

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

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SCOTT'S ORIOLE

*Icterus parisorum*

Family: ICTERIDAE  
B533

Order: PASSERIFORMES

Class: AVES

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#### DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

A fairly common summer resident of southern California desert woodlands, breeding north in smaller numbers to Inyo and southern Mono cos. Prefers Joshua tree and pinyon-juniper, as well as desert scrub and desert succulent shrub habitats where yuccas are common. Breeds locally in adjacent wooded habitats such as desert riparian, palm oasis, and valley foothill hardwood (arid oak woodlands). Rare in winter occurring mostly in wooded canyons on western edge of southern deserts (Garrett and Dunn 1981).

#### SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

**Feeding:** Mostly eats insects and their larvae, supplemented by fruits of cactus, yucca, and other plants, as well as nectar (Bent 1958). Seeks insects in low vegetation and on ground (Grinnell and Miller 1944).

**Cover:** Perches and roosts in trees, also in tall shrubs.

**Reproduction:** Usually builds nest in Joshua tree, smaller yucca, or pinyon pine; also uses oak or other hardwood (Grinnell and Miller 1944). Nest height 1.3 to 6 m (4-20 ft) above ground (Harrison 1978), but usually less than 1.8 m (6 ft) (Grinnell and Miller 1944).

**Water:** Never observed drinking by Miller and Stebbins (1964), who suggested that fruit, nectar, and insects supplied water needs.

**Pattern:** Frequents desert shrubland and woodland habitats, especially with Joshua tree and other yuccas. Does not require an interspersed of different habitat types.

#### SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

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

**Seasonal Movements/Migration:** California breeding population mostly migrates to Mexico for winter; absent from August or September through March. A few winter along western edge of southern deserts.

**Home Range:** No data found.

**Territory:** No data found.

**Reproduction:** Breeding season late April through late June. Apparently a solitary nester, but mating system unknown. Apparently often double-brooded; usually lays 3 eggs, range 2-4. Incubation about 14 days, by female only. Altricial young tended by both parents (Verner and Willson 1969, Harrison 1978).

Niche: Apparently a rare host to bronzed cowbird brood parasitism (Ehrlich et al. 1988). Little life history information available.

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