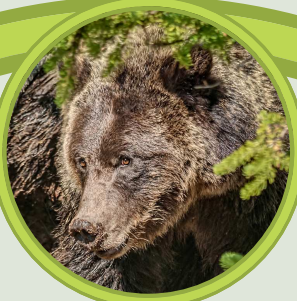


Lifecycle of a whitebark pine tree

Grizzly bears find red squirrel caches, which are a vital source of protein.



Seed middens can supply several thousand calories, referred to as "Big Mac equivalents."



Red squirrels create many caches of whitebark pine cones to stockpile a food source.

A crucial link in high-elevation Rocky Mountain food chain



Clark's Nutcracker takes seeds from whitebark pine and caches them underground for spring feeding to chicks.



Blister rust and beetle infestation have killed more than 90 percent of whitebark pine groves.

Whitebark pine saplings may take up to **80 years** to become mature trees capable of producing cones.

Proper conditions for seedling survival may occur decades apart.

