

PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

SITE NAME TUSCARORA RIDGE - ("THE PULPIT") **COUNTY** FULTON, FRANKLIN, HUNTINGDON **SITE #** 36

APPROX. SIZE 160 SQ. MILES **OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC(DCNR) / PRIVATE **LAT.** 39°55' **LONG.** 77°57'

DESCRIPTION

Tuscarora Summit, known by birders as "The Pulpit," is located inside Buchanan State Forest and lies at the southern end (in Pennsylvania) of a ridge system that acts as a major migratory funnel for raptors. Tuscarora Ridge extends from Juniata County in central Pennsylvania into Maryland. Farther east lies Kittatinny Ridge, which includes Hawk Mountain and Waggoner's Gap, and many fall migrants from there and other westerly ridges converge near Tuscarora Summit (see Chapter 2 on the Kittatinny Corridor). The Pulpit is a rocky mountaintop area with great visibility for hawk-watching.

Directions: About 15 miles W of Chambersburg on Rt. 30, at the top of Tuscarora Summit, left turn before restaurant to gate.

BIRDS - SUMMARY

Average numbers of migrant raptors for the years 1973-1995 were over 6,000 in the fall, with a high of over 12,000 in 1978. Seventeen species are regularly observed. Spring migration numbers averaged about 1,000 for all species between 1977 and 1995, with a high of over 2,300 in 1979.

REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

- 1d Raptors: (FM - 6,000±; SM - 1,000+), including Broad-winged Hawk (FM - 2,500; SM - 500), Sharp-shinned Hawk (FM - 1,800, SM - 125), and Red-tailed Hawk (FM - 1,260, SM - 200). 17 spp.
- 2 Bald Eagle (FM - 100, SM - 2), Peregrine Falcon (FM - 15, SM - 2), Osprey (FM - 150, SM - 90) .
- 3 Northern Harrier (FM - 150, SM - 25)

- 5 Long-term raptor monitoring - daily during fall migration for the past 25+ years.

CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Conservation of this IBA should be focused on the entire ridge system, not only the immediate site, which is highlighted for expediency only. The hawkwatch site is owned by the Maryland Hang Gliding Association and is used for recreation and birding. The surrounding area includes both public (state forest) and private lands. Forest pests and disease, recreational development/overuse, and excessive or inappropriate forestry practices could potentially affect the use of the larger ridge system by migrants.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Richard Bell, Conococheague AS, (717) 765-3400 DCNR, Buchanan State forest, (717) 485-3148

SUBMITTED BY:

Richard Bell