

**Q: Why can't we just let nature take its course to enhance wildlife?**

**A:** As long as humans make an effort to suppress natural disturbances such as fire, floods, disease and pest outbreaks, we are no longer dealing with a natural forest system. These disturbances are needed to create grasslands, shrublands and young forest habitats across the landscape. Many wildlife **Species of Greatest Conservation Need** rely on these disappearing habitats. The number of wildlife species present in a given area most always mirrors plant biodiversity, both species and structural diversity. In the absence of natural disturbances, active management must be substituted to maintain the region's unique biodiversity.

**Q: Does clear-cutting destroy the environment?**

**A:** Although feared and often misunderstood, clear-cutting is a legitimate silvicultural tool for hardwood forests. It is an efficient way to create even-aged forest regeneration and the most practical way to generate early successional forest habitat in the absence of natural disturbances. Many wildlife species depend on these young forest habitats and others need a variety of young, intermediate and mature forests to meet their requirements. Be sure to preserve wildlife trees such as snag trees and maintain a vegetative buffer in surrounding riparian zones.



*Cerulean Warbler*

**Many Sources of Assistance are Available.**

For specific information and advice regarding the CWCS, contact your regional NYS DEC wildlife biologist

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All email addresses above end with: gw.dec.state.ny.us

For a free on-site visit from a MFO volunteer, visit [www.cornellmfo.info](http://www.cornellmfo.info) or call your Cornell Cooperative Extension Office.



For a wide variety of forestry and wildlife information visit [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info).

For a variety of forest information, [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org). Please consider joining the New York Forest Owners Association.



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**The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS)** was completed by the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources (DFWMR) of NYSDEC in September of 2005 to address the wildlife species in greatest need of conservation in the state. The CWCS utilizes the best available data on the status of fish and wildlife species to define a vision and establish a strategy for state wildlife conservation and funding. The CWCS is a collaborative effort among agencies, organizations and individuals with an interest in New York's wildlife. Go to: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/30483.html>



**Delaware Watershed Region\***

**Over 85% of the Delaware watershed region is covered in forests of which a majority is privately owned.** Consequently, the health and prosperity of the watershed's wildlife populations depends on how well these owners protect and enhance the habitat on which the hundreds of species of insects, amphibians, reptiles, fish, birds and mammals depend. The good news is that most forest wildlife species are thriving, but unfortunately many are not. These species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) have been identified in the NY Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS). 81 of these species call the Delaware basin their home.

A major goal of the CWCS is to inform forest owners of the need for management practices that will enhance forest biodiversity and thereby keep these SGCN from becoming rare or endangered. **So much of the critical habitats for these species exists on private lands that landowner cooperation will be the ultimate deciding factor on whether species declines can be halted.** The plan further lists the threats to these species and management strategies that will improve their habitat. Fortunately, for forest owners and wildlife alike, many species will benefit from sustainable forest practices, including timber production, when implemented in accordance with NYS best management practices (BMPs).

**\*Counties:** Broome, Delaware, Greene, Orange, Sullivan, Ulster and small portions of Chenango and Schoharie Counties

