

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR HABITAT IN BIRD CONSERVATION
REGION 14

Introduction

The Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) is an uncommon but fairly widespread breeder in BCR 14. It prefers low, dense, shrubby deciduous vegetation. This bird is declining throughout its range. It is listed as a “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” in at least one state Wildlife Action Plan in BCR 14.

Habitat Needs

This cuckoo is most abundant in second growth deciduous forests with scattered openings, and edges of various sorts that contain shrubs.

Its territory size ranges from eleven to fifty acres.

Habitat Management Practices

The habitat management objective for this species would be to provide ten to twenty acre areas of sapling to pole sized stands in areas that will produce northern hardwoods.

When assessing properties for habitat potential for this bird, look for soils that produce northern hardwood on lower slopes such as Berkshire, Peru or Bernardston. Bice, Charlton, Sutton, Becket, Bernardston, Canterbury, Henniker, Marlow, Montauk, Paxton, Plaisted, Dixfield, Gilmanton, Howland, Metacomet, Pittstown, Scituate, Skerry, Woodbridge. There are other similar soils in BCR 14 depending on where you are.

Recommended Silvicultural Treatments include:

Even-age management would be the best option. Set management areas up for a 120-year rotation with entries at ten-year intervals. The cut units should be at least ten acres. The recently cut areas will provide the necessary scattered openings within the management unit along with the log landings and access roads and skid trails.