

Important Bird Areas Program

Bird Blitz 2009: Dan's Mountain

One of this year's target areas for western Maryland was Dan's Mountain, located west of Cumberland in Allegany County. For several years, there have been controversial plans for a wind turbine project on privately owned parcels along the northeastern section of the mountain ridge. As part of the Allegheny Front, Dan's Mountain reaches an elevation of nearly 2,900 feet at Dan's Rock, and the Dan's Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) holds the largest contiguous state-owned forest in Maryland. Areas surveyed in 2009 included the oak-hickory forests of the WMA and Dan's Mountain State Park. This rugged area received adequate survey coverage, with 2 participants conducting 4 surveys which totaled 24.5 km during 10.5 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 8 at-risk species recorded with two species matching or exceeding their state-level IBA thresholds. Worm-eating Warbler matched its state-level threshold of 20 pairs. Cerulean Warbler exceeded not only its state-level threshold of 10 pairs, but also its global threshold of 15 pairs. These results indicate that Dan's Mountain may have significance for Cerulean Warbler at the global scale. These results also show that the area likely supports a fairly high diversity of Forest Interior-Dwelling Species (FIDS) with 22 FIDS recorded out of 34 possible in the Appalachian Mountains region of Maryland (Table 2).

Thanks to the volunteer(s) who conducted Bird Blitz surveys at this site: Mary Huebner. These data will greatly assist our review of this area as a potential IBA later this year.

Table 1. Bird Blitz 2009 survey effort for the Dan's Mountain candidate IBA.

Volunteers	Surveys	Distance (km)	Time (hr)
2	4	24.52	10.5

Table 2. Bird Blitz 2009 results for the Dan's Mountain candidate IBA.

Primary Target At-risk Species	Total	Assemblage
Bald Eagle	1	--
Blackburnian Warbler	1	FIDS
Cerulean Warbler	19	FIDS
Prairie Warbler	2	--
Worm-eating Warbler	20	FIDS
Louisiana Waterthrush	9	FIDS
Kentucky Warbler	11	FIDS
Wood Thrush	21	FIDS
Secondary Target Species	Total	Assemblage
Barred Owl	4	FIDS
Hairy Woodpecker	1	FIDS
Pileated Woodpecker	4	FIDS
Acadian Flycatcher*	x	FIDS
Red-eyed Vireo*	1	FIDS
Blue-headed Vireo	6	FIDS
Yellow-throated Vireo	2	FIDS
Common Raven	4	FIDS
Winter Wren	3	FIDS
Magnolia Warbler	1	FIDS
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	FIDS
Black-and-white Warbler	24	FIDS
American Redstart	38	FIDS
Ovenbird*	x	FIDS
Hooded Warbler	6	FIDS
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	SHRUB
Scarlet Tanager*	3	FIDS
Eastern Towhee	1	SHRUB
Field Sparrow	1	SHRUB

*Species not formally counted due to wide distribution across Maryland.

Prepared by:

David Yeany II, MS

IBA Program Assistant, Audubon MD-DC

2437 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21224

Phone: 814-221-4361 Email: dyeany2@gmail.com