



The Dusky Grouse was considered a subspecies of the Blue Grouse until 2016, when it was recognized as a separate species.

# Dusky Grouse

*(Dendragapus obscurus)*

## STATUS

SARA

Alberta

NO STATUS

SECURE

British Columbia

Saskatchewan

YELLOW

ABSENT

## PRIMARY HABITAT

Old Coniferous

## TERRITORY SIZE

Unknown

## NEST TYPE

Ground

## NEST REUSE

Some

## STAND LEVEL

Patches (1–4 ha) of Douglas fir >150 years old with clumps of mature ESSF or Aw.

## LANDSCAPE LEVEL

Old Douglas fir (>200 years old) containing openings; heterogeneous landscapes

## BREEDING WINDOW



## HABITAT ECOLOGY

- Dusky Grouse occupy a range of habitats including sagebrush and grasslands. They use forest habitats including ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and true fir. Aspen thickets are important habitat for juveniles and breeding males.<sup>1</sup>
- During the winter, this species migrates to higher elevations (up to >3,600 m) to conifer-dominated stands including Douglas fir, subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, limber pine, Engelmann spruce, and western hemlock.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Conifer needles, particularly Douglas fir needles, are an important winter food source.<sup>1</sup>
- Ground nests are built in well-developed herbaceous and shrub layers within forest openings.<sup>1</sup> Fallen, suspended logs may increase nesting success.<sup>3</sup>

## RESPONSE TO FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Responses to harvest are not well-studied or well-understood,<sup>1</sup> however the loss of coniferous habitats and structural diversity due to harvesting are considered threats to the Dusky Grouse.<sup>4</sup>
- This species has been observed feeding on planted ponderosa pine seedlings in Idaho.<sup>5</sup>

## STAND-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Selective logging with retention of old (>150 years if available), large-diameter Douglas fir and clumps of mature subalpine fir and/or Engelmann spruce is recommended within wintering habitats. Recommended retention patch sizes range from 1 ha to >4 ha.<sup>4,6,7</sup>

## RANGE MAP

