

## Brown Creeper (*alascensis*)

*Certhia americana alascensis*

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

### Conservation Status

NatureServe: Agency:

G Rank: BLM: IUCN: Audubon AK:

S Rank: USFWS: ADF&G: Species of Greatest Conservation Need

Final Rank		
Conservation category: <b>IV. Orange</b>		
IV = unknown status and high biological vulnerability and action need		
<u>Category</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Score</u>
Status:	-20 to 20	0
Biological:	-50 to 50	-16
Action:	-40 to 40	8
<b>Higher numerical scores denote greater concern</b>		

**Status** - variables measure the trend in a taxon's population status or distribution. Higher status scores denote taxa with known declining trends. Status scores range from -20 (increasing) to 20 (decreasing).

	Score
<i>Population Trend (-10 to 10)</i>	0
Unknown. Limited data suggest a stable long-term (1993-2015) trend in southeast and southcoastal Alaska (Handel and Sauer 2017), but data are not available for most of the range of <i>C. a. alascensis</i> .	
<i>Distribution Trend (-10 to 10)</i>	0
Unknown.	
Status Total:	0

**Biological** - variables measure aspects of a taxon's distribution, abundance and life history. Higher biological scores suggest greater vulnerability to extirpation. Biological scores range from -50 (least vulnerable) to 50 (most vulnerable).

	Score
<i>Population Size (-10 to 10)</i>	0
Unknown.	
<i>Range Size (-10 to 10)</i>	-8
Found in interior, southcentral, and southcoastal Alaska (Gibson and Withrow 2015). Range limits are not well understood, but it occurs as far west as Dillingham (Saracco et al. 2007) and as far north as Fairbanks (Guers 2013). Estimated range size is >100,000 sq. km, but <400,000 sq. km.	
<i>Population Concentration (-10 to 10)</i>	-10
Does not concentrate.	
<i>Reproductive Potential</i>	
<u>Age of First Reproduction (-5 to 5)</u>	-5
Unknown, but probably breeds in first year (Poulin et al. 2013).	
<u>Number of Young (-5 to 5)</u>	1
Unknown for Alaska. Elsewhere in North America, annual clutch size averages 5-6 eggs (Poulin et al. 2013).	

*Ecological Specialization*Dietary (-5 to 5)

1

Consumes a variety of invertebrates including spiders, flies, beetles, insect larvae, ants, and lepidopterans (reviewed in Poulin et al. 2013). These prey items are principally obtained by gleaning invertebrates from rough tree bark (Poulin et al. 2013). Because this habit of feeding is specialized and restricts the type of prey available, we rank this question as B- Moderately adaptable.

Habitat (-5 to 5)

5

In Alaska, inhabits closed-canopy, old-growth coniferous and mixedwood forests such as white spruce and spruce-birch (Isleib and Kessel 1973; Spindler and Kessel 1980; Dellasala et al. 1996; Andres et al. 2004; Van Hemert et al. 2006; Saracco et al. 2007). Nests in natural crevices behind loose or peeling bark, usually in dead or dying trees (Andres et al. 2004; Poulin et al. 2013). The availability of suitable foraging and nesting habitat is thought to be a limiting factor for populations in Alaska (USFS 2008).

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 Biological Total: -16

**Action** - variables measure current state of knowledge or extent of conservation efforts directed toward a given taxon. Higher action scores denote greater information needs due of lack of knowledge or conservation action. Action scores range from -40 (lower needs) to 40 (greater needs).

**Score***Management Plans and Regulations (-10 to 10)*

2

Protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA 1918).

*Knowledge of Distribution and Habitat (-10 to 10)*

2

Limited knowledge of distribution in central Alaska e.g. between Dillingham (Saracco et al. 2007) and Fairbanks (Gibson 1970; Guers 2013), and between Fairbanks/Tetlin Junction (Spindler and Kessel 1980) and Cook Inlet. Additional studies are also needed to identify range limits and contact zones between *C. a. occidentalis* and *C. a. alascensis*. Habitat associations have been described in Prince William Sound (Isleib and Kessel 1973), on the Kenai Peninsula (Van Hemert et al. 2006), and in interior Alaska (Spindler and Kessel 1980), and are consistent with habitat elsewhere in its range (Poulin et al. 2013).

*Knowledge of Population Trends (-10 to 10)*

2

Monitored locally through multi-year bird surveys at some locations such as Kodiak Island (Corcoran et al. 2014), Middleton Island (DeCicco et al. 2015b), and Fairbanks (Guers 2013), and in southcoastal Alaska through the Breeding Bird Survey (Handel and Sauer 2017). However, detections for this species are low and data are inadequate for estimating rangewide trends.

*Knowledge of Factors Limiting Populations (-10 to 10)*

2

The availability of suitable foraging and nesting habitat is thought to be a limiting factor for populations in Alaska (USFS 2008). Research in Alaska and elsewhere in its range suggests that this species is sensitive to habitat disturbance. Specifically, studies have found lower abundances (Nappi et al. 2010; Vanderwel et al. 2011; Thompson et al. 2013) and lower nest densities (Poulin et al. 2010; D'Astous and Villard 2012; Geleynse et al. 2016) in harvested or heavily burned forests stands. It is unclear whether these lower densities are the result of limited food (Poulin et al. 2010; D'Astous and Villard 2012) or limited nest sites (Geleynse et al. 2016). In addition, lower reproductive success has been documented for nests near forest edges and for nests in small forest patches, perhaps because of increased predation (Poulin and Villard 2011). Additional research is needed on the ecology and demographic rates of populations in Alaska, for which few data are available.

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 Action Total: 8

**Supplemental Information** - variables do not receive numerical scores. Instead, they that are used to sort taxa to answer specific biological or management questions.

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<b>Harvest:</b>	None or Prohibited
<b>Seasonal Occurrence:</b>	Breeding
<b>Taxonomic Significance:</b>	Subspecies
<b>% Global Range in Alaska:</b>	>10%
<b>% Global Population in Alaska:</b>	Endemic
<b>Peripheral:</b>	No

## References

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