

## PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

**SITE NAME** OIL CREEK STATE PARK

**COUNTY** VENANGO, CRAWFORD

**SITE #** 18

**APPROX. SIZE** 7,075 ACRES

**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC (DCNR)/ PRIVATE **LAT.** 41°30' **LONG.** 79°39'

### DESCRIPTION

Oil Creek State Park is located in the northern part of Venango County, with a small piece in Crawford County. The dominant feature is a long, narrow gorge. The 13 miles of the Oil Creek Valley are the result of glacial runoff and are dominated by flood plain wetlands, oak-hickory forests and cool, steep hemlock ravines. Oil Creek State Park is open daily, year round. The park habitats include the stream valley, brushy and wooded wetlands, hemlock/maple woodlands in side valleys and oak/hickory forests.

*Directions:* From Oil City north on Route 8 to park entrance. Take SR 1007 to park office.

### BIRDS - SUMMARY

Relatively undisturbed and unbroken, rugged hillside and streamside forest with high diversity and substantial concentration of breeding forest birds, especially noteworthy for being in a historically degraded section of the state. Up to 20 species of breeding warblers, including Cerulean, Yellow-throated, Blackburnian, Hooded, Black-and-white, Black-throated Green and Black-throated Blue Warblers, Northern Parula, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Migrant warblers of up to 34 species abundant in spring, particularly at the mouths of hemlock ravines and wetland areas.

### REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

1e As many as 20 warbler species breeding (see summary). Up to 34 species of warblers in migration.

4b Undisturbed maturing bottom land and steep-slope forest.

### CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Once the center of a booming 19th century oil industry, Oil Creek State Park and the Oil Creek Valley have undergone a remarkable transformation. The Oil Creek area is an example of nature healing under proper management and becoming quality habitat. The park jurisdiction extends from ridgetop to ridgetop, helping to keep the area free from surrounding development. The park does not own the mineral rights, however, and modern technology has brought a resurgence of natural gas drilling to the park, threatening to fragment the forest with clearings for well, pipelines and roads. Park management is working to limit development to non-sensitive areas.

### LOCAL CONTACTS

State Park Manager, (814) 676-5915

Donald Snyder 814-734-1015

### SUBMITTED BY:

Ornithological Technical Committee - Pennsylvania Biological Survey