

MIGRATORY BIRDS
OF
HIGH FEDERAL INTEREST
IN THE BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK AREA
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The following information was collected on three birds from the "Migratory Birds of High Federal Interest" list, during the summers of 1982 and 1983 at Bryce Canyon National Park.

WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER - Sphyrapicus thyroideus

The Williamson's Sapsucker is a fairly common summer resident of the ponderosa pine zone on the Paunsaugunt Plateau, on which Bryce Canyon National Park is located. Although this bird resides mainly in the ponderosa pine zone, no active nests were found in Pinus ponderosa trees. Of the eight active nest cavities found during the study, seven were found in Quaking Aspen (Populus tremuloides), and one was found in a dead White Fir (Abies concolor). Six of the nests were found within the park and two were found just outside park boundaries on the Whiteman Bench, where heavy logging has occurred throughout the years. Wherever there were a few aspen trees, dead or alive, among the ponderosa, active as well as many old inactive nest cavities could be found. The one nest that was found in a dead White Fir was below and to the east of Rainbow Point. The tree was on a slope in the spruce - fir zone and the closest ponderosa pine trees were found farther down the slope. Ponderosa pine logging did not seem to affect the sapsucker's preferred nesting trees.

From observing what the adults brought to the nest in their beaks and from examining feces found beneath the nest trees, it was observed that their diet consists primarily of ants.

The plumage of the immature birds resemble that of the adults and the markings distinguishing the males from the females can be seen as the feathers first come in. The young in all the nests fledged between July 8 and July 18.

WESTERN BLUEBIRD - Sialia mexicana

The Western Bluebird is a fairly common summer resident of the ponderosa pine zone on the Paunsaugunt Plateau. They are usually seen around or on big, old ponderosa pine snags, where they nest in old nest cavities. They are especially fond of snags near openings. Several times birds were seen in the pinyon-juniper zone as well as

the spruce - fir zone, but none were known to nest in these areas. During the 1982 and 1983 study Western Bluebirds were seen almost every day.

Western Bluebirds start returning to the Park in March and April. The first date that they were seen in 1983 was March 19. There was four to five feet of snow on the ground, and more to come. The birds were seen along the road and drinking from water puddles in the road.

GRACE'S WARBLER - Dendroica graciae

This bird is found in the ponderosa pine zone and, most often, below the rim. They were seen in live ponderosa pine trees and didn't seem to have any dependence to dead snags.

Grace's Warbler is not abundant in Bryce Canyon, although several birds were seen every time visits were made to the ponderosa pine areas below the rim.