

PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

SITE NAME BARROWS HERONRY & EDWARD BRUCKER SANCTUARY	COUNTY MERCER	SITE # 8
APPROX. SIZE .55 ACRES	OWNERSHIP PRIVATE	LAT. 41° 22' LONG. 80° 25'

DESCRIPTION

This IBA consists of two sites in Mercer County. The Barrows Heronry, approx. 10 acres, is characterized by riparian woodland and swampy second-growth with Black Cherry and a number of very tall Sycamores. The Edward Brucker Great Blue Heron Sanctuary, 45 acres owned by Thiel College is in a flood plain of the Big Run River, a tributary of the Little Shenango River. Riparian and deciduous forest areas contain nest trees of Black Oak, beech, Shagbark Hickory and Sycamore

Directions: Brucker Sanctuary is located about 3 miles south of Greenville on Rt. 18.

NOTE: BOTH OF THESE SITES ARE PRIVATELY OWNED. NO ACCESS IS PERMITTED TO THE BARROWS HERONRY. THE BRUCKER SANCTUARY IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ONLY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER AND JANUARY.

BIRDS - SUMMARY

The Barrows heronry presently holds the largest Great Blue Heron colony in Pennsylvania. Although numbers fluctuate, an average of more than 200 active nests has been reported over the last 10 years, and in 1998 there were an estimated 500 nests. Most of the nests are in 8-10 large Sycamore trees, and several trees support close to 50 nests each. The Brucker Sanctuary had up to 264 Great Blue Heron nests in 1989, but has declined since then, and is presently unoccupied.

REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

1c Great Blue Heron (B - avg. 200+ pair, max. 500+ pair)

CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Threats to the area include succession and decay of nest trees. Flooding ice flows also present a problem by undermining riverbanks. The Brucker Sanctuary was created in 1986 through the efforts of local citizens, purchased by Edward Brucker, and protected by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Twenty-two acres were donated to Thiel college. Entry is prohibited during the active nesting season. An observation area is provided to allow visitors to view the birds. The Barrows Heronry is on privately owned land, the majority belonging to a single, conservation-minded landowner who has sensitively protected the habitat.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Phillip Ode, (412) 589-2117 (Brucker site)

Gene Wilhelm, (724) 794-2434 (Barrows site)

SUBMITTED BY:

Phillip Ode