

Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*)

Pennsylvania Endangered Bird Species

State Rank: S1B (critically imperiled, breeding) **Global Rank: G5** (secure)

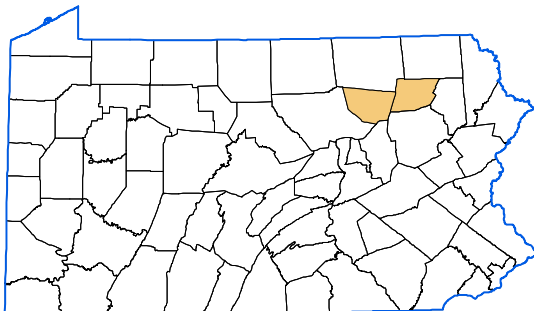
Identification

The Blackpoll Warbler is an active, small, and insect eating member of the Wood-Warbler family (*Parulidae*) that measures about 4.5 inches long. This species has white wing bars, thin pointed bill, white spots visible on underside of tail, and yellow legs. The adult alternate plumage male has a black crown and malar streak, white face, upperparts streaked black and white, and underparts mostly white with black streaks on the sides. The adult alternate plumaged female is similar but lacks the distinctive head pattern. The basic plumaged adult and immature are similar with a greenish crown, nape and back with thin black streaks, indistinct supercilium, breast paler than upperparts with faint darker streaks, and white belly and undertail coverts. The fall birds are very similar to fall Bay-breasted Warblers (*Dendroica castanea*) and Pine Warblers (*Dendroica pinus*) but have yellow legs and black streaks on the back. Bay-breasted Warbler fall adults tend to have a chestnut wash on the sides.



photo source: www.nps.gov

Pennsylvania Distribution by County



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program data 2007

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (2007)



Range

Blackpoll Warblers breed in the coniferous forests of Alaska and Canada, and higher altitude and coastal spruce-fir forests of northern New York, northern New England through Nova Scotia and Labrador. Recently the species has been found as far south as northeast Pennsylvania.

Habitat

This species prefers cool, wet boreal black spruce forests and in the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada they use coastal or subalpine white spruce (*Picea glauca*), red spruce (*Picea rubens*), and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*). South of the main range, breeding records have occurred in spruce bogs, conifer swamps, and conifer groves at elevations great than 700 meters. Specifically, in Pennsylvania, evidence of breeding occurred in a Red Spruce dominated swamp and forest with heath (*Ericaceae*) shrubs. In Alaska, this species may primarily prefer spruce-alder-willow thickets in riparian areas or the transition zone between taiga and tundra. In subalpine zones it is also found in mixed forests of conifers and birch or aspen, including second growth.

Conservation Status

In Pennsylvania, this species is a relatively newly documented breeding warbler. As of 2007, there are only two documented breeding site for Blackpoll Warbler in Pennsylvania. However, searches for this species will continue, especially with the 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas. Throughout most of the breeding range, the Blackpoll Warbler is largely unaffected by habitat degradation due to the remoteness of their nests. Still, even though excessive logging could decrease habitat availability, this species appears to recolonize cut-over areas relatively quickly. Degradation of subalpine spruce-fir forests as a result of acid precipitation may adversely influence Blackpoll populations in northeastern U.S. and southeastern Canada. Deforestation of tropical non-breeding habitats is probably of minor importance, given the broad range of habitats used by this species. One potential threat to this species could be the loss of stopover habitat for this species. Due to a transoceanic migration, and the fat deposits this species must gain before flight, the Blackpoll Warbler may require undisturbed habitat. This species needs stopover habitat in order to successfully gain fat to undertake a long transoceanic migration. Such areas should be identified and brought to conservation attention.

References

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