



ILLUSTRATION: C. WEST

WESTERN FORESTS

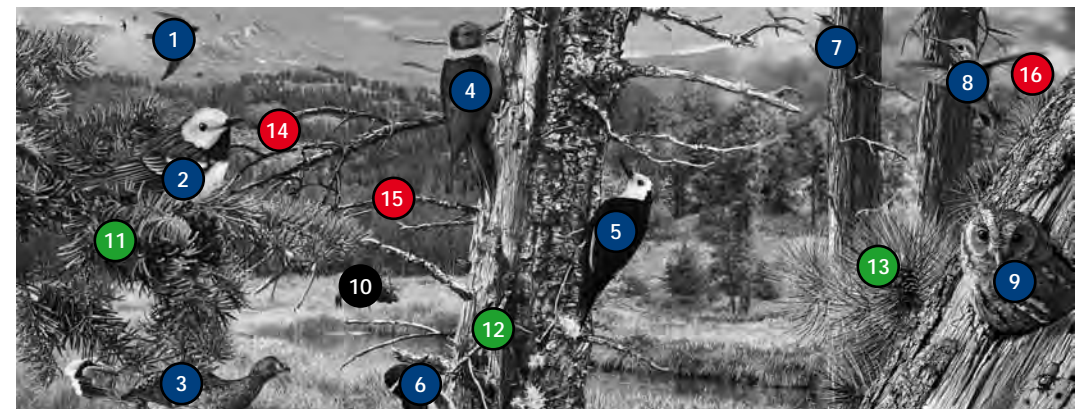
AREA: 957,099 SQ. MILES
(INC. CANADA)
STATES: AK, AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT,
NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY
BCRs: 5, 10, 15, 16, AND 34

WATCHLIST SPECIES
RED: 4
YELLOW: 28

Western forests are naturally more fragmented than those of other regions, in part due to the West's fire ecology and complicated topography, where open areas, grasslands, or deserts often separate forests that grow on mountain slopes. They vary from extremely arid and open to dense temperate rainforests, boasting trees that are the oldest (bristlecone pines), tallest (California redwoods), and largest (giant sequoias) in the world. Although conifers tend to dominate, large areas also consist of deciduous aspens, oaks, cottonwoods, and sycamores. The frequency of wildfire varies, and contributes to the forests' heterogeneity. Some pine forests experience frequent

low-intensity burns that do not kill adult trees (e.g., ponderosa pine); some experience intense stand-replacing burns (e.g., lodgepole pine); and yet others (e.g., Pacific rainforests) burn only rarely, perhaps once every 400 years.

Birds: Western forests support a wide diversity of WatchList bird species, many of which are restricted to specific forest types. The Marbled Murrelet and Sooty Grouse breed only in coastal forests of the Pacific Northwest; the Flammulated Owl and Lewis's Woodpecker nest in mature stands of ponderosa pine; the Pinyon Jay depends on pinyon pines; the Nuttall's Woodpecker, Yellow-billed



Birds: 1. Black Swift; 2. Hermit Warbler; 3. Sooty Grouse; 4. Lewis's Woodpecker; 5. White-headed Woodpecker; 6. Williamson's Sapsucker; 7. Varied Thrush; 8. Calliope Hummingbird; 9. Flammulated Owl. **Mammals:** 10. elk. **Vegetation:** 11. Douglas fir; 12. dead snag; 13. ponderosa pine. **Threats:** 14. logging; 15. bark beetle outbreaks; 16. fire suppression.