

Bushtit - *Psaltriparus minimus*

Abundance: Uncommon

Status: NSS3 (Bb)

NatureServe: G5 S1

Population Status: population size and distribution are restricted but extirpation is not imminent; breeding population is restricted to Utah juniper habitat in southwestern Wyoming

Limiting Factor: Habitat: limiting factor is severe; Utah juniper habitat is limited; unlikely ability to increase population size and distribution without adequate information exchange and cooperation with other land management agencies to ensure that habitat remains intact

Comment:

Introduction

The Bushtit occurs from Vancouver Island and Washington south to Baja California and east to Colorado and Wyoming. In Wyoming, it is found almost exclusively in the southwestern corner of the state. The Bushtit is considered an uncommon summer resident in Wyoming.

Habitat

The Bushtit is an obligate species of Utah juniper in Wyoming and nests only in juniper woodlands. It is most often found in younger junipers that have not yet developed cavities but are reproductively mature, between 35 and 100 years old. It forages throughout the junipers but especially at the edge of juniper stands, in openings, and in the sagebrush and mountain mahogany understory.

Problems

- h Species is susceptible to impacts from energy development and other large-scale projects that destroy or impair suitable habitats.
- h Population status and trends are largely unknown in Wyoming.
- h Suitable breeding habitat is restricted to the extreme southwestern portion of the State.
- h During nest building, egg laying, and early incubation, human presence or changes in weather can cause desertion and even pair bond dissolution.
- h Throughout much of the West, resource managers view juniper as an invasive species that should be controlled or replaced with more desirable habitats.

Conservation Actions

- h Continue inventory and monitoring efforts and implement the Monitoring Wyoming's Birds grid-based monitoring program to determine density and population trends.
- h Maintain stands of younger age-classes of juniper and a mosaic of edges, open areas, and shrubs in juniper woodlands where this species nests.
- h Use prescribed and natural fire to maintain open stands of juniper woodland where this species occurs.
- h Management or manipulation of juniper in southwestern Wyoming should not favor one of the juniper obligates to the detriment of others. Instead, management should be coordinated to provide a mosaic of juniper woodland conditions.

Monitoring/Research

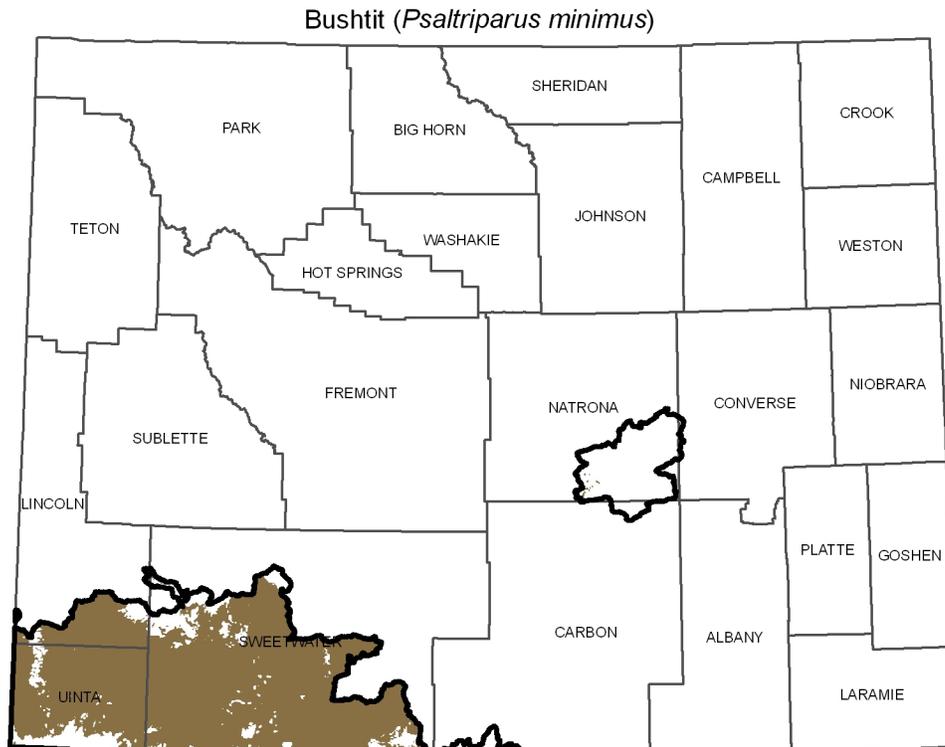
May need specialized, periodic monitoring to estimate the number of breeding pairs if existing monitoring programs do not detect this species in sufficient numbers to determine population density and trends.

Recent Developments

An increase in industrial development in preferred habitat may negatively affect populations.

References

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- Oakleaf B, Cerovski AO, Luce B. 1996. Nongame bird and mammal plan: a plan for inventories and management of nongame birds and mammals in Wyoming. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Nongame Program. 183 p.
- Sloane SA. 2001. Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*). In: Poole A, Gill F, eds. The birds of North America. Nr 598. Philadelphia: Academy of Natural Sciences; Washington: American Ornithologists' Union.



SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges and predicted distributions for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database. University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming. Note that brown indicates the predicted distribution of the species; heavy black lines indicate outermost boundaries of possible occurrence.