

SCNM Appendix 3: Important Bird Areas

From the National Audubon Society: *“The Important Bird Areas Program (IBA) is a global effort to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity. The Important Bird Areas Program recognizes that coupled with [global warming](#), habitat loss and fragmentation are the most serious threats facing populations of birds across America and around the world. By working to identify and implement conservation strategies at Important Bird Areas, we hope to minimize the effects that habitat loss and degradation have on birds and other biodiversity.”*

There are two Important Bird Areas (IBAs) designated by the IBA Program within the boundary of the proposed SCNM:

Siskiyou Crest IBA

Site Description:

In the Siskiyou Mountains, southwest Oregon near the California border, roughly from Mt. Ashland west-southwest to Maple Dell Gap, and including Wagner Butte, Grouse Gap, MacDonald Peak, Red Mountain, Wrangle Gap, Silver Fork Gap, Dutchman’s Peak, and Yellowjacket Ridge. The area includes roughly 10-15 miles of the Siskiyou Mountains crest area in Oregon--continuation of the IBA into California is being considered. Dominant habitats are meadows and conifer forest. The diverse array of meadows are composed of grass, sedge, deciduous and/or evergreen shrubs, and small trees, and many have a small stream or other water source.

Ornithological Summary:

The mountain meadows are important post-breeding habitat for many species: Rufous Hummingbirds, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Dark-eyed Juncos in particular form impressive congregations. A small population of White-headed Woodpeckers is present in the conifer forests here, the only population known west of the Cascades in Oregon. Other species of interest include breeding Fox Sparrows, Green-tailed Towhees, Lincoln's Sparrows, and possibly Calliope Hummingbirds. The Dutchman Peak area is the best known site for fall hawk migration in the Siskiyou.

Anderson Butte--Sterling Ditch IBA

Site Description:

On BLM lands up Little Applegate Road (lands north of Little Applegate River) past junction with Sterling Creek Road. Includes portions of T39S, R2W, Sections 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24. Takes in Wolf Gap, Tunnel Ridge, and Goat Cabin Ridge. These BLM managed lands include a mix of shrubland and forest

land. The habitats for which this site was identified are the ceanothus-manzanita brushfields and scrub oak habitat.

Ornithological Summary:

This habitat is highly important to a very specific bird community that includes Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wrentit, Oak Titmouse, and California Towhee. All but the Wrentit are near the northern extent of their range in this IBA, and all but the gnatcatcher are year-round residents in this habitat. In addition, the manzanita in these shrublands provides resources to a diversity of birds year-round. During winter, manzanita provides a berry food source for several species, particularly Hermit Thrushes. In early spring, manzanita flowers provide a nectar heavily used by arriving Rufous Hummingbirds (and others). The flowers are also eaten (perhaps for the nectar or other nutritional content?) by songbirds such as Purple Finches and Golden-crowned Sparrows before and during spring migration (Dennis Vroman pers. comm.).

Conservation Issues:

In many areas Ceanothus-manzanita brushfield habitat has been lost to urbanization and/or forest succession (due to fire suppression). Further, it is considered a "fire hazard" and is often eradicated to reduce fire danger.

Citation: National Audubon Society 2009. Important Bird Areas in the U.S.