

Brown Creeper

Certhia americana

General Information:

-This tree-dwelling bird roosts by hanging onto a tree trunk or the side of a house with its sharp claws. Unlike the nuthatches, it does not move sideways or upside down when foraging for insects. Rather, it circles the tree in an upward direction, as if were ascending a spiral staircase, or it takes a straighter path up, then drops to the base of a nearby tree and starts working it ways up again. The long curved bill is an efficient tool for picking insects out of bark crevices, and the stiff tail feathers prop the bird upright just as a woodpecker's tail does.

Song:

-Its call is a soft musical *see-see-titi-see*, similar to that of the Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Behavior:

-Solitary or in pairs and a very tame bird. It often joins mixed-species foraging flocks in the winter. Eats a variety of insects, larvae, seeds, and some nuts. It is well-camouflaged and difficult to spot; often escaped predators by pressing its body tightly against the tree, while spreading its wings and tail, and remaining perfectly motionless.



Breeding:

-Monogamous and a solitary nester.

Nesting:

-Incubation 13-17 days by the female. The 1 brood per year of altricial young stay in the nest for 13-16 days, are brooded by the female, but fed by both sexes.

Conservation:

-Nesting areas threatened due to cutting of forest habitat.

Shoreline Restoration Issues:

-To create an environment friendly for the Brown Creeper it is important to have a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees of differing ages. Furthermore, planting shrubs such as American or Beaked Hazelnut, High-bush Cranberry, Silky or Red-Osier Dogwood, or Ninebark around mature trees will help protect this bird while it is feeding. I think that a combination of Honey Locust, Shagbark Hickory, Sycamore, Silver Maple, Yellow Birch, Eastern Hemlock, Eastern White Pine, Red Pine, and Northern White Cedars would be a wonderful mix.