

Habitat based bird monitoring in Black Rock Forest, Cornwall, NY: long-term trends and seasonal inventories, 2011

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Forest birds keep forests healthy by performing important ecosystem services such as insect control and seed dispersal. Threats to forests such as habitat loss, invasive species and fire suppression, among others, are having negative impacts on birds. Our goal was to study the bird populations of Black Rock Forest (Cornwall, NY) in five distinct habitats within the forest. By creating a habitat-based and long-term database of bird populations and vegetation structure, we hope to identify and map the connections between the specific habitats and their bird populations. We selected five different sites to monitor and at each we conducted a vegetation survey and weekly 5-minute bird point-counts for May, June, and July. For the forest in general, we found that the Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*) had the highest abundance measured in birds per hour. Throughout the study we documented several birds, including Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*) and Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*) that are specific to certain habitats. Our data will allow us to provide recommendations for forest management (prescribed burns, *etc.*) so that the mosaic of habitats can be maintained in an effort to preserve Black Rock Forest's rich bird diversity.