

PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

SITE NAME YOUGHIOGHENY VALLEY, OHIOPLYE
STATE PARK

COUNTY FAYETTE, SOMERSET

SITE # 26

APPROX. SIZE 19,000+ACRES

OWNERSHIP PUBLIC(DCNR) / PRIVATE **LAT.** 39°52' **LONG.** 79°29'

DESCRIPTION

Youghiogheny Valley / Watershed and Ohioplye State Park areas are well known for their recreational opportunities. The Youghiogheny River Gorge alone attracts thousands of visitors each year. Unknown to many visitors are the vast high-quality habitat areas for many species of bird and animals. The region surrounding the Youghiogheny River contain rocky banks, steep hillsides covered with hemlock and thick groves of rhododendron and Mountain Laurel, mixed deciduous forest, and open meadows. Birding these areas can be difficult because of the noise associated with the swift-flowing Youghiogheny River. Because of this condition, accurate bird numbers may be underestimated. Worm-eating Warblers can be found on the mountainsides, as well as the Northern Parula and Hooded Warblers.

Directions: From Uniontown, follow Rt. 40 E to Farmington. Turn left on Rt. 381 N.

BIRDS - SUMMARY

Youghiogheny Valley / Watershed is host to a wide variety of forest-interior and edge-sensitive species. With the adjacent Ohioplye State Park, Youghiogheny Valley / Watershed forms one of the largest bird-habitat blocks in the southwestern part of the state. Species include: Whip-poor-will, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Golden-winged Warbler, Pine Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Wood Thrush, Yellow-throated Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Cerulean Warbler, Veery, Hermit Thrush, and Red-eyed Vireo.

REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

- 3 A site of major importance, supporting a significant population of species on the Pennsylvania special concern list.
- 4a 4b Rare, threatened or unusual within the Allegheny Plateau / Ohio Hill region. An exceptional representative of a characteristic natural habitat within the Allegheny Plateau physiographic province.
- 5 PSO Special Areas Project - Mountaineer Audubon Society.

CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Recreational overuse may be the biggest threat to Ohioplye State Park and the surrounding watershed. Intense development pressure is also a major 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 offer a possible solution. Expansion of Ohioplye State Park is possible but unlikely. River Otter reintroduction project conducted in cooperation with the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, The Pennsylvania Game Commission, Penn State University, and East Stroudsburg University.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Charles Bier - W. PA Conservancy (412) 288-2777

Ohioplye State Park, (724) 329-8591

SUBMITTED BY:

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