

# BEAUTY MARK OR SCAR?



The continuously variable nature of fire severity is apparent from the presence of green-needled, brown-needled, and blackened trees in this photo of the Black Mountain fire, which burned near Missoula, Montana, 2003. By using a Before–After/Control–Impact (BACI) approach to analyze changes in bird abundances after the fires of 2000 in the Bitterroot Valley, Montana, Smucker et al. found that the abundances of different bird species peak in forest patches that burned at different fire severities. Their results highlight the importance of maintaining all fire severities, including severely burned forest stands, in our forest management and forest restoration efforts.

Look for the article by K. M. Smucker, R. L. Hutto, and B. M. Steele, “Changes in bird abundance after wildfire: importance of fire severity and time since fire,” in the October 2005 issue of *Ecological Applications* 15(5). Top photo by Susan Reel, lower photo by R. L. Hutto.