

## PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

**SITE NAME** PINE CREEK GORGE NATURAL AREA

**COUNTY** TIOGA

**SITE #** 28

**APPROX. SIZE** 12,600 ACRES

**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC(DCNR) / PRIVATE **LAT.** 41°39' **LONG.** 77°27'

### DESCRIPTION

This site is a uniformly forested canyon with Pine Creek serving as the central artery. Pine Creek Gorge was designated in 1968 as a registered National Natural Landmark. The site is mostly Tioga State Forest lands (95%); Leonard Harrison State Park on the east rim, Colton Point State Park on the west rim. Abundant rock outcrops are found throughout the steep canyon walls. Numerous tributaries feed into Pine Creek. The forest contains a mixture of Red and White Oak, northern hardwoods, White Pine, and hemlock. The area offers seclusion and habitat important to species such as the Eastern Wood Rat, as well as the River Otter and fisher, which have been reintroduced to the area. (Tioga State Forest, 717-724-2868).

**Directions:** From Wellsboro, take Rt. 6 west to Ansonia, approx. 8 miles.

### BIRDS - SUMMARY

Eagles are often sighted and now nest in the gorge. Along the water, Belted Kingfisher, Common Mergansers, Wood Ducks, Green and Great Blue heron, Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, can often be seen. The extensive forest support a large number of forest interior birds. Conifers support high populations of Pine and Blackburnian warblers.

### REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

- 2 Bald Eagle (B - 1+ pair), Osprey (SM, FM - 25±).
- 3 Northern Saw-whet Owl (W), Northern Harrier (W, B), Swainson's Thrush (B), Red Crossbill (B).
- 4b Unusual canyon / gorge nesting area - Common Nighthawk (B), Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Common Merganser, and Bald Eagle.
- 5 Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology - Special Areas Project

### CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Acid mine drainage and domestic and agricultural sewage continue to pollute Pine Creek. A fly ash dump on Babbs Creek, a tributary of Pine Creek, poses a threat of potential contamination far exceeding the acid mine drainage. Sedimentation from farming, road construction, and logging operations is exceedingly evident. Particularly in the spring, the site experiences major problems with recreational overuse. In 1992 the site was introduced into the Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers Program. The Pine Creek Implementation Team, composed of landowners, business owners, and local and state officials was formed in 1993 to create rules and regulations for the Pine Creek Scenic River Gorge.

### LOCAL CONTACTS

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### SUBMITTED BY:

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