

# [Red-breasted Sapsuckers \(Sphyrapicus ruber\)](#)

Member of the Picidae Family: [Woodpeckers](#) ... [Sapsuckers](#)  
... [Flickers](#)

The **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** (*Sphyrapicus ruber*) occurs naturally in the deciduous or mixed forests on the Pacific coast of North America. Those occurring in their northern range migrate south for the winter. Those on the coast are often resident (non-migratory).



Red-breasted  
Sapsucker

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## Description:

This medium-sized woodpecker has a red head and upper chest. The lower abdomen and rump (lower back) is white. The back is black and they have distinctive wing bars with a large white wing patch.

The nominate northern race - *Sphyrapicus ruber ruber* - has yellow bars on the back and yellow upper belly.

The southern subspecies - *Sphyrapicus ruber daggetti* - has white bars on the back and a pale abdomen.

## Breeding:

They nest in tree cavities and interbreed with the [Red-naped Sapsucker](#) or [Yellow-bellied Sapsucker](#) where their ranges overlap.

## Diet:

These [sapsuckers](#) drill holes in trees and eat the sap, as well as insects attracted to it. They may catch insects in flight. They also feed on seeds and berries, and are regular visitors to bird feeders.



Species Research by [Sibylle Johnson](#)

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