

Forestry for the Birds June 11, 2014

George Perkins Marsh of Woodstock, Vermont pointed out more than 150 years ago that human intervention could make a real difference to the natural world. This works both ways: deforestation deprives nesting birds of habitat, but reforestation and good woodland management can attract nesting birds.

Staff at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park in Woodstock are working with the park's 555 acres of forest to bring back or increase numbers of nesting birds that are identified by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department as being of particular conservation concern in the state.

“Since 2007 we've been managing the forest in a way that benefits the birds,” explained the park's resource manager Kyle Jones, himself a keen birder, “And in 2012 we launched a program in partnership with Audubon Vermont to promote cutting practices designed to provide high-quality nesting habitat for birds at the same time as improving growing conditions for trees.”

Saturday June 28, Jones and Jim Shallow, Director of Conservation and Policy at Audubon Vermont, will offer a free guided walk to demonstrate some of the habitat work that has helped to improve nesting sites for, among others, wood thrush, ovenbird, chestnut-sided, mourning, blackburnian, and black-throated green warblers. The program will be of particular interest to forest owners, bird watchers, foresters and anyone with an interest in birds and the environment.

“Vermont's forests are globally significant because of the variety of migratory birds that breed here,” said Shallow. “Forestry done with birds in mind can improve the habitat for dozens for migratory bird species like the wood thrush and wood pewee. There is no better place to learn about forest birds and their habitat needs than Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park where the ideas of sustainable forest management were born.”

“Forestry for the Birds” a free two-hour guided walk Saturday June 28 meets at 8:30am at the Prosper Road trailhead, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park, Woodstock, VT. Call 802 457 3368 ext 22 or go to www.nps.gov/mabi for more information.