

# NEW HAMPSHIRE IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS CRITERIA

(revised 9/29/08)

## IBA Categories:

### Category 1

- ◆ Areas consistently supporting significant numbers of endangered or threatened bird species.
- ◆ Areas consistently supporting at least one breeding pair of widely dispersed endangered or threatened bird species.

### Category 2

- ◆ Areas consistently supporting significant numbers of one or more bird species of high conservation priority in New Hampshire.
- ◆ Areas consistently supporting bird species assemblages characteristic of a representative, rare, threatened or unique habitat types within the state.

### Category 3

- ◆ Areas where birds concentrate in significant numbers during the breeding season, in winter, or during migration.

### Category 4 (supplementary)

- ◆ Areas important for long-term bird research or monitoring projects that contribute substantially to ornithology and/or bird conservation.

## IBA Criteria: Category 1

Areas consistently supporting significant numbers of federal or state endangered (E) or threatened (T) bird species or areas consistently supporting at least one breeding bird pair of widely dispersed endangered or threatened species that are listed below. The area should be one of consistent or recent occurrence (in the last 10 years). Thresholds will vary and may include areas with 1% of the state population (if known) in a season, or represent one of the one to three areas in the state with the highest regularly occurring numbers. Names of species considered “widely dispersed” are followed by a (D) in the table.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Fed. Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Regional Status</b>
Common Loon		T	Moderate priority in BCR 14
Pied-billed Grebe (D)		T	Moderate priority in BCR 30
Bald Eagle (D)		T	Moderate priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Northern Harrier (D)		E	Moderate priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Golden Eagle		E	Not ranked at all on any current regional level
Peregrine Falcon (D)		T	Moderate priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Piping Plover	T	E	Highest priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Upland Sandpiper		E	High priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Roseate Tern	E	E	High priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Common Tern		T	High priority in BCRs 14 & 30
Least Tern		E	High priority in BCR 30
Common Nighthawk (D)		E	High priority in BCR 14, moderate in BCR 30
Am. Three-toed Woodpecker		T	Not ranked at all on any current regional level
Sedge Wren (D)		E	High priority in BCR 30
Grasshopper Sparrow		T	High priority in BCR 30

## **IBA Criteria Category 2**

Areas consistently supporting significant breeding or non-breeding densities of one or more species of high conservation priority in New Hampshire, excluding the Threatened and Endangered species addressed in Category 1. Thresholds will vary but may include areas with 5% or more of the state population (if known) or one of three areas that support the highest regularly occurring numbers. Species in this category include the following:

- a) New Hampshire Species of Conservation Concern (as per NH Fish & Game Department Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program).
- b) Species on the New Hampshire Living Legacy Project list as important indicators for rare and unique habitats.
- c) Priority species (Tier I or II) identified in Partners In Flight physiographic region plans (PIF: Conservation of the Land Birds of the United States, 2000) that include New Hampshire.
- d) Species identified in the Northern Atlantic Regional Shorebird Plan as being of high priority (rank of 4 or 5) in the region OR occurring at high concentrations in the Northern Atlantic Shorebird Planning Region, which is extremely important to the species relative to the majority of other regions.
- e) Species identified by the New Hampshire Partners In Flight Working Group as being of conservation concern in the state and not already addressed above.
- f) Species identified as high priority or concern in both Bird Conservation Regions 14 and 30 AND which breed regularly in New Hampshire Exceptions occur when the species is not ranked in a BCR because it does not occur there or occurs there in relatively low numbers.

For the purposes of the NH IBA Program, these species are treated as indicators of representative, rare, or unique habitats within the state. Each species (as well as some Category 1 species) is assigned to one or more habitats in the list that follows. If a species from Category 1 is present at an area, but not in numbers high enough to satisfy Category 1, then it should definitely be mentioned in this section of the nomination. In nominating an IBA based on a habitat assemblage, sites that contain Category 1 species will rate higher than sites without them. That said, nominators are encouraged to also include densities of additional species not listed in Categories 1 or 2 if they are particularly high and help describe the nature of the avian community in a given area. For example, both Ovenbirds and Red-eyed Vireos are common forest species, and do not appear in the IBA Criteria. If data are available for these species for a particular site, and they occur in high numbers, these should be included along with species of conservation concern.

<u>Habitat Type</u>	<u>Associated Species of Conservation Concern</u>	
Lakes and Lakeshores	Common Loon Osprey	Bald Eagle
Riverbanks and Shorelines	Bald Eagle Bank Swallow	
Deep Emergent Marsh	Pied-billed Grebe American Bittern Least Bittern	Sora Common Moorhen Marsh Wren
Northern Bog	Spruce Grouse Olive-sided Flycatcher	Palm Warbler Rusty Blackbird
Non-emergent Wetlands (incl. Shrub-Swamp)	American Black Duck American Bittern Osprey Northern Harrier	Sedge Wren Canada Warbler Rusty Blackbird
Salt marsh	American Bittern Willet Common Tern	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow Seaside Sparrow
Sand dune	Piping Plover Least Tern	Horned Lark Savannah "Ipswich" Sparrow
Coastal island	Common Eider Common Tern Roseate Tern	Arctic Tern Black Guillemot Purple Sandpiper
Extensive Grassland	Northern Harrier Upland Sandpiper Horned Lark Vesper Sparrow	Grasshopper Sparrow Bobolink Eastern Meadowlark
Early Successional Habitats	American Woodcock Black-billed Cuckoo Olive-sided Flycatcher Brown Thrasher Blue-winged Warbler	Golden-winged Warbler Chestnut-sided Warbler Prairie Warbler Eastern Towhee Field Sparrow
Pitch Pine Barrens	Common Nighthawk Whip-poor-will Prairie Warbler	Eastern Towhee Field Sparrow Vesper Sparrow

<u>Habitat Type</u>	<u>Associated Species of Conservation Concern</u>	
Alpine	American Pipit	
High Elevation Spruce/Fir Forest (>2500')	Spruce Grouse Boreal Chickadee Bicknell's Thrush	Bay-breasted Warbler Blackpoll Warbler
Floodplain forest	Veery Cerulean Warbler	American Redstart

Note that the following matrix forest habitats (oak-pine, hemlock, northern hardwoods, spruce-fir, mixed forest) are widespread across much of the state. For the purposes of the NH IBA Program, exemplary matrix forest should usually be unfragmented blocks of over 1000 acres, with smaller areas more likely in the heavily-developed southeastern part of the state.

Oak-Pine Matrix Forest (>1000 acres)	Whip-poor-will Eastern Towhee	
Northern Hardwood Matrix Forest (>1000 acres)	Ruffed Grouse Northern Goshawk Eastern Wood-Pewee Least Flycatcher Veery Wood Thrush	Black-throated Blue Warbler American Redstart Canada Warbler Scarlet Tanager Rose-breasted Grosbeak Purple Finch
Spruce-Fir Matrix Forest (>1000 acres)	Spruce Grouse Northern Goshawk Am. Three-toed Woodpecker Olive-sided Flycatcher Boreal Chickadee	Cape May Warbler Bay-breasted Warbler Blackpoll Warbler Canada Warbler Purple Finch
Mixed Matrix Forest (>1000 acres)	Ruffed Grouse Cooper's Hawk Northern Goshawk Red-shouldered Hawk Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Eastern Wood-Pewee Least Flycatcher Acadian Flycatcher	Veery Wood Thrush Blackburnian Warbler Cerulean Warbler American Redstart Scarlet Tanager Purple Finch
Hemlock Matrix Forest (>1000 acres)	Blackburnian Warbler Louisiana Waterthrush (along streams)	

### IBA Criteria Category 3

Areas where birds concentrate in significant numbers during the breeding season, winter, or migration. The numerical criteria are guidelines only. Other factors such as quality and location of habitat may be considered. Lower numbers will be considered for inland areas where, in cases such as waterfowl, concentrations are smaller but are regionally significant.

- a) **Seabirds** (shearwaters, storm-petrels, fulmars, gannets, alcids, jaegers): The area is within New Hampshire's jurisdictional offshore waters and consistently supports a high density of foraging pelagic seabirds.
- b) **Gulls and Terns**: The area consistently supports a high density of breeding pairs or foraging individuals. Human-made feeding areas such as landfills are excluded.
- c) **Wading Birds** (herons, bitterns, egrets, ibises): The area consistently supports a high density of breeding birds or foraging individuals.
- d) **Waterfowl** (geese, ducks): The area consistently supports 5 or more breeding species, or a high density of migrating or wintering individuals.
- e) **Water Birds** (grebes, loons, cormorants, coots, moorhens, rails): The area consistently supports 5 or more breeding species, or a high density of migrating or wintering individuals.
- f) **Raptors and Vultures** (owls, vultures, hawks, falcons, eagles, harriers, osprey): The area consistently supports 5 or more breeding species or a high density of breeding pairs or wintering individuals.
- g) **Shorebirds** (plovers, sandpipers, snipe, woodcock, phalaropes): The area consistently supports a high density of shorebirds at any one time. It should be noted that most species of shorebird that migrate through the state have also been identified by the U.S. Shorebird Plan as being of high conservation priority. Although these species are not listed specifically in these criteria, this means that most areas where shorebirds stop-over in any numbers could qualify as potential IBAs.
- h) **Landbirds**: The area consistently supports an exceptional diversity of bird species DURING MIGRATION. Areas supporting high numbers or diversity of BREEDING landbirds should be nominated under Category 2.
- i) **Swifts and Swallows**: The area consistently supports high numbers of breeding or migrating swifts or swallows, including staging areas or roost sites. Three species in this group (Chimney Swift, Cliff Swallow, and Barn Swallow) are of regional conservation concern, but fail to fit into any of the habitat types in Category 2. They should be kept in mind when nominating sites based on this criterion.

#### **IBA Criteria Category 4 (supplemental)**

Areas important for long-term avian research or monitoring projects that contribute substantially to ornithology and bird conservation. An indicator of such an area will often be a long record of data collection (10+ years) resulting in publication in the scientific literature. These areas are not necessarily essential habitats for birds, however, they are considered worthy of identification and conservation. Except in exceptional cases, this criterion will not be sufficient to warrant IBA status, and should be used in association with Categories 1-3.