

## PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

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**SITE NAME** RACCOON CREEK VALLEY & STATE PARK      **COUNTY** BEAVER, ALLEGHENY, WASHINGTON      **SITE #** 13

**APPROX. SIZE** 100 SQ. MILES      **OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC(DCNR) / PRIVATE      **LAT.** 40°28'      **LONG.** 80°22'

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### DESCRIPTION

Raccoon Creek Valley covers parts of southern Beaver, western Allegheny, and northern Washington counties. Habitat in the area is predominantly second and third-growth deciduous woodland, fields in advanced stages of succession, lakes, stream valleys and pine plantations. In Raccoon Creek State Park, at the portion of the valley just west of Raccoon Lake, is a 300-acre wildflower reserve, located at the confluence of Traverse and Raccoon Creeks. A migratory flyway for songbirds, nearly all species of western Pennsylvania warblers and vireos can be seen annually. Raccoon Creek State Park is located in Beaver County, approximately 25 miles from Pittsburgh. The park has two small lakes: Raccoon Creek Lake is 101 acres, and another small lake, 4 acres in size. The park covers 7,323 acres.

**Directions:** To Raccoon Creek State Park take Rt. 22 west from Pittsburgh to Rt. 30.

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### BIRDS - SUMMARY

The Raccoon Creek Valley covers approximately 100 square miles of land bordered by the Ohio River to the north, south to Rt. 22, west from the Pennsylvania / Ohio border, east to approximately Rt. 79. This large river bottom area is one of the last relatively undeveloped areas in the Pittsburgh region. The Valley also acts to funnel migrating birds north and south. Waterfowl documented in this area include: Red-breasted Merganser, Common Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Oldsquaw, Lesser Scaup, Greater Scaup, Tufted Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Redhead, Canvasback, and American Wigeon.

### REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

1e This site is recognized as having an exceptional concentration and / or diversity of birdlife. It also includes exceptional river bottom habitat. Birds include 33 species of warblers.

4a 4b This area is considered to be rare, threatened, or unusual within this region of Pa. It is also exceptionally representative of a characteristic natural / near-natural habitat within its province.

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### CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Intense development pressure is the primary threat to this habitat area. Residential housing, commercial and industrial development, and highway construction continue to move into this area from greater Pittsburgh. Land acquisition from land conservancies offers a possible solution. Expansion of Raccoon Creek State Park is possible but highly unlikely. Raccoon Creek State Park maintains a series of bluebird nesting boxes.

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### LOCAL CONTACTS

Raccoon Creek SP, (724) 899-2200

Audubon Society of Western PA, (412) 963-6100

### SUBMITTED BY:

Ornithological Technical Committee - Pennsylvania Biological Survey