



ACADIA NP • APPALACHIAN NST • BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS NRA • MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NHP • MINUTE MAN NHP
MORRISTOWN NHP • ROOSEVELT-VANDERBILT NHS • SAINT-GAUDENS NHS • SAUGUS IRON WORKS NHS • SARATOGA NHP • WEIR FARM NHS

Surveying is for the Birds

Results of Annual Breeding Landbird Survey at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP

Background

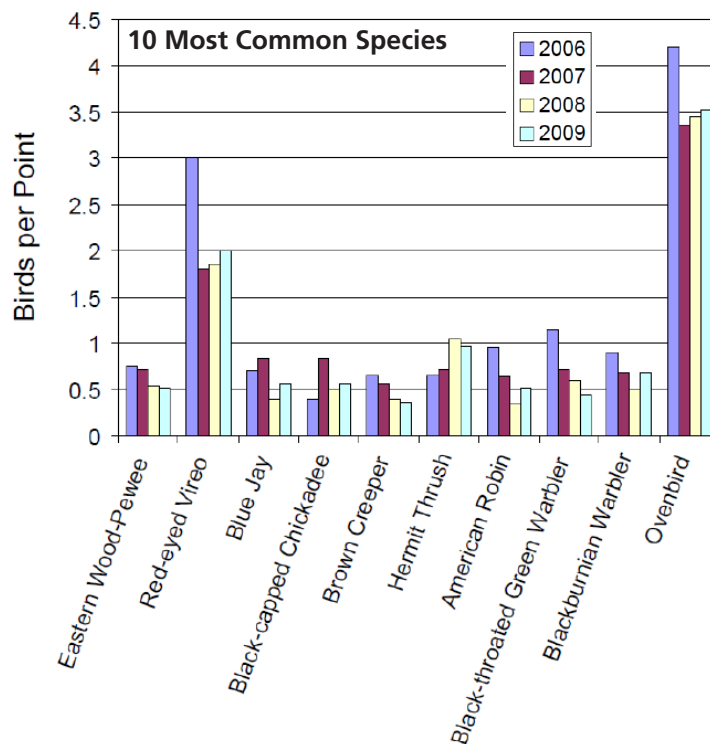
Using volunteer birders, the Northeast Temperate Network (NETN) and the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) has been monitoring breeding landbirds in most network parks since 2006. On a broad scale, all 11 network parks are located within the temperate deciduous forest biome. At a finer scale, the parks range across four Bird Conservation Regions (Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller lies in the Atlantic Northern Forest BCR). Bird Conservation Regions, developed by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, are ecologically defined units that provide a consistent spatial framework for bird conservation across North American landscapes. By employing broad scale units that are ecologically meaningful to bird populations, conservation efforts can be tailored to support groups of species throughout the heart of their ranges. Bird Conservation Regions are being used to help assign “conservation priority” scores for bird species. Each BCR has its own unique list of “priority” species ranked by conservation importance according to a standardized set of criteria.

Purpose and Scope

The recently released report summarizes data collected from 2006 through 2009. As with any long-

term study, as more years of data accumulate, interpreting study results becomes more relevant and meaningful. Therefore, it is important to not read too much into the results of only a few years of data collection.

Ovenbird
USFWS



NETN and VCE are currently working to improve quality control procedures for this project, including a thorough review of existing data. The results presented here may change slightly in future reports if data errors are detected and subsequently corrected.

Results and Findings

Three study sites consisting of 25 point-count locations were established in the park and surveyed annually since 2006. Including repeat surveys, a total of 336 individuals of 35 species were detected in 2009, while 351 individuals of 38 species were detected in 2008, 407 individuals of 48 species were detected in 2007, and 368 of 42 species were detected in 2006. In total, 55 species were recorded in all four years, with an average abundance of 15.31 birds per point (not including repeat surveys, which could bias the abundance estimate). In 2009, relative abundance was up slightly from 2008, while species richness decreased, even though two new species were detected (Chimney Swift and Mourning Warbler). Two species of regional conservation concern, Wood Thrush and Bobolink, were detected during the four survey years. Ovenbird and Red-eyed Vireo were the most abundant species detected.

55 species detected in the park.

American Crow
American Goldfinch
American Redstart
American Robin
Baltimore Oriole
Barred Owl
Black-and-white Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Black-capped Chickadee
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Blue Jay
Blue-headed Vireo
Bobolink
Broad-winged Hawk
Brown Creeper
Brown-headed Cowbird
Cedar Waxwing
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Chimney Swift
Chipping Sparrow
Common Grackle
Common Name
Common Raven
Common Yellowthroat
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored Junco)
Downy Woodpecker
Eastern Kingbird
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Great Crested Flycatcher
Hairy Woodpecker
Hermit Thrush
Indigo Bunting
Least Flycatcher
Louisiana Waterthrush
Mourning Dove
Mourning Warbler
Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted Flicker)
Ovenbird
Pileated Woodpecker
Pine Warbler
Purple Finch
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Red-eyed Vireo
Red-winged Blackbird



Species Spotlight: Broad-Winged Hawk



Zeroing in on its small, scampering prey on the forest floor from mid-canopy hunting perches is made easier for this crow-sized raptor with powerful eyes that include transparent, side closing lids, so that even when blinking, it never misses any action.

During the spring and fall migration season, it is possible to see over 100,000 of these soaring birds glide over strategic migration routes, such as Hawk Ridge in MN, and Putney Mountain in VT. Migrating farther than most other hawks, they spend their winters in Central and South America. Some Broad-Wings need to travel over 6,200 miles before reaching their wintering grounds.

To help them make it that far with relatively little food along the way, they harness the energy of the sun, soaring upwards in tight circles on rising columns of warm air called thermals.

These so-called 'kettles' of hawks can sometimes contain thousands of birds. They can rise as high as 8,000 feet before the thermal weakens, at which point they launch off on air currents gliding for several miles losing altitude slowly until reaching another thermal, only to do it all again. If conditions are ideal, they can travel over 300 miles in 6 hours in this way.

Up until the 1930's, many considered these birds vermin, and thousands were shot while flying over their well-known migration routes. Today, they are protected under the U.S. Migratory Bird Act and are one of North America's most common hawks.

USFWS photo

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Scarlet Tanager
Tufted Titmouse
Veery
White-breasted Nuthatch
Wild Turkey
Winter Wren
Wood Thrush
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle Warbler)

More Information

Brian Mitchell
NETN Program Manager

Phone/Email
802-457-3368 ext. 37
brian_mitchell@nps.gov

Steve Faccio
Vermont Center for Ecostudies
Conservation Biologist

802-649-1431
sfaccio@vtcostudies.org

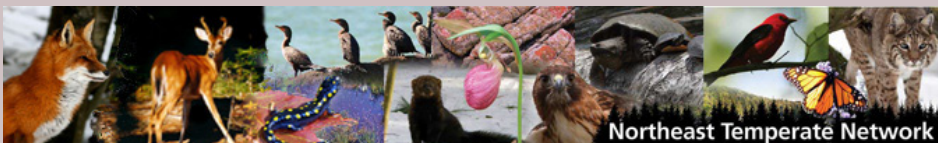
Full Report online at:

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/NETN/monitor/monitor.cfm>



Northeast Temperate Network

54 Elm Street, Woodstock, Vermont 05091
802-457-3368
<http://www.science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/netn/>



Northeast Temperate Network