

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

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER

Vermivora celata

Family: PARULIDAE

Order: PASSERIFORMES

Class: AVES

B425

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

A common breeding resident, transient, and migrant. Uncommon in winter in central California (McCaskie et al. 1979), but fairly common in winter in southern California (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Breeds west of Sierra Nevada crest in mountains and foothills below about 900 m (3000 ft). Breeds in chaparral, coastal scrub, valley foothill hardwood, riparian, and perhaps above 1500 m (5000 ft) east of the Sierra Nevada crest in brushy stages of eastside pine habitat (Gaines 1977b). After breeding, found in all montane habitats; a substantial postbreeding, upslope dispersal occurs, which has led to reports of breeding in the transition zone and other montane habitats (Gaines 1977b). Winters in lowlands in chaparral and riparian habitats. A common resident on Channel Islands (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Fairly common fall, and common spring, migrant on Farallon Islands (DeSante and Ainley 1980).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Eats mostly insects; also eats seeds, small fruits, plant galls, nectar, and tree sap. Usually feeds 1.5 to 9.1 m (5-30 ft) above ground in shrubs and small trees. Gleans and hovers (Bent 1953). May visit hummingbird feeders; regularly feeds at sapsucker drillings (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Cover: Shrubs and trees in chaparral, brushy stages of woodlands, forests, and riparian habitats provide cover.

Reproduction: Breeds in dense, brushy habitats. Nests on ground in brushy cover, or in shrub less than 1 m (3 ft) above ground.

Water: Observed drinking occasionally in a coastal oak woodland (Williams and Koenig 1980).

Pattern: Frequents dense shrub growth for breeding. Forages in open to dense brushy areas, and in open woodlands with brush understory.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Yearlong, diurnal activity. Nocturnal migrant.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: Spring migrants usually arrive in California by late March from wintering grounds in Mexico, becoming common in lowlands throughout the state in April. Common in mountains by July. Most have departed northern California by mid-October, but a few regularly overwinter. In southern California, remains fairly common in winter.

Home Range: In Los Angeles Co. coastal chaparral, a male had a home range of about 2

ha (5 ac) (Mans 1961).

Territory: No data found. Breeding density in males per 40 ha (100 ac) reported as: 42 in a logged Douglas-fir stand reseeded to Monterey pine in Marin Co. (Evens 1975), and 16 in California bay-Bishop pine mixed forest in Marin Co. (Stewart 1974).

Reproduction: Breeds from mid-April to mid-July. Pair nests solitarily. Lays 3-6 eggs, usually 4 or 5. One brood of altricial young raised per yr (Harrison 1978). Young breed the following yr.

Niche: Subject to predation from small mammals, accipiters, corvids, and snakes.

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