

ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 103(2) MAY 2001

FEATURE ARTICLES

HABITAT PREFERENCES OF PINYON-JUNIPER SPECIALISTS NEAR THE LIMIT OF THEIR GEOGRAPHIC RANGE¹

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Abstract. We investigated habitat preferences for five pinyon-juniper specialists during the 1998 and 1999 breeding seasons in Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*) woodlands of southwestern Wyoming. We compared avian use and availability of vegetation features using univariate and multivariate analysis to detect selection for vegetative features of pinyon-juniper specialists near the northeastern range boundary of pinyon-juniper habitat on the Colorado Plateau. Gray Flycatchers (*Empidonax wrightii*), Juniper Titmice (*Baeolophus griseus*), and Bewick's Wrens (*Thryomanes bewickii*) preferred woodlands with high overstory juniper cover. The Juniper Titmouse was associated with senescent trees, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*) with rock outcrops and shrubs in the family Rosaceae, and Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) with pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*). We suggest the geographic distribution of four of five pinyon-juniper specialists is limited by the occurrence of pinyon pine in semiarid woodlands on the northeastern Colorado Plateau. The geographic limit for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in this region may correspond to the presence of mountain mahogany in the woodland understory. The conservation of pinyon-juniper specialists in southwestern Wyoming will benefit from the maintenance of successional processes, particularly those that perpetuate mature woodlands with a pinyon pine component.

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