

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD

Calypte costae

Family: TROCHILIDAE

Order: APODIFORMES

Class: AVES

B288

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Common in summer and uncommon in winter. Most common and widespread in southern California, but also breeds locally along the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley (McCaskie et al. 1979) and the eastern edge of the Sierra Nevada north through Inyo Co. Has nested in Monterey Co. since 1981, and occurs regularly in spring and summer in Siskiyou Co. (McCaskie et al. 1988). In winter, largely restricted to the southern coast, but also winters on southern deserts (Garrett and Dunn 1981). There is upslope movement after breeding and during fall migration (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Occurs in more arid habitats than other hummingbirds in California. Primary habitats are desert wash, edges of desert riparian and valley foothill riparian, coastal scrub, desert scrub, desert succulent shrub, lower-elevation chaparral, and palm oasis. An uncommon transient on the Channel Islands (Garrett and Dunn 1981).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Various herbaceous and woody plants provide flower nectar; also takes small insects and spiders. In winter, exotic shrubs such as bottlebrush important (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Hovers when gathering nectar and insects.

Cover: Mostly shrubs, but also trees, provide cover.

Reproduction: Nest placed in a wide variety of trees, cacti, shrubs, woody forbs, and sometimes vines (Bent 1940). Nest height averages about 1.5 m (5 ft) (Woods 1927). Nest sometimes located close to water source, but more often well away from water (Johnsgard 1983).

Water: No additional data found. Nectar provides much water.

Pattern: Occurs primarily in arid scrub and chaparral habitats and in riparian edge.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Yearlong, diurnal activity.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: Arrives in southern deserts in late January, but not until mid-March on the coast and northern interior areas. Most desert breeders depart by late May, but numbers remain high on the coast until late September. There is upslope movement after breeding and during fall migration. Uncommon along the southern coast in winter.

Home Range: No data found.

Territory: Male has large territory, often 1 to 1.5 ha (2.5 to 3.7 ac) (Johnsgard 1983).

Territory usually contains scattered tall perches and many food sources.

Reproduction: Breeds from March through May in the deserts, and from April through July on the coast. Promiscuous; female nests in close proximity to others in favorable areas (Bent 1940). Usually 2 eggs laid, and 1 brood raised per season. Incubation lasts 15-18 days. Young altricial; fledge in 20-23 days. All nesting duties performed by female, as is usual in hummingbirds.

Niche: As with other small hummingbirds, apparently taken infrequently by predators.

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