

Summarise the lecture in relation to the declining population of yellow cedar trees.

Summary words

Hypothesis – theory, idea, explanation, reason,

Drop – fall, decline, decrease

Author – writer

Lecturer – speaker

As a result – consequently, subsequently, leading to

Insects – beetle, cedar bark beetle,

Brown bears – animals

To date there are no theories that can sufficiently explain the reason for the declining yellow cedar populations in Western North America. While initial ideas may well have been greeted with optimism, recent studies suggest that scientists are still yet to isolate the primary cause of the large drop in their numbers.

The author suggests that the cedar bark beetle could be responsible for killing the trees, due to scientists finding dead trees ravaged by this small insect, however he/she fails to point out that in healthy trees the bark is poisonous to many insects and is therefore resilient against attacks. Subsequently there must be a reason that the trees are becoming weaker and allowing the cedar beetle to lay their eggs in them, whereby they subsequently become a source of food as the larvae eat the timber.

When looking for something that was weakening the trees, leading to their eventual death, scientists next looked at brown bears. These animals sharpen their claws against the bark and therefore could in part be responsible. Although, on islands where the bears are not inhabitants, the volume of trees is still in decline.

The final explanation, sites weather conditions as the reason for the fall. Yet, the cedars are commonly found at various mountain altitudes. At lower locations the weather is warmer and provides optimal growing conditions. Even here tree populations are not doing well.

After listening to the lecture, what is clear is that more research needs to be done to explain why the tree's numbers are in decline.

Summary words

Birds – populations, numbers, statistics,

Urban expansion – increased human footprint,

Future – outlook

Lecturer – speaker, professor,

All birds – blanket covering,

Agrees – acknowledges,

Used to people – accustomed

People – humans

Pesticides – poison,

Home – habitat

Summarise the lecture about declining bird numbers

The author of the given article raises cause for concern into declining bird numbers in the United States due to the expanding human footprint. The writer paints a gloomy picture should people not change their practices. The lecturer on the other hand is more optimistic in relation to bird populations in the future.

The initial concern is that as urban development expands so too will the eradication of the natural habitat that provides homes for many species of birds. While the professor in part agrees in the decline of some bird numbers, he draws the line at blanket covering all bird populations, siting that some species of birds are actually becoming more accustomed to humans and making their homes with city spaces.

Secondly, the writer projects that in the future there will be a need to expand agriculture and in so doing cultivate more and more land. On this point acknowledges the author's view to a point, but also points out that agriculture expansion is decreasing every year, believing that existing farmers will continue to increase crop yields and introduce more productive varieties of crops, to stem the tide in this area.

The final point of contention is the use of pesticides in the cultivation of crops, which in turn gets into the food chain, and thereby both directly and indirectly affects bird numbers. This was certainly the case in the past, although the current practices of developing insect resistant varieties of food in conjunction with the development of safe pesticides will ensure that the future impact will indeed be minimal.

While both the writer and speaker do agree that because of man, there has been a fall in some bird numbers, the speaker holds that into the future through education, knowledge and development, birds will still be a vital part of the ecosystem.