



Featured Species Habitat Management Guidance for Wood Thrush

Latin Name: *Hylocichla mustelina*

Scope: Northern Lower Peninsula

Rationale - *why we value the species and the problem for the species:*

The wood thrush (WOTH) is listed as a SGCN (Eagle et al. 2005; Michigan DNR 2015), a Partners in Flight priority species (Mattson 2009), and an Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture focal species (Potter et al. 2007). Populations have experienced significant long term decline both nationally and within the Midwest. Michigan populations have declined at an average rate of 2.21% per year for the past 46 years (Sauer et al. 2014). The literature suggests fragmentation of forests is the primary cause of population declines.

Habitat Need - *the cause & effect relationship between habitat and species and its primary limiting habitat need:*

The species is highly susceptible to nest predation and brood parasitism, which increases with forest fragmentation and suggests the WOTH is dependent on large tracts of mature forest for successful reproduction (Rosenberg et al. 2003; Weinberg and Roth 1998). WOTH occurs primarily in upland, mesic deciduous and mixed forests with large trees, diverse tree communities, moderate undergrowth, and a well-developed litter layer (Roth et al. 1996).

Habitat Objectives - *the treatment or management to address the primary limiting habitat need:*

- 1) Were possible maintain contiguous forest tracts of over 250 acres in size.
 - a. minimize edges and maximize forest interior by concentrating openings, oil and gas development, roads, and pipelines along the forest or stand edge;
 - b. promote forested corridors between smaller forest patches to increase habitat connectivity.
- 2) Manage stands to maintain or promote a well-developed shrub understory.
 - a. Limit over browsing by deer.
 - b. Provide canopy gaps through single tree and group selection harvest practices and retain conifer species.

Priority Geographic Areas – *the specific geographic areas where we should focus management for the species:*

The 7 NLP Regional State Forest Management Plan Management Areas (Benzie Moraines, Benzie Outwash, Chandler Hills, Emmet Moraines, Jordan Valley, Pigeon River Country, and Williamsburg Moraines) that list WOTH as a featured species.

Priority Landscapes – *the landscape, setting, or cover-type where we should focus management within the areas above:*

State forest lands with mesic and wet deciduous forest hardwoods.

Population Goal - *the goal for the species, its habitat, or a stakeholder's actions:*

Maintain stable breeding populations in priority landscapes as indicated by continued presence in currently occupied stands. Maintain occupancy in at least 80% of randomly selected stands and breeding season presence in at least 50% of those stands.

Evaluation Method - *the monitoring method to measure progress towards the goal above:*

Propose annual breeding season occupancy surveys conducted in early June from randomly selected northern hardwood stands in which selection harvests were conducted between 5 and 10 years previous.

Incidental Species – *other species which may benefit from management for this species:*

American marten; black bear; black-throated blue warbler; and northern goshawk.

References - citation for documents referenced in this guidance:

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- Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). 2015. DNR online list of Frequently Asked Questions on the 2009 Revision of the State Endangered Species List. <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10370_12141-213610--,00.html >. Accessed 09 Sept. 2015.
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- Roth, R. R., M. S. Johnson and T. J. Underwood. 1996. Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/246>
- Sauer, J. R., J. E. Hines, J. E. Fallon, K. L. Pardieck, D. J. Ziolkowski, Jr., and W. A. Link. 2014. The North American Breeding Bird Survey, Results and Analysis 1966 - 2012. Version 02.19.2014. USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD.
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