

## BREEDING BIRD CENSUS: 2001

### 1. IRRIGATED MIXED WILLOW RIPARIAN BOSQUE RIBEREÑO DE SAUCE, IRRIGADO

SACHA K. HEATH, MICHAEL A. PALLADINI  
AND SUSAN PRENTICE  
PRBO Conservation Science  
3820 Cypress Drive # 11  
Petaluma, CA 94954

**Location:** California; Mono Co.; Mono City; Wilson Creek; 38°03'N, 119°09'W; Lundy & Negit Island Quadrangles, USGS. **Continuity:** Established 2000; 2 yr. **Size:** 15 ha. **Description of Plot:** For at least a century, Wilson Creek's primary purpose has been that of a ditch, transporting water to Mono Lake after being extracted from Mill Creek and passed through a hydroelectric plant. Wilson Creek is a part of a large system of flooded and irrigated pasture used for sheep grazing. Main stem stream supports narrowleaf and yellow willow in narrow strips and up to 50 m-wide patches respectively. The canopy of mostly yellow willow barely exceeds 5 m. Nearly continuous ground cover is primarily Mexican and Nevada rush, creeping wild rye, and woolley sedge. Edge: Less than 25% of the plot's perimeter is bordered by the same habitat, as the plot encompasses a 3-km section of the stream and is bordered by Great Basin sagebrush scrub, irrigated pasture, and a small sub-division. Topography and Elevation: The plot is nearly level with a slope of <5% grade. Elevation ranges from 2060 m to 2070 m. **Weather:** Mean temp., 15.6°C (range -4-35°C). Mean monthly (May-August) high and low temperatures were respectively higher and lower than long-term means (1950-1988, Western Regional Climate Center data for Lee Vining, CA). Mean monthly precipitation was below average in May and June and above average in July and August. **Coverage:** 350.5 h; 60 visits (57 sunrise, 3 sunset); 8 May-17 Jul. **Census:** Song Sparrow, 17.0 (45; 12N,11FL); Spotted Towhee, 10.5 (28; 1N); Yellow Warbler, 7.0 (19; 3N,2FL); Green-tailed Towhee, 4.0 (11); Northern Flicker, 2.0; Brewer's Sparrow, 1.5 (1N,3FL); American Kestrel, 1.0; Belted Kingfisher, 1.0; American Robin, 1.0; Common Yellowthroat, 1.0; Black-billed Magpie, col. (9N,12FL); Northern Rough-winged Swallow, col. (1N); Cliff Swallow, col. (4N,9FL); Red-winged Blackbird, col.

(2N,3FL); Gadwall, unk. (1N,7FL); Mallard, unk.; Green-winged Teal, unk. (1N); Mourning Dove, unk.; Savannah Sparrow, unk.; Western Meadowlark, unk. (2N,1FL); Brown-headed Cowbird, unk. (12N,9FL). **Total:** 21 species; 46.0 territories (123/40 ha). **Visitors:** Northern Pintail, Mountain Quail, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Common Nighthawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Warbling Vireo, Pinyon Jay, Mountain Chickadee, Sage Thrasher, MacGillivray's Warbler, Western Tanager, Fox Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Brewer's Blackbird, Bullock's Oriole, Cassin's Finch. **Remarks:** Despite Wilson Creek's primary purpose as a water transport system, its riparian vegetation supported birds associated with early successional riparian vegetation. Bird species richness here includes species associated with the irrigated grasslands adjacent to the creek. Nonetheless, Wilson Creek supported fewer territories and species than Mono Lake's other primary tributary streams. Cowbirds parasitized 67% of potential host species (Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird) nests. Predation accounted for 50% of all nest failures. We did not determine territorial densities for colonial species, nor for species difficult to document with the spot-mapping method due to their lack of vocalization or loosely held territory boundaries. We also did not map species that primarily used the irrigated pasture next to our study plots (Savannah Sparrow, Western Meadowlark), though their territories encompassed the riparian somewhat. These species' territories are indicated as "col" (colonial) or "unk." (unknown) above; nest numbers provide some indication of their prevalence. **Acknowledgements:** Financial and logistical support was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office, United States Forest Service Partners in Flight - Region 5, Inyo National Forest, Mono Lake Committee, California Department of Fish and Game, Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, White Mountain Research Station - Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education, Joel Ellis, and Jan Simis. This is PRBO contribution No. 1525.

## 2. RECOVERING MIXED WILLOW-BLACK COTTONWOOD RIPARIAN I

BOSQUE RIBEREÑO DE ÁLAMO Y SAUCES,  
EN RECUPERACIÓN I

SACHA K. HEATH, CHRIS MCCREEDY AND

QURESH S. LATIF

*PRBO Conservation Science*

3820 Cypress Drive # 11

Petaluma, CA 94954

**Location:** California; Mono Co.; Lee Vining; Rush Creek; 37°56'N, 119°04'W; Lee Vining Quadrangle, USGS. **Continuity:** Established 2000; 2 yr. **Size:** 39 ha. **Description of Plot:** See *Western Birds* 35:197-209 (2004). **Weather:** Mean temp., 17.9°C (range -3-37°C). Mean monthly (May-August) high and low temperatures were respectively higher and lower than long-term means (1950-1988, Western Regional Climate Center data for Lee Vining, CA). Mean monthly precipitation was below average in May and June and above average in July and August. **Coverage:** 453.6 h; 92 visits (87 sunrise, 5 sunset); 5 May-28 Jul. **Census:** Yellow Warbler, 88.5 (91; 104N,105FL); Spotted Towhee, 29.0 (30; 5N,8FL); Song Sparrow, 24.5 (25; 18N,12FL); Green-tailed Towhee, 8.0 (8); American Robin, 7.0 (7; 5N,6FL); Northern Flicker, 4.0 (4; 3N,4FL); Willow Flycatcher, 3.0 (3; 2N,7FL); MacGillivray's Warbler, 3.0; Brewer's Sparrow, 3.0 (1N,3FL); Savannah Sparrow, 3.0; Black-headed Grosbeak, 3.0 (2N,3FL); Bewick's Wren, 2.0; House Wren, 2.0 (1N); American Dipper, 1.0 (1N); Bullock's Oriole, 1.0; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 0.5; Belted Kingfisher, +; Black-billed Magpie, col. (2N,4FL); Violet-green Swallow, col.; Northern Rough-winged Swallow, col. (2N); Red-winged Blackbird, col. (10N,11FL); Brewer's Blackbird, col. (4N,10FL); Gadwall, unk.; Mallard, unk. (3N,15FL); Green-winged Teal, unk. (1N,3FL); Spotted Sandpiper, unk. (4N,11FL); Mourning Dove, unk. (1N,1FL); Brown-headed Cowbird, unk. (47N,22FL). **Total:** 28 species; 182.5 territories (187/40ha). **Visitors:** Northern Pintail, California Quail, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Common Nighthawk, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Western Wood-Pewee, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Western Scrub-Jay, Pinyon Jay, Common Raven, Cliff Swallow, Marsh Wren, Mountain Bluebird, Sage Thrasher, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Western Tanager, Sage Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Cassin's Finch, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch. **Remarks:** The riparian breeding bird community demonstrated signs of recovery, eighteen and ten years after the cessation of complete stream diversions and livestock grazing, respectively. Shrub and ground nesters occurred in highest densities indicating the habitat value of the early successional stage vegetation (primarily Woods'

rose and a willow mix). Cavity and canopy nesters were scant, indicating the lack of available cavities or canopy trees for nesting sites. 2001 marked the first nesting record for the state endangered Willow Flycatcher on Rush Creek, likely representing a re-occupation of the stream by this species (see *Western Birds* 35:197-209 (2004)). Cowbirds parasitized 41% of potential host species' (Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird) nests. Predation accounted for 56% of all nest failures. We did not determine territorial densities for colonial or polygamous species, nor for species difficult to document with the spot-mapping method due to their lack of vocalization or loosely held territory boundaries. These species' territories are indicated as "col." (colonial) or "unk." (unknown) above; nest numbers provide some indication of their prevalence. **Acknowledgements:** Financial and logistical support was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office, United States Forest Service Partners in Flight - Region 5, Inyo National Forest, Mono Lake Committee, California Department of Fish and Game, Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, White Mountain Research Station - Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education, Joel Ellis, and Jan Simis. This is PRBO contribution No. 1522.

## 3. RECOVERING MIXED WILLOW- BLACK COTTONWOOD RIPARIAN II

BOSQUE RIBEREÑO DE ÁLAMO Y SAUCES,  
EN RECUPERACIÓN II

SACHA K. HEATH, MICHAEL A. PALLADINI AND

SUSAN PRENTICE

*PRBO Conservation Science*

3820 Cypress Drive # 11

Petaluma, CA 94954

**Location:** California; Mono Co.; Lee Vining; Lee Vining Creek; 37°58'N, 119°06'W; Lee Vining Quadrangle, USGS. **Continuity:** Established 2000; 2 yr. **Size:** 24.5 ha. **Description of Plot:** Irregularly shaped; encompasses riparian vegetation associated with the stream corridor. The stream/vegetation are currently under passive restoration after decades of water diversion (until 1986), livestock grazing (until 1991), and a 1954 fire. Half of the plot contains large islands of sagebrush scrub or Woods' rose located between strips of narrowleaf, yellow, or shiny willow and black cottonwood saplings which lie along the braided side channels and main stem. The second half of the plot is characterized by dense stands of black cottonwood saplings and trees and mixed willow scrub, interspersed with soil, gravel, and cobble bars or patches of forbs consisting primarily of lupine, mugwort, Indian paintbrush, and bouncing Bette. Small stands of exotic white polar, Lombardi poplar,

and native Jeffrey pine represent the majority of the high canopy (mean 13 m, range 5–30 m). Overall, vegetation can be termed mid-successional with cottonwood saplings reaching 5 m. Edge: Less than 25% of the plot's perimeter is bordered by the same habitat, as the plot encompasses a 1.8 km section of a major watershed stream and is bordered by Great Basin sagebrush scrub. Topography and Elevation: The plot is nearly level with a slope of <5% grade. Elevation ranges from 1951 m to 1975 m. **Weather:** Mean temp., 16.2°C (range -4–34°C). Mean monthly (May–August) high and low temperatures were respectively higher and lower than long-term means (1950–1988, Western Regional Climate Center data for Lee Vining, CA). Mean monthly precipitation was below average in May and June and above average in July and August. **Coverage:** 433.9 h; 74 visits (73 sunrise, 1 sunset); 7 May–8 Aug. **Census:** Yellow Warbler, 31.5 (51; 29N,52FL); Song Sparrow, 22.0 (36; 12N,27FL); Spotted Towhee, 16.0 (26; 1N,4FL); Green-tailed Towhee, 12.0 (20; 3N,3FL); American Robin, 4.0 (7; 3N,3FL); Bullock's Oriole, 3.0 (5; 2N,8FL); Brewer's Sparrow, >2.0 (3N,4FL); European Starling, 2.0 (2N,12FL); American Kestrel, 1.0 (1N,5FL); Belted Kingfisher, 1.0; Northern Flicker, 1.0 (1N,6FL); Steller's Jay, 1.0 (1N); House Wren, 1.0 (1N); Lazuli/Indigo Bunting hybrid, 1.0 (1N); Lazuli Bunting, 1.0; Black-billed Magpie, col. (1N); Violet-green Swallow, col.; Northern Rough-winged Swallow, col. (1N); Red-winged Blackbird, col. (9N,8FL); Brewer's Blackbird, col. (15N,12FL); Mallard, unk. (2N); Green-winged Teal, unk. (2N); Killdeer, unk.; Spotted Sandpiper, unk. (10N,28FL); Brown-headed Cowbird, unk. (14N,3FL). **Total:** 25 species; 99.5 territories (162/40ha). **Visitors:** Common Nighthawk, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Western Scrub-Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Cliff Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, Orange-crowned Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch. **Remarks:** The riparian breeding bird community appeared to be responding to passive restoration efforts. Shrub and ground nesters occurred in highest densities indicating the habitat value of the early successional stage vegetation. Canopy and cavity nesters were beginning to occupy the emerging native black cottonwoods, but primarily used the exotics and native pines that have remained throughout periods of disturbance. Cowbirds parasitized 28% of potential host species' (Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird) nests. Predation accounted for 68% of all nest failures. We did not determine densities for colonial or polygamous species, nor for species difficult to document with the spot-mapping method due to their lack of vocalization or loosely held territory boundaries. These species' are indicated as

“col.” (colonial) or “unk.” (unknown) above; nest numbers provide some indication of their prevalence. **Acknowledgements:** Financial and logistical support was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office, United States Forest Service Partners in Flight - Region 5, Inyo National Forest, Mono Lake Committee, California Department of Fish and Game, Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, White Mountain Research Station - Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education, Joel Ellis, and Jan Simis. This is PRBO contribution No. 1523.

#### 4. REMNANT BLACK COTTONWOOD RIPARIAN FOREST

##### REMANENTES DE BOSQUE RIBEREÑO DE ÁLAMO

SACHA K. HEATH, CHRIS MCCREEDY AND  
QURESH S. LATIF  
*PRBO Conservation Science*  
3820 Cypress Drive # 11  
Petaluma, CA 94954

**Location:** California; Mono Co.; Mono City; Mill Creek; 38°03'N, 119°08'W; Lundy Quadrangle, USGS. **Continuity:** Established 2000; 2 yr. **Size:** 15 ha. **Description of Plot:** Irregularly shaped; encompasses riparian vegetation associated with the stream which has been diverted for hydroelectric power generation and irrigation for at least a century. Minimal stream flows maintained a remnant but decadent black cottonwood riparian forest. Jeffrey pines comprise most of the canopy on the upstream end of the plot (mean 13 m, range 5–20 m). Many of Mill Creek's historic “bottomland riparian” side channels consist of unvegetated cobble or have been replaced by upland Great Basin sagebrush scrub. Although still greatly compromised, stream flow has been higher and nearly year-round in recent years; patches of narrowleaf or yellow willow, Woods' rose, forbs, sedges, and grasses are regenerating and black cottonwood saplings make up a fair amount of the understory. Mill Creek takes a near 90-degree turn in the middle of the study plot; the lower half of the plot is far less vegetated than the upper section. Edge: Less than 25% of the plot's perimeter is bordered by the same habitat, as the plot encompasses a 3 km section of a major watershed stream and is bordered by Great Basin sagebrush scrub and a small subdivision. Topography and Elevation: The plot is nearly level with a slope of <5%. Elevation ranges from 1972 m to 2048 m. **Weather:** Mean temp., 18.6°C (range -1–36°C). Mean monthly (May–August) high and low temperatures were respectively higher and lower than long-term means (1950–1988, Western Regional Climate Center data for Lee Vining, CA). Mean monthly precipitation was below average in May and June and above average in

July and August. **Coverage:** 308.9 h; 75 visits (68 sunrise, 7 sunset). 6 May–13 Aug. **Census:** Spotted Towhee, 19.0 (51; 7N,8FL); Bewick's Wren, 7.5 (20; 1N,2FL); Northern Flicker, 6.0 (16; 6N,4FL); American Robin, 6.0 (11N,6FL); European Starling, 6.0 (5N,11FL); Yellow Warbler, 6.0 (14N,3FL); Brewer's Sparrow, 6.0; House Wren, 5.0 (13; 4N,13FL); Song Sparrow, 5.0 (4N,1FL); Green-tailed Towhee, 4.5 (12; 1N); American Kestrel, 4.0 (11; 3N,8FL); Bullock's Oriole, 4.0 (3N,5FL); Hairy Woodpecker, 2.0 (1N); Western Wood-Pewee, 2.0 (1N,2FL); Cassin's Finch, 2.0 (1N); Killdeer, 1.0; Belted Kingfisher, 1.0; Bushtit, 1.0 (1N,2FL); Lazuli Bunting, 1.0 (1N); Juniper Titmouse, 0.5 (1N,3FL); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, + (1N,4FL); Black-billed Magpie, col. (5N,7FL); Violet-green Swallow, col.; Brewer's Blackbird, col. (15N,16FL); Mallard, unk. (4N); California Quail, unk.; Mourning Dove, unk.; Brown-headed Cowbird, unk. (12N,5FL). **Total:** 28 species; 89.5 territories (239/40 ha). **Visitors:** Mountain Quail, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Cooper's Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Black Phoebe, Warbling Vireo, Steller's Jay, Western Scrub-Jay, Pinyon Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Common Raven, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, American Dipper, Sage Thrasher, Orange-crowned Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle. **Remarks:** Total bird density here was lower than Mono Lake's other tributary streams, but remnant black cottonwood and Jeffrey pine forest here supported many more cavity and canopy nesters. Cowbirds parasitized 48% of potential host species' (Spotted Towhee, Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, and Lazuli Bunting) nests. Predation accounted for 67% of all nest failures. Cowbirds and predators were associated with the housing development adjacent to Mill Creek: large flocks of cowbirds foraged at bird feeders and two banded adult breeders (American Robin, Green-tailed Towhee) were killed by housecats. We did not determine territorial densities for colonial species, nor for species difficult to document with the spot-mapping method due to their lack of vocalization or loosely held territory boundaries. These species' are indicated as "col" (colonial) or "unk." (unknown) above; nest numbers provide some indication of their prevalence. **Acknowledgements:** Financial and logistical support was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office, United States Forest Service Partners in Flight - Region 5, Inyo National Forest, Mono Lake Committee, California Department of Fish and Game, Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve,

White Mountain Research Station - Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education, Joel Ellis, and Jan Simis. This is PRBO contribution No.1524.

## 5. MIXED HARDWOOD POLETIMBER

### BOSQUE MIXTO MADERERO

DAVID ROSEN

*White Memorial Conservation Center*

*P.O. Box 368*

*Litchfield CT 06759*

**Site Number:** CT1265009. **Location:** Connecticut; Litchfield Co.; Litchfield; White Memorial Foundation–Wheeler Hill; 41°42'N, 73°13'W; Litchfield Quadrangle, USGS. **Continuity:** Established 1965; 35 yr. **Size:** 8.5 ha. **Description of Plot:** See Aud. Field Notes 19:609–610 (1965) and J. Field Ornithol. 64(Suppl.):36 (1993). Rapidly growing Asiatic bittersweet, Japanese barberry, and multiflora rose are routinely cut along the trails. **Weather:** Mean start temp., 24.5°C (range 15–30°C). Temperatures were close to average in May (13.8°C vs. 14.2°C) and June (18.9°C vs. 18.5°C). They were below normal in July (18.7°C vs. 21.2°C). May and June were much wetter than normal, while July was much drier than normal. May had a total of 11.3 cm of rain fall over the course of ten days. The average May rainfall is 10.6 cm. June had eight wet days, with a total of 19.3 cm of rain. Normal June rainfall is 9.9 cm. July had 12 wet days, but only 3.8 cm of rain. Normal July rainfall is 13.2 cm. All data are from the White Memorial Foundation's weather station. **Coverage:** 19.0 h; 10 visits (1 sunrise, 4 sunset); 4, 11, 19, 29 May; 5, 14, 25 Jun; 5, 13, 21 Jul. **Census:** Ovenbird, 11.5 (54; 1N,37FL); Red-eyed Vireo, 9.5 (45; 14FL); Veery, 9.0 (42; 18FL); Eastern Towhee, 9.0 (1N,16FL); Gray Catbird, 6.5 (31; 2N,23FL); Wood Thrush, 5.5 (26; 12FL); Tufted Titmouse, 4.5 (21; 2N,31FL); American Redstart, 4.0 (19; 16FL); Common Yellowthroat, 4.0 (9FL); Black-capped Chickadee, 3.5 (16; 1N,20FL); American Robin, 3.5 (1N,11FL); Chestnut-sided Warbler, 3.5 (11FL); Scarlet Tanager, 3.5 (5FL); Blue Jay, 3.0 (14; 1N,6FL); Black-and-white Warbler, 3.0 (1N,9FL); Northern Cardinal, 3.0 (2N,6FL); Wild Turkey, 1.5 (8FL); Downy Woodpecker, 1.5 (3FL); Great Crested Flycatcher, 1.5; American Crow, 1.5 (1N,7FL); Mourning Dove, 1.0; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1.0; Eastern Wood-Pewee, 1.0; Eastern Phoebe, 1.0 (2N,9FL); Yellow-throated Vireo, 1.0; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1.0 (6FL); Blue-winged Warbler, 1.0 (3FL); Yellow Warbler, 1.0 (4FL); Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1.0; Brown-headed Cowbird, 1.0 (2FL); Baltimore Oriole, 1.0; House Finch, 1.0 (4FL); American Goldfinch, 1.0; Cooper's Hawk, 0.5; Broad-winged Hawk, 0.5; Barred Owl, 0.5; Hairy Woodpecker, 0.5; Northern Flicker, 0.5; Warbling Vireo, 0.5; Fish Crow, 0.5; House Wren, 0.5; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 0.5; Hermit Thrush, 0.5; Cedar Waxwing,