



This ground-dwelling, large-bodied warbler is more often heard than seen thanks to its distinctive and loud “teacher-teacher-teacher-teacher” song.

Ovenbird

(*Seiurus aurocapilla*)

STATUS

SARA NO STATUS
 Alberta SECURE

British Columbia YELLOW
 Saskatchewan NO STATUS

PRIMARY HABITAT

Deciduous

TERRITORY SIZE

0.6–1.6 ha

NEST TYPE

Ground

NEST REUSE

Same area

STAND LEVEL

High dispersed retention or large deciduous patches with deep leaf litter.

LANDSCAPE LEVEL

Large areas of core habitat; riparian buffers >100 m wide.

BREEDING WINDOW



HABITAT ECOLOGY

- The Ovenbird is most common in large, contiguous deciduous or mixed forest with the following habitat features:^{1,2}
 - Closed canopy (60–90%).¹
 - Lower understory cover but deep leaf litter,¹ which improves cover for nests and increases invertebrate prey.³
- The Ovenbird is most strongly associated with mature and older forests, however it has been observed in stands as young as 11–14 years post-disturbance, suggesting some flexibility in its use of forested habitats.^{2,4}
- This species shows a slight increase following spruce budworm outbreaks.⁵

RESPONSE TO FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Overall, Ovenbird is considered a forest-interior species that is sensitive to even low-intensity harvesting in the short term (e.g., harvest with 30–40% retention).^{3,6–8}
- However, this species was observed using clearcut (i.e., no planned retention) harvest stands 15–33 years postharvest, suggesting rapid recovery on harvested sites as leaf litter from regenerating vegetation becomes thick—however, occupancy was consistently higher in unharvested forest.⁹
- In Saskatchewan, Ovenbirds responded positively to large aggregated harvests (250–400 ha and 1,200–2,700 ha) compared with postfire stands and salvage-logged burns.¹⁰

STAND-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

- High retention levels (e.g., 70 trees/ha with ≥30 cm dbh or >30% retention) may affect this species less negatively than clearcuts in the short term by providing greater canopy closure and leaf litter,¹ however at least one study suggests that 20–50% dispersed retention has a limited positive effect up to 15 years postharvest.¹¹
 - The negative effects of clearcutting may be limited to the first 15 postharvest years provided regenerating deciduous vegetation produces deep leaf litter, yet this may represent lesser-quality habitat.⁹
- Patches of closed-canopy, mature deciduous trees with low understory cover and deep leaf litter are recommended within harvested stands. Patch sizes, amount, and distribution should be consistent with the region’s natural range of variation (but see Landscape-level Recommendations).^{12,13}

RANGE MAP

