

**Spruce Grouse***Falcapennis canadensis*

Locally fairly common resident in moist lodgepole pine forests along e. slope of Cascades and n. Washington.



**Subspecies:** Franklin's Spruce Grouse, *F. c. franklinii*.

**Habitat:** Conifer forests, especially fire-adapted lodgepole pine forests. Greatest densities appear to be in young successional stands of dense lodgepole pine, 7-14 m height, with a well-developed middle/under story of spruce, fir, and/or deciduous shrubs.

**Occurrence:** Range includes the upper e. slope of Cascades from the U.S.-Canada border s. to Yakima Co. and at higher elevations in Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille Cos. Occurrence s. of Yakima Co. doubtful (Smith et al. 1997, Stepniowski 1999). Though at least one "very good description" exists of a bird in the Olympics (Smith et al. 1997), occurrence there remains questionable. And, though the species occurs in the Wallowa Mts. in ne. Oregon (Gilligan et al. 1994), it is not recorded in the Blue Mts.

Though resident with some birds remaining on territory year round, there are also some minor seasonal shifts in habitat and altitude. Some migrate up to 11 km between breeding and winter areas. Females tend to migrate more frequently and over greater distances than males. Timing of migration varies among populations but in general birds depart winter range mid-Feb to mid-May, depart breeding range mid-Aug to late Dec. Territorial behavior peaks during the breeding season when birds forage on forbs and invertebrates. Arboreal in winter, foraging primarily on lodgepole pine needles.

Although populations in Washington have not been adequately monitored, available transect and harvest information indicates that overall trends are downward (e.g. see DeSante and George 1994) because of forest management issues such as succession, timber harvest, fire suppression, and overgrazing.

**Remarks:** Reports of birds along Elwha R. on 4 May 1975, observations on Hurricane Ridge, at Iron Springs on 9 Sep 1979 were outside the known distribution and unverified. Numbers harvested by hunters are included under Forest Grouse (WDFW 2001) and are uncertain.

**Noteworthy Records:** *Peripheral area:* fall 1988 on Chelan Mt. and nr. Mission Pk., Chelan Co. (F. C. Zwickel p.c.); fall 1988 on Red Top Mt. Kittitas Co.; 2 on 12 May 1990 on Pine Grass Ridge, 1 nr. Bear Creek Mt. (F. Martinsen p.c.), and others nr. Bumping L. (W. Oliver p.c.), Yakima Co.

*Michael A. Schroeder*