

BIRD CONSERVATION

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 2 APRIL 2020

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Winter surveys</i>	1
<i>Winter- continued</i>	2
<i>Yale-Myers Forest</i>	3
<i>Hybrid Warbler</i>	4
<i>Field station update</i>	5
<i>Membership</i>	6

Keep up with what's new:

Web site:

[http://
www.birdconservationresearch.org/](http://www.birdconservationresearch.org/)

Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/
#!/pages/Bird-Conservation-
-Research-
Inc/119775051450412?
sk=wall](https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Bird-Conservation-Research-Inc/119775051450412?sk=wall)

Blogspot:

[https://
birdconservationresearch.bl
ogspot.com/](https://birdconservationresearch.blogspot.com/)

Flickr:

[https://www.flickr.com/
photos/birdconservation/
sets/72157628082844564/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/birdconservation/sets/72157628082844564/)

WINTER SURVEYS OF THE NORTHEAST UPLANDS



The Gray Catbird is a common summer but rare winter resident.

Winter is an inherently variable season for resident birds, with certain species abundant during some winters and absent during others. Only with long term observations

patterns begin to emerge.

This winter, BCR repeated five survey transects through Connecticut's Northeast Uplands ecoregion that it first performed there in

2001. The 75 census points along these routes, which are also to be repeated next winter, will provide a 20-year perspective on winter bird populations across the

(Continued on page 2)

YALE FOREST

-CONTINUED

“The winter of 2019-2020 was notable for its low density of birds. ”



An ice storm coated the trees of northeastern Connecticut in early winter.

region.

In addition to these routes, we also began our first winter surveys along 10 transects through the Yale-Myers Forest of Union-Ashford-Eastford. These routes were originally established as breeding bird survey transects. These latter routes count birds using a different technique, so once we have gathered several years of data, we can compare how the two methods perform.

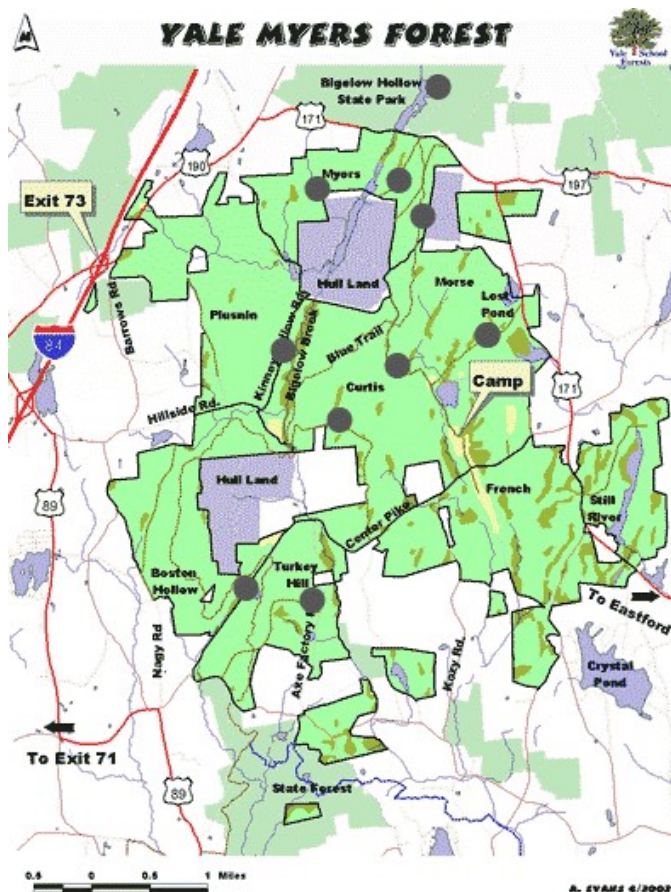
The winter of 2019-2020

was notable for its low density of birds. Indeed, a few transects produced hardly a single individual. Species like the Golden-crowned Kinglet, among the most abundant winter residents during some years, occurred only infrequently. Similarly, finches that during some winters arrive from the boreal zone in huge numbers were largely absent. Only a few Purple Finches appeared on this winter's counts. The highlight of winter surveys was the appearance of a single Gray Catbird— a rarity for

our region.

In contrast, some species seem to have increased noticeably since the initial 2001 counts. Pileated Woodpeckers continued their increase across the region, being present on nearly all of this winter's surveys. Another woodpecker, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, once absent from the region in winter, now occurs regularly.

SUMMER YALE FOREST STUDY NEARS COMPLETION



This map of the Yale-Myers Forest properties shows the location of our 10 survey transects.

“...Findings such as these demonstrate that the forest bird community is highly dynamic.”

Some of the most interesting observations from our long-term studies of the summering birds of Yale-Myers Forest have concerned findings for individual species. Some that were among the commonest when the study began in 1985 are now rare to absent, whereas other species not

present in 1985 are now among the most abundant.

Notable among the former group is the Red-breasted Nuthatch—the commonest nuthatch in 1985 but now occurring only infrequently. Notable among the latter group is the Pine Warbler—absent in 1985 but now the

second commonest forest warbler. Similarly, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, absent in 1985 is now among the commonest of woodpeckers. Findings such as these demonstrate that the forest bird community is highly dynamic.

Warblers even among different genera have been demonstrated to be closely related, and a number of intergeneric hybrids have been reported. This pairing is a new one, however. The full text of the article may be accessed at <http://www.artsandacademic.net/pdf/hybrid%20warbler.pdf>.

FIELD STATION UPDATE



Placing black plastic down helps warm the soil for early spring plantings.

Spring is a busy time at the field station. April is the month in which we begin spring banding activities as part of our ongoing studies into the importance of Connecticut agricultural land as migratory habitat for Midwestern grassland bird species.

Last year, we demonstrated the presence of the typically Midwestern Clay-colored Sparrow, and in previous years we have also found Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows. Although less restricted

to the Midwest, we have also banded a number of migrant Savannah Sparrows on the property, and we will be seeking additional Midwestern species this spring.

We are also continuing our program of transplanting native flowering and fruiting shrubs and trees to our newly cleared field borders. Our goal is to maximize the attractiveness of the borders to migrating and resident birds.

Part of the reason for encouraging birds is related to our agricultural operations, which will be expanding to three vegetable plots this year. We are working to employ wild birds as part of our integrated pest management strategy.

“We are working to employ wild birds as part of our integrated pest management strategy.”

The Newsletter of
Bird Conservation Research, Inc.

P.O. Box 209
Pomfret, CT 06258

Web:
www.birdconservationresearch.org

E-mail: mail@birdconservationresearch.org

Bird

Conservation Research, Inc.

Membership

_____ \$25 Regular member
_____ \$35 Family membership
_____ \$50 Sustaining member
_____ \$100 Contributor
_____ \$250 Patron
_____ \$500 Benefactor
_____ \$1,000 Grand benefactor

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____

City _____

State, zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____



Be part of this year's crop.

MEMBERSHIP

It's time to renew membership for 2020. Existing members have received renewal forms already. If you have not yet become a member, it

is never too late. Memberships remain one of our principal means of funding the projects that we conduct, so please consider joining us.

Membership applications and contribution options are available at www.birdconservation-research.org.