

PRAIRIE WARBLER
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR HABITAT IN BIRD CONSERVATION
REGION 14

Introduction

The Prairie warbler (*Dendroica discolor*) ranges from common in the southern part of BCR 14 to uncommon further north. It prefers fry thickets, shrubby second growth, Christmas tree plantations, abandoned gravel pits and dry abandoned fields. Its population is declining as abandoned openings revert to forest. It is listed as a “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” in one or more state Wildlife Action Plans in BCR 14.

Habitat Needs

Prefers young stands of paper birch or hardwood with a softwood component and pine. Logging and fire can create favorable habitat.

Its territory size is around four to five acres in size.

Habitat Management Practices

The habitat management objective for this species would be to create or maintain as many sapling/pole size (ten to thirty feet tall) stands as possible on dry sites. Treatment scheduling needs to be set up so that there is a consistent supply of this habitat type across space and time.

When assessing properties for habitat potential for this species, look for excessively to well-drained soils in Important Forest Soils Group IC that will produce pine and paper birch, such as Adams, Colton, or Masardis, in northern areas. Similar soils in southern areas include Boscawen, Caesar, Champlain, Hinckley, Hoosic, Merrimac, Quonset or Windsor. On glacial till, soils in Important Forest Soils Group such as Gloucester, Hermon and Success.

Recommended Silvicultural Practices include:

Clearcuts that are five or more acres in size.

Prescribed fire in five or more acre units.

Schedule entries so that at least 25 percent of the total area in this habitat type remains in the sapling/pole stage.