

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR HABITAT IN BIRD CONSERVATION
REGION 14

Introduction

The sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) has been in breeding decline in BCR 14 for a long time although there is some evidence that it has either stabilized or increased lately (see figure 1).

Habitat needs

This bird prefers coniferous or mixed wood forests containing clearings or bordering brushy meadows. It generally forages over open areas or forest edges rather than the forest interior. It mainly nests in conifers often near an opening.

Food sources are usually small birds along with rodents, amphibians and insects.

Home range is up to half a square mile.

Habitat Management Practices

The objective for the habitat management of this species would be to establish and maintain a series of shrubby openings across every fifty acres of mature softwood or mixed softwood/hardwood. The openings should be established so that some of them are adjacent to mature softwoods for nesting cover.

When assessing properties for habitat potential for this species, look for soils that are more poorly drained. These would include soils series such as Bemis, Cabot, Lyme, Monarda, Moosilauke, Pillsbury Ridgebury, Stissing in BCR 14. These soils fall into the Important Soils Group IIB.

Recommended silvicultural treatments include:

Group selection using groups ranging from one to three acres in size. Consider decreasing the time between entry periods, perhaps to five years, while treating less area per entry. This will maintain the shrubby condition in the temporary openings more consistently over time. Make sure that there are some mature components near the openings. Group IIB soils are operable in winter only so that operations are not likely to interfere with breeding and nesting success.