

Red-breasted Sapsucker

Sphyrapicus ruber

Class: Aves
Order: Piciformes

Review Status: Peer-reviewed

Version Date: 30 November 2018

Conservation Status

NatureServe: Agency:

G Rank: G5 ADF&G: Species of Greatest Conservation Need IUCN: Least Concern Audubon AK:

S Rank: S5B USFWS: BLM:

Final Rank		
Conservation category: IX. Blue		
low status and low biological vulnerability and action need		
<u>Category</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Score</u>
Status	-20 to 20	-10
Biological	-50 to 50	-19
Action	-40 to 40	-8
Higher numerical scores denote greater concern		

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 in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	-10
Both short-term (2003-2015) and long-term (1993-2015) trends point to an increasing population in Alaska (Handel and Sauer 2017).	
<i>Distribution Trend in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	0
Unknown.	
Status Total:	-10

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 in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	-10
Uncertain, but >25,000. PIF (2019) estimates population size in Alaska at 860,000 birds (95% CI: 400,000 to 1.5 million).	
<i>Range Size in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	-2
Breeds on islands and mainland of southeast Alaska (Willett 1928; Dellasala et al. 1996; Armstrong 2008; Walters et al. 2014). Causal in southcentral and southcoastal Alaska (Armstrong 2008; MacIntosh 2009). While some individuals may remain on breeding grounds year-round, most of the population overwinters further south (Willett 1928; Walters et al. 2014; G. Baluss, USFS, pers. comm.) and we therefore consider this species as occurring in Alaska only during the breeding	

season. Estimated range size is 42,000 sq. km, based on range map from ACCS (2017a).

Population Concentration in Alaska (-10 to 10) -10

Does not concentrate.

Reproductive Potential in Alaska

Age of First Reproduction (-5 to 5) -4

Unknown. Suspected to be one year like the red-naped sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*), but some individuals may not breed until they are 2 years old (Walters et al. 2014). We rank this question as $0.5 * D + 0.5 * C$.

Number of Young (-5 to 5) 1

Females lay one clutch per year, usually containing 4 or 5 eggs (Walters et al. 2014). A replacement clutch may be laid if the first one fails (Walters et al. 2014).

Ecological Specialization in Alaska

Dietary (-5 to 5) 1

Consumes tree sap, bark, and cambium, as well as invertebrates, seeds, and berries (Andres 1999b; Walters et al. 2014).

Habitat (-5 to 5) 5

Typically associated with coniferous, old-growth forest stands and edges (Dellasala et al. 1996; Cotter and Andres 2000a; Wagner 2011). Although they may forage in a variety of forest habitats, including logged forests (Kissling and Garton 2008; Mahon et al. 2008; USFS 2008), the presence of large-diameter, soft or rotting trees is required for nesting (Kissling and Garton 2008; USFS 2008). Nest cavities are usually excavated in dead or dying trees (Joy 2000; Wagner 2011), though live softwood may be used in some areas (Mahon et al. 2008).

Biological Total: -19

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 in Alaska (-10 to 10) 2

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

Knowledge of Distribution and Habitat in Alaska (-10 to 10) -10

Distribution is well-known through multi-species bird surveys (e.g. BBS and ALMS; Cotter and Andres 2000a; Andres et al. 2004). Habitat associations, including nest site selection, have been described (Suring 1988 qtd. in Wagner 2011; Dellasala et al. 1996; Kissling and Garton 2008; Wagner 2011).

Knowledge of Population Trends in Alaska (-10 to 10) -2

Survey data are adequate to detect trends across this species' breeding range in Alaska (Handel and Sauer 2017).

Knowledge of Factors Limiting Populations in Alaska (-10 to 10) 2

Given this species' specific habitat associations, the availability of suitable nesting habitat likely limits its populations. Indeed, the red-breasted sapsucker requires habitat features that are specific to mature forests (USFS 2008; Wagner 2011; see Habitat section) and is sensitive to loss and fragmentation of old-growth forests (Dellasala et al. 1996; Andres 1999b; Kissling and Garton 2008; USFS 2008). Data on the closely related red-naped sapsucker have documented high nest success

and high adult survival rates (Martin 1995; Walters and Miller 2001; Sadoti and Vierling 2010). Fewer data are available for *S. rubrus*, but Willson and Gende (2000) found that at least one fledgling hatched (100% nest success) for all 31 nests that they monitored; this rate was the highest of all species included in their study.

Action Total:
-8

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

Harvest:	None or Prohibited
Seasonal Occurrence:	Breeding
Taxonomic Significance:	Monotypic species
% Global Range in Alaska:	>10%
% Global Population in Alaska:	25-74%
Peripheral:	No

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