



The Woodpeckers: engineers of the forest

(Virkkala, R., 2006)

What is a Woodpecker?



Family *PICIDAE*



the strongest avian excavator



over 210 species around the world



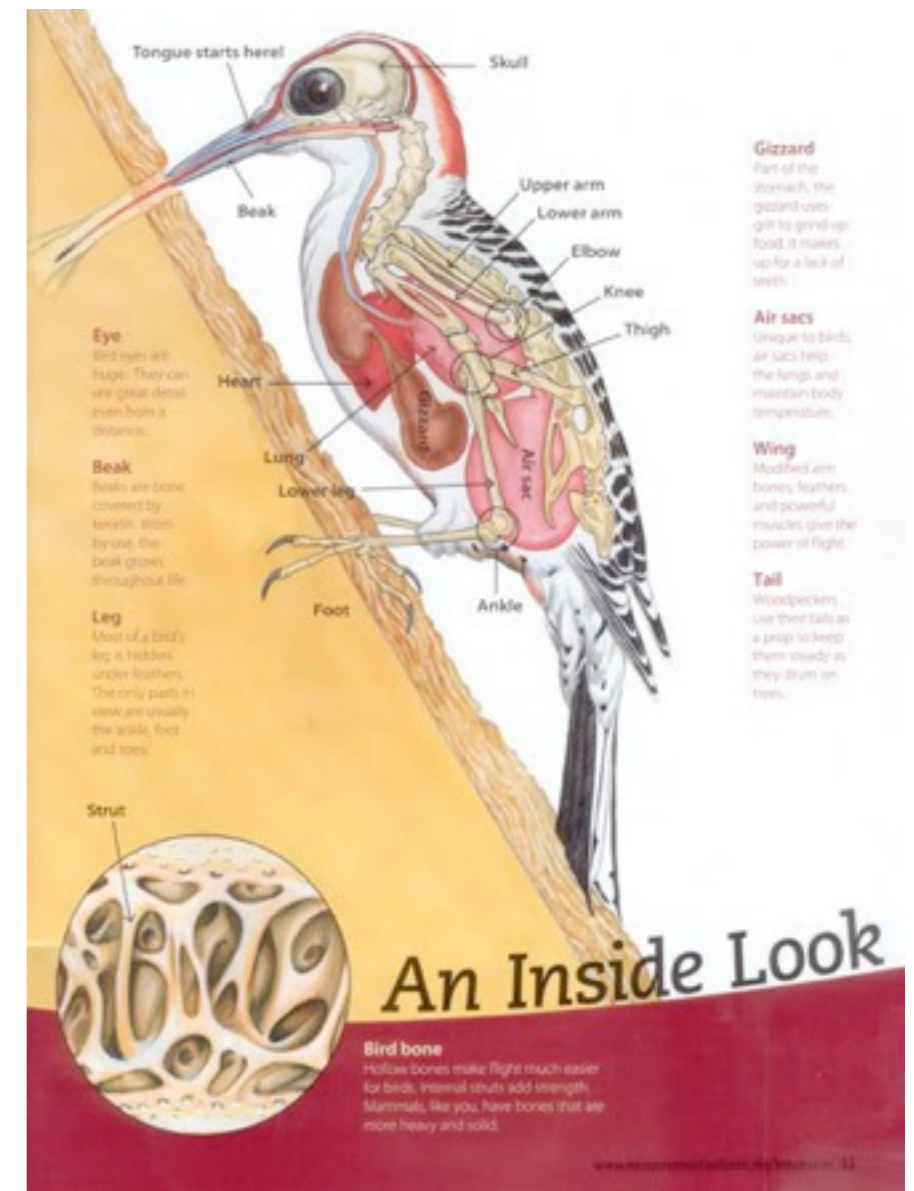
absent from treeless landscapes



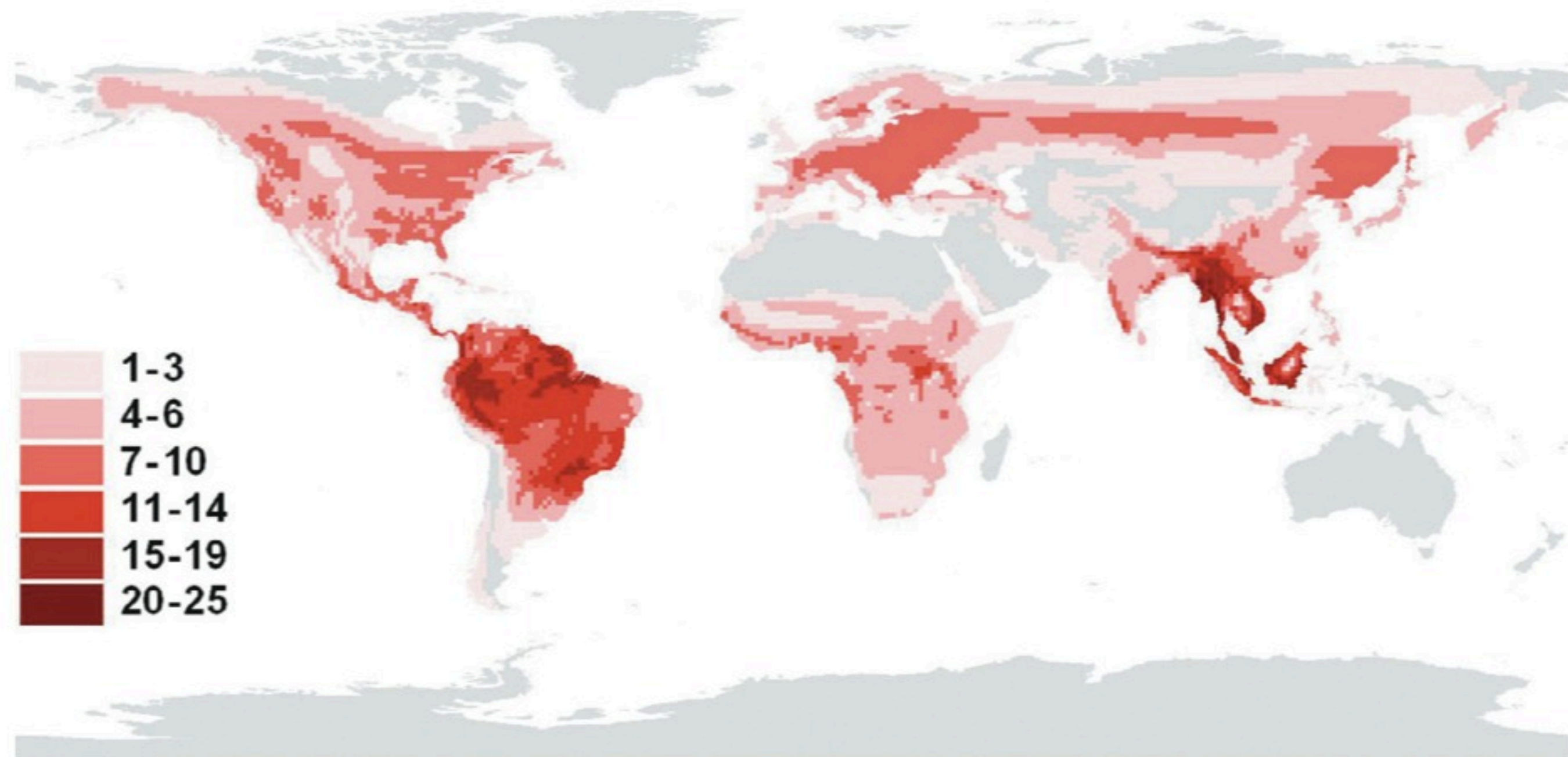
diet includes insects, seeds, fruits,
and small vertebrates



nest in tree holes (cavity)



Distribution of woodpeckers

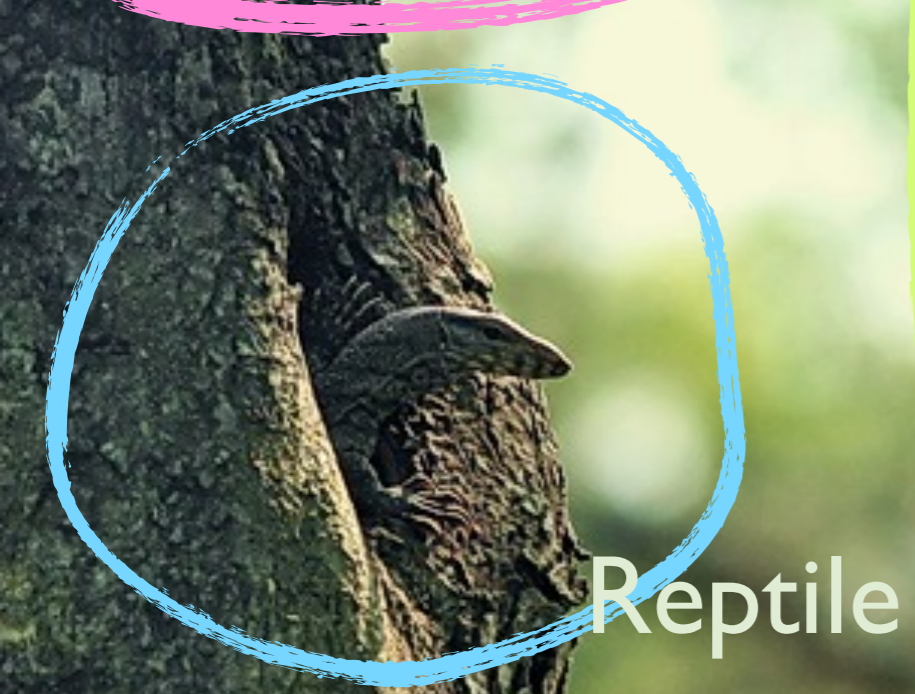
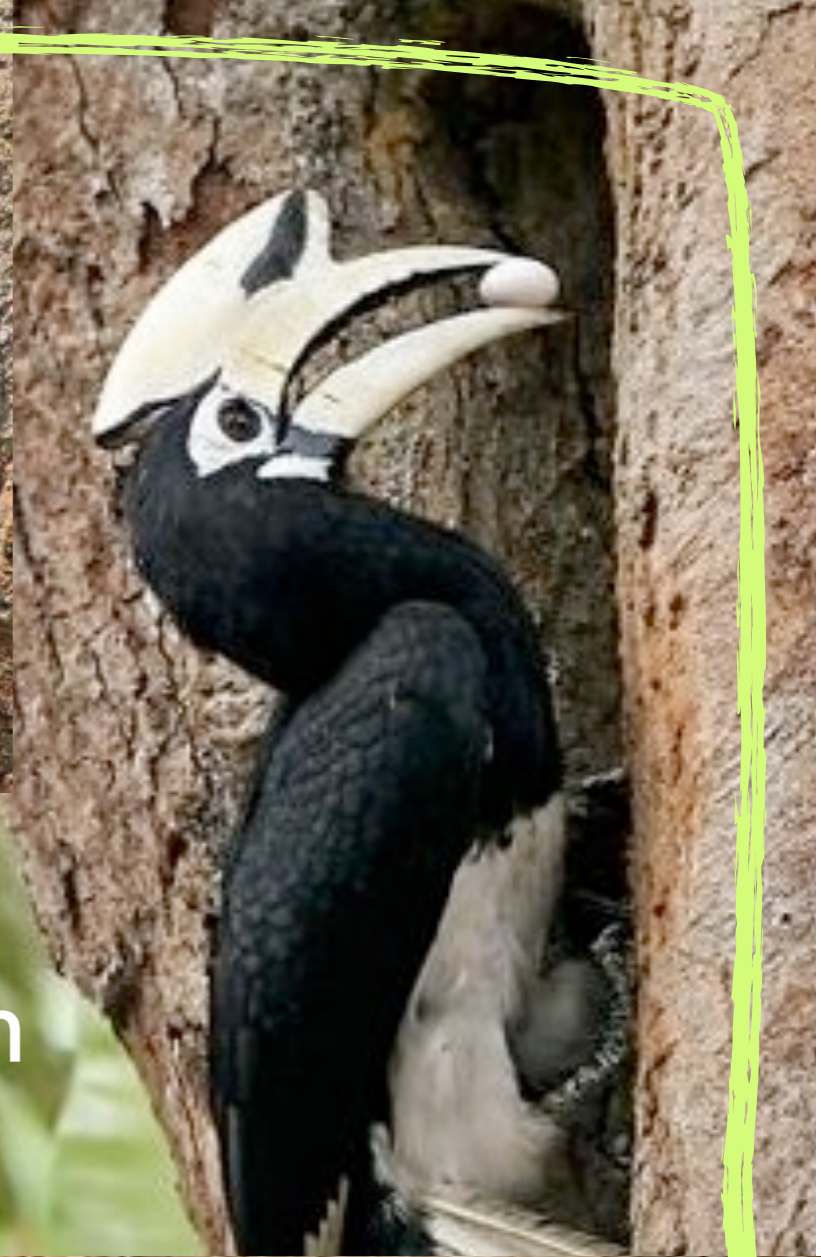


(Mikusiński, G., 2006)

nest cavity development and use

- Next year and years after woodpeckers abandoned the excavated nests...





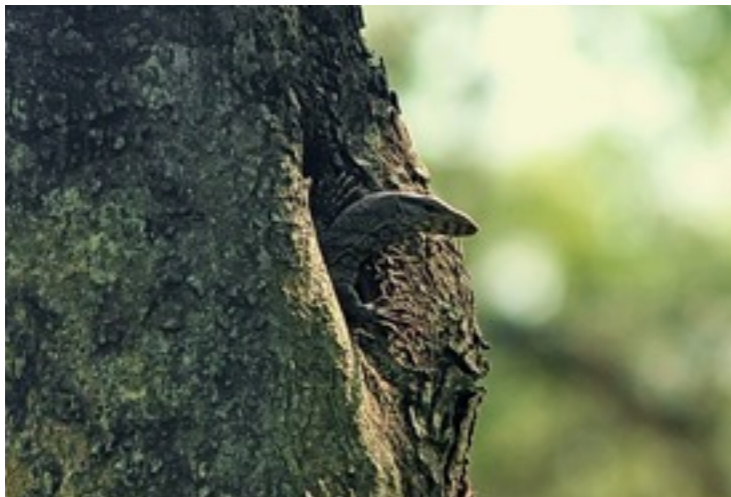
cavity users classified into 3 groups



 **Primary excavators**



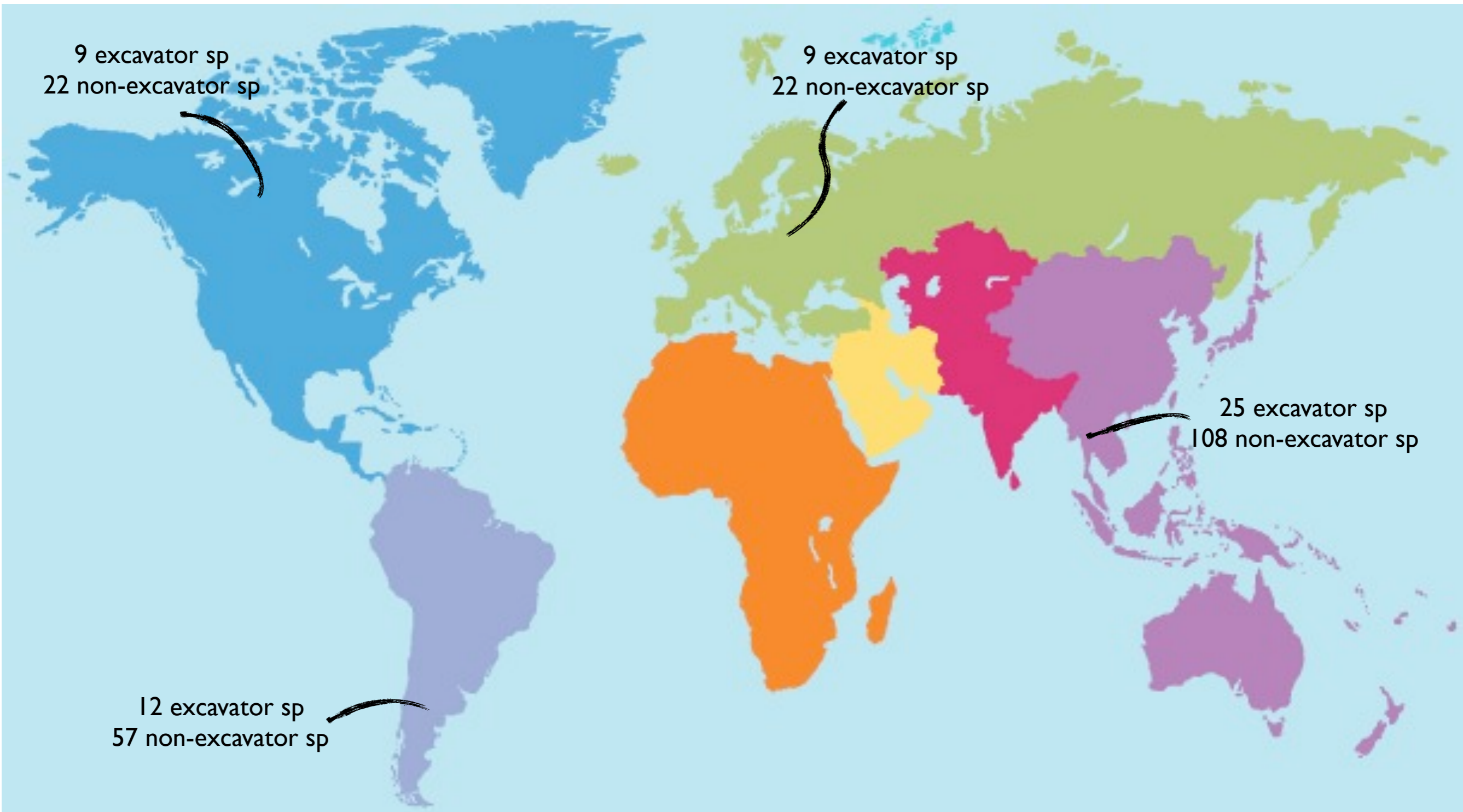
 **Weak primary excavators**



 **Secondary cavity users**

(BLANC, L.A., WALTERS, J. R., 2008)


who use cavities



(Pattanavibool, A., Edge, W. D., 1996)
(Cockle, K. L., Martin, K., Wesolowski, T., 2011)


Why cavity nesters are important to ecosystems

Predator


-  Owls hunt various species of rodents (ex. rats, mice) and help to control rodent populations.



Seed disperser

-  Acorn Woodpeckers - disperse various species of oak trees which they depend on for food and nest cavities.



-  Hornbills - extremely important seed disperser for many species of tropical trees; they can disperse various sizes of seeds.



Nest web community concept

“A quantitative interspecific network in which species that create cavities are **linked** to species that use the cavities”

(BLANC, L.A., WALTERS, J. R., 2008)

