



Pine Grosbeak

(Pinicola enucleator)

STATUS

SARA **NO STATUS**
 Alberta **SECURE**

British Columbia **YELLOW**
 Saskatchewan **NO STATUS**

PRIMARY HABITAT

Coniferous

TERRITORY SIZE

12 ha (uncertain)

NEST TYPE

Canopy (coniferous/shrubs)

NEST REUSE

Unknown; site fidelity

STAND LEVEL

Retain mountain ash and berry-producing trees and shrubs, where available, in spruce harvests.

LANDSCAPE LEVEL

Large, old, open unharvested forests. Passive landbase (wet, subalpine, remote) is also important.

BREEDING WINDOW

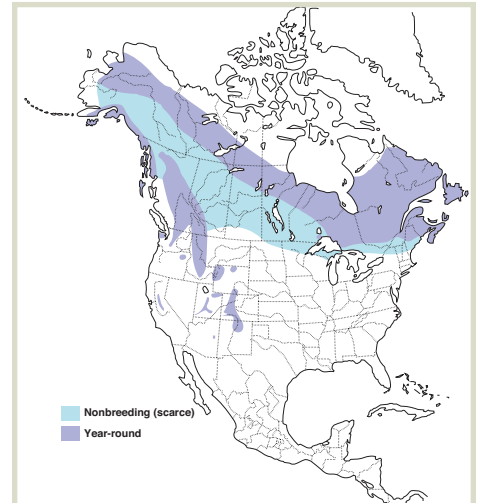


The Pine Grosbeak is an inconspicuous species that is rarely observed except during years when their populations boom and they spread into new areas during the winter.

HABITAT ECOLOGY

- The Pine Grosbeak lives year-round within the Boreal Shield and across most of interior BC. Populations east of the Rockies have periodic “winter irruptions”, during which large numbers of birds move outside of their usual range, sometimes as far south as the Canada-US border. These irruptions occur every 5–25 years and are thought to be driven by food availability.¹
- Pine Grosbeaks are most abundant in open coniferous (spruce, subalpine fir and tamarack) forests near the treeline (northern or montane), drainages and wet valleys.¹
 - They only breed in subalpine and subarctic open coniferous forests.¹ In the winter, they will occupy a range of habitats including mixed coniferous-deciduous, deciduous, and second-growth forests.² Wintering habitats are thought to be driven by availability of mountain ash, ash, and maple.¹
- In BC, the Pine Grosbeak’s breeding range is now understood to be widespread. It is most common in the Northern Boreal Mountains and Sub-Boreal Interior ecoregions, particularly above 1,500 m, and in remote forests and parklands dominated by western hemlock, subalpine fir, white spruce, and Engelmann spruce.³

RANGE MAP



RESPONSE TO FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Pine Grosbeaks are very rarely observed, making it difficult to draw conclusions about their response to forestry.
- Studies in Finland show that Pine Grosbeaks are mainly observed in very old (>200 years) spruce or pine forests, and very rarely in thinned and/or fragmented forests.^{4,5} They are also positively associated with large, unharvested reserves, but negatively associated with the amount of pine forest in the reserves.⁶

STAND-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on known habitat associations, the following habitat features are recommended for retention within harvested areas:
 - Mountain ash trees and other berry-producing trees or shrubs.
 - Wet areas containing sparse black spruce, tamarack, or other conifers.
- Given the Pine Grosbeak’s association with open coniferous stands during the breeding season, silviculture that promotes dense regeneration appears likely to reduce habitat quality. Harvesting is most likely to affect breeding habitats in BC, where they are more widespread, but more research is needed to determine the degree of overlap between breeding populations and harvesting, and the effect of harvest.