

Technical Assistance for Landowners: Forestry for the Birds

Roughly 80% of our region's forests are privately owned. When considered in the broader landscape, even the smallest properties can be key components of the large blocks of forest that support breeding birds of conservation concern. As a result, small actions by landowners can have a global impact. From a thorough assessment of habitat to thoughtful planning and management to permanent conservation, what you do in your woods matters to birds. That's why Audubon Vermont's *Forest Bird Initiative* is working directly with landowners like you. Together, we can ensure that abundant high-quality breeding habitat is available to keep our forest birds common across our state and region.



White-throated sparrow

© Powdermill Avian Research Center

Forest Bird Habitat Assessment I

Length of site visit: 1-3 hours

Time of year: Spring – late summer

Eligibility: Landowners owning ≥ 200 acres of forest and/or those located in priority forest blocks. Groups of neighboring landowners collectively owning ≥ 200 acres are encouraged to participate. Inquire about exceptions.

Fee: Provided free of charge to eligible landowners. Donations accepted. This is an opportunity for landowners to walk their woods with an Audubon biologist. We'll share with you which birds and habitats are on your property, conduct a rapid assessment of current habitat and landscape conditions, and provide you with suggested next steps for protecting and improving bird habitat on your property. We encourage landowners to include their county or consulting forester in habitat assessments whenever possible since we will discuss options for integrating timber and songbird habitat management.



Forest Bird Habitat Assessment II

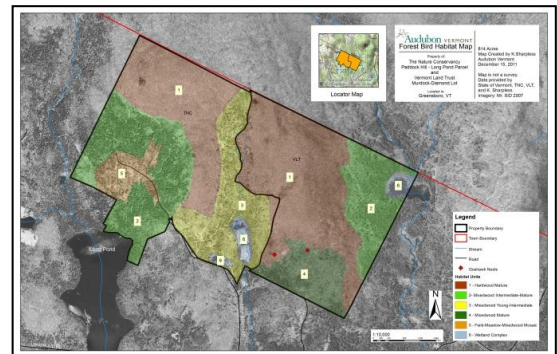
Length of site visit: Variable; dependent on size of property and access.

Time of year: Spring – late summer

Eligibility: All forest landowners.

Fee: \$500 minimum. Cost based on property size and complexity of assessment.

For those landowners who would like a more in-depth inventory and assessment of forest birds and habitats on their property, we will work with you to design a project that meets your specific interests and needs. Includes a detailed written report and digital habitat maps of your property. This inventory can be used to inform development of Use Value Appraisal program forest management plans and assist in applying for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding for certain conservation practices.



Management Plan Review

Length of site visit: Variable.

Time of year: Any

Eligibility: Landowners owning ≥ 200 acres of forest and/or those located in priority forest blocks are given preference. Prior participation in a forest bird habitat assessment is encouraged.

Fee: Free of charge to eligible landowners. Donations accepted.

If you are updating your forest management plan or creating a new plan for the first time, we can work with you and your forester to provide feedback and supplemental bird information and recommendations.

Implementation Consultation

Length of site visit: Variable

Time of year: Any

Eligibility: Landowners owning ≥ 200 acres of forest and/or those located in priority forest blocks are given preference. Prior participation in a forest bird habitat assessment is encouraged.

Fee: Free of charge to eligible landowners. Donations accepted.

Audubon biologists are available to help landowners implement specific projects that benefit forest birds. If you are planning a timber sale, we can walk the site with you and/or your forester to answer questions and provide targeted input in your project to ensure you have a maximum positive impact on forest songbirds.

If you are applying for Natural Resource Conservation Service incentive funding for a habitat improvement project, we can work with your forester and NRCS staff to assist with project planning and layout. If you are working to permanently conserve your forest with an easement, we can provide information on the importance of your forest for birds as well as input on easement language.



A note on fees and donations.

We are able to provide most assistance to eligible landowners regardless of ability to pay thanks to support from grants, foundations, and individuals. It costs Audubon Vermont an average of \$350 in staff time, administrative costs, and travel expenses to provide a landowner with a rapid habitat assessment. We encourage those who can and would like to make a donation in support of this important work to do so. Your contribution will help us work with other landowners like you who care about birds and keeping Vermont a globally important migratory bird nursery. Thank you!

How do I get more information or sign up?

- Contact an Audubon Vermont Conservation Biologist: Steve Hagenbuch, shagenbuch@audubon.org, 802-233-0332.
- Contact your county forester or ask your consulting forester.
- Visit our website at vt.audubon.org/forest-bird-initiative-1 to download resources.
- Come to a workshop or tour. See our calendar of events at vt.audubon.org Sign up online for periodic email updates.
- Questions about Audubon Vermont's Forest Bird Initiative? Contact Conservation and Policy Director, Jim Shallow at jshallow@audubon.org or 802-434-3068.