



Cerulean Warbler Occurrence Atlas for Military Installations Year 2

Background:

The Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) is a species of management concern in 21 states, 1 province, and Canada. While the Cerulean Warbler is not on the Federal Endangered Species List, it is on the Partners in Flight 2004 Continental Watch List and the IUCN 2008 Red List and was petitioned for federal listing in 2006. This small wood-warbler nests and forages 50 feet up in the canopy and requires mature forests. This habitat can be found on many military installations within the bird’s breeding range but there is no Service-wide or Department of Defense (DoD)-wide occurrence record of Cerulean Warblers. Without knowing the distribution of this species on military lands, the DoD cannot manage for it effectively or help prevent federal listing.



Male Cerulean Warbler

Photo by Phil Swanson

Objective:

This multi-year project will determine the status of Cerulean Warblers on all military installations (including Army Corps of Engineer reservoirs) that have appropriate habitat and lie within the breeding range. The final products will include a GIS layer and a set of management recommendations. This is Year 2 of a projected three years. The Legacy Program entirely funds this project.

Summary of Approach:

There are two phases to the Cerulean Warbler Occurrence Atlas. During the first stage, a questionnaire on habitat and survey work was sent to the environmental officer at each potential site. The returned questionnaires were evaluated and the Cerulean Warbler status was assigned as present, not present, or unknown. The second stage consists of bird surveys conducted at those locations marked “Cerulean presence unknown”. Efforts in Year 1 concentrated on contacting each site; in Year 2, efforts were divided

between contacting new sites and surveying “Cerulean presence unknown” sites.

Benefit:

Knowing the distribution of Cerulean Warblers on all military lands will allow the DoD to coordinate range-wide, multi-service management efforts. Partnerships with organizations concerned with Neotropical migrants and rare species, such as Important Bird Area programs and state natural resources departments, can also be strengthened. The long-term goal of all Cerulean Warbler management is to support the population and prevent the addition of this bird to the Endangered Species List. Federal listing of this species could have a detrimental impact on operations and the military mission of those installations that support the species.

Accomplishments:

In Year 1, 258 sites were contacted. In Year 2, 174 sites were contacted and 137 questionnaires were returned. Finding the point of contact for each location remains the most difficult part of the project.

In Year 1, 10 sites were surveyed. In Year 2, 37 sites were surveyed, primarily in USFWS Regions 4 and west of the Mississippi River. (Funding delays from Legacy continued into the beginning of the breeding/ survey season, so fewer sites were surveyed than planned.) Cerulean Warblers were documented at 6 sites this year and 2 last year. The bird lists compiled by the field staff were shared with the facility and (with permission) with ongoing Breeding Bird Atlas efforts.

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Questionnaire</u>	<u>Survey</u>
Cerulean present	48	8
Cerulean not present	67	39
Presence unknown	128	81 left
Other (no habitat, etc.)	95	
No response	37	
No POC yet	51	

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