4. List as many items mentioned in the article as you can recall that cavity dwellers use to line their nests.
5. What is a barred owl’s main predator?
  - a. fisher
  - b. great horned owl
  - c. marten
  - d. coyote

6. Name two things carpenter ants eat.

7. Match the animal with the trait:

Animals

Traits

Wood duck

uses its 2-inch-long beak to hollow out a cavity

Pileated woodpecker

sometimes stores food in the cavity for later

Fisher

likes to nest in pine, spruce or fir trees

Barred owl

needs its nest tree to be at least 60 years old

Red squirrel

may lay up to 16 eggs

8. Name two ways a male kestrel helps his family.
9. True or False. Years ago forest managers often didn’t recognize the importance of trees with

broken branches and rotten insides as part of a healthy habitat.

10. Red squirrels sometimes line their cavity nests with cedar bark. In addition to serving as insulation, what other advantage does the cedar bark provide?

11. Which describes the relationship between kestrels and squirrels?

- Kestrels create the cavities for nesting squirrels.
- Kestrels are predators to newborn squirrels.
- Squirrels disrupt nesting kestrels by taking over their nesting cavities.
- Kestrels may kick out a nesting squirrel and claim the cavity as their own.

Challenge: You notice a wood duck has used the artificial nesting box you made to lay her eggs! You count 12 eggs in the nest. About how many baby ducklings might you expect to live into the summer months?

### **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments Practice Items**

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- Why might an animal prefer a cavity nest to a nest out in the open?
- True or false: Most old trees have cavities.
- What are two ways cedar bark might help red squirrels?
- Which of the species featured in the story has the most offspring?

### **Vocabulary**

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arboreal – related to trees

incubates – sits on eggs to warm them

insulation – something that separates one thing from another

parasites – living things that live on, in, or with other living things and use their resources

premier – top, first

pterodactyl – a flying dinosaur-like animal

rodents – animals like mice, rats, and rabbits

An **arboreal** animal does things that are  
an animal that does things **related to trees** is known as

When a duck **incubates** eggs, it

When a duck **sits on eggs to warm them**, it

**Insulation** is

**Something that separates one thing from another** is called

**Living things that live on, in, or with other living things and use their resources** are called

**Parasites** are

A **premier** location is one that is

A location that is **top or first** is a

A **pterodactyl** is

A **flying dinosaur-like animal** is called a

**Animals like mice, rats, and rabbits** are known as

**Rodents** are