



Audubon MARYLAND-DC

Important Bird Areas Program

Bird Blitz 2010: Potomac State Forest

Potomac State Forest, located along the Maryland/West Virginia border in southeastern Garrett County, is owned and managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Forest Service. The State Forest consists of about 4,700 ha (11,535 acres) of oak-hickory forest with 40-60 year old plantations of pine and spruce mixed throughout. As its name indicates, these forests drain into the North Branch of the Potomac River. This forest covers some of the most rugged mountain terrain in Maryland, and the site also boasts the highest point in the state at 981 m (3,220 ft) on Backbone Mountain. During 2010 Bird Blitz, 3 surveys were conducted by 2 volunteers covering approximately 22 km of transects during nearly 14 survey hours (Table 1).

The results of these surveys are summarized below in Table 2, with highlighted species representing those which matched or exceeded their state-level IBA thresholds. It is important to note that Bird Blitz survey totals represent minimum population estimates of breeding pairs. Actual populations are higher because not all available habitat was covered and because some birds along a route may not be counted (if they were silent and/or hidden while observers passed by). There were 4 at-risk species recorded in Potomac State Forest, with Blackburnian Warbler exceeding its state-level IBA threshold of 10 pairs. Bird Blitz results also indicate the site has a moderately diverse Forest Interior-Dwelling Species (FIDS) assemblage for Maryland's Appalachian Mountains region with a total of 20 FIDS recorded during 2010 surveys. FIDS are those species listed by Maryland DNR as requiring large intact areas of forest to breed successfully.

A special thanks goes out to the volunteers who conducted 2010 Bird Blitz surveys at this site: Ross Geredien and Fran Pope. These data will greatly assist our review of this area as a potential IBA.

Table 1. Bird Blitz 2010 survey effort for the Potomac State Forest candidate IBA.

Volunteers	Surveys	Distance (km)	Time (hr)
2	3	22.4	13.8

Table 2. Bird Blitz 2010 results for the Potomac State Forest candidate IBA.

Primary Targets - At-risk Species	Total	Assemblage
Alder Flycatcher	1	Mountain Peatland
Wood Thrush	12	FIDS
Blackburnian Warbler	12	FIDS
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	FIDS
Secondary Target Species	Total	Assemblage
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	FIDS
Broad-winged Hawk	2	FIDS
Hairy Woodpecker	4	FIDS
Pileated Woodpecker	2	FIDS
Acadian Flycatcher	48	FIDS
Red-eyed Vireo	74	FIDS
Blue-headed Vireo	28	FIDS
Common Raven	1	FIDS
Brown Creeper	1	FIDS
Hermit Thrush	6	FIDS
Magnolia Warbler	11	FIDS
Black-throated Blue Warbler	12	FIDS
Chestnut-sided Warbler	4	Shrubland
Black-and-white Warbler	8	FIDS
Northern Parula	5	FIDS
Ovenbird	9	FIDS
Hooded Warbler	3	FIDS
Scarlet Tanager	27	FIDS
Eastern Towhee	1	Shrubland

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