

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

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GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

*Regulus satrapa*

Family: REGULIDAE

Order: PASSERIFORMES

Class: AVES

B375

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#### DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Often an abundant resident and breeder in northern California. Breeds in moderate to dense coniferous habitats, especially in mixed conifer, Douglas-fir, redwood, and red fir, in coastal ranges from Oregon border to Santa Cruz Co., and throughout the Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada in suitable habitat. Uncommon, local breeder in White Mts., Transverse, and Peninsular Ranges. Some remain at high elevations all year; many move downslope into valley foothill hardwood and valley foothill riparian habitats. Wintering populations in southern half of state are sparse (Grinnell and Miller 1944, Gaines 1977b).

#### SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

**Feeding:** Eats insects, spiders, other small invertebrates, and their eggs; occasionally eats sap at woodpecker holes, seeds, and fruit. Forages high in outer foliage, small twigs, and branches of conifers; occasionally in hardwoods. Gleans, hovers, and flycatches (Bent 1949). In a west-slope mixed-conifer forest in El Dorado Co., Airola and Barrett (1985) reported a preference for white fir and sugar pine.

**Cover:** Moderate and dense forests provide cover for feeding and breeding.

**Reproduction:** Nest concealed in foliage at tips of branches or in clusters of live, hanging twigs. Nest height 1.5-15 m (5-50 ft) above ground, or higher.

**Water:** No additional information found.

**Pattern:** Prefers dense, shaded coniferous forests for breeding and feeding. Winters in diverse forest habitats, but always dense and well-shaded.

#### SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

**Activity Patterns:** Yearlong, diurnal activity.

**Seasonal Movements/Migration:** Mostly resident. At high elevations, many move downslope to winter.

**Home Range:** In Arizona spruce-fir forests, Carothers et al. (1973) reported 17 pairs per 40 ha (100 ac).

**Territory:** No data found.

**Reproduction:** Breeds from early April into early August, with peak from late May into early July. Monogamous. Clutch size 5-11, mostly 8 or 9. Incubation 14-17 days by female. Altricial young tended by both parents; fledged in 14-19 days (Harrison 1978).

Niche: Little life history information available. May feed in winter in flocks with chickadees, brown creepers, small woodpeckers (Ehrlich et al. 1988). Apparently parasitized infrequently by brown-headed cowbird. Only 1 of 29 nests or family groups in the Sierra Nevada contained a cowbird (Verner and Ritter 1983, Airola 1986).

Comments: Appears on Audubon Society Blue List 1980-1981 (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

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Life history accounts for species in the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHHR) System were originally published in: Zeiner, D.C., W.F.Laudenslayer, Jr., K.E. Mayer, and M. White, eds. 1988-1990. *California's Wildlife*. Vol. I-III. California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California. Updates are noted in accounts that have been added or edited since original publication.