

Resilient Ecosystems

Standing Habitat

The Brown Creeper

I found the Brown Creeper, quite by accident this weekend. I was lounging in the sun outside in the morning with my cup of tea and had the Merlin App open and recording birds. The app brought up a video of the Brown Creeper making a nest in under sloughing bark. Immediately I started googling. The Brown Creeper is the only bird in North America that builds its nest under sloughing bark. A user of our snags we leave behind!

Oh, and it also only climbs a tree, then flies to the base of the next and hops back up, never climbing in a downward direction. If you see one headed down a tree, its likely a nuthatch.

Although I love picking off bark on trees while wondering under the canopy, I might have to stop. Especially during bird nesting season. Pulling off a chunk of bark and having eggs fall to my feet is not something I want to experience.

The Brown Creeper lives on the Coast and through the Interior on the west side of the Rockies. They are tiny, with long tails and a downcurved bill. While they are a songbird, their song is shrill and a bit too high and quiet to hear. Their claim to fame is how they move and where they nest.

The little bird zigzags up the bole of the tree, never down searching for insects. Once as high as they want to go, they fly down to the base of another tree and begin their ascent again.

A Brown Creeper burn about 4-10 calories a day and eating a spider provides enough energy to climb 60 metres.

Next time you see a small, streaky brown bird "creeping" upward on a tree trunk in a jerky, spiral motion, it's a Brown Creeper. Let us know if you spot one!

Sloughing Bark on a snag is an important old forest attribute. Think about what trees you leave that will be sloughing bark throughout the rotation.



Links

Don't miss out

Here is a video of the Brown Creeper hunting insects and building a nest. Note the tree is full of pitch tubes and looks suspiciously like a lodgepole pine.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-5ZynLEgM>

Identification:

[All About Birds: Brown Creeper](#)

[Schlitz Audubon](#)



Woodlots BC

