

American Woodcock

Natural History and Habitat Management

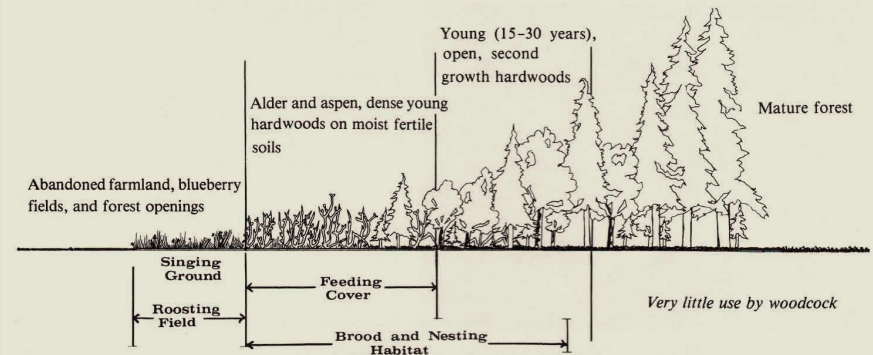
The American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)

- Classified as a shorebird, but lives in early successional upland habitats with dense shrub cover and moist soil
- Strange appearance and secretive habits have earned it many colorful local names, including timberdoodle, bog sucker, brush snipe and Labrador twister
- Mottled pattern of browns, black, buff and gray aid in camouflaging it against the leaf litter
- Earthworms make up 50 to 90 percent of the woodcock's diet
- During a mild winter, some woodcock may remain in Maryland from breeding grounds further north
- Female lays about 4 eggs in a shallow depression on the ground lined with leaves
- Offspring are ready to leave the nest within hours of hatching, and are almost full grown at 4 weeks



Woodcocks in Snow

Stages of Forest Succession Used by Woodcock



Environmental Education Opportunities

This area is ideal for teaching ecological concepts such as old field succession, disturbance, habitat types, indicator species, diversity, and ecosystem interdependence. The opportunity also exists for demonstrating wildlife management techniques in the area of habitat restoration.



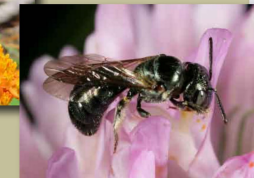
Blue-winged Warbler

Benefits to Other Wildlife

There are many other species dependent on early successional habitat. Habitat management for woodcock will benefit yellow-breasted chats, prairie warblers, blue-winged warblers, field sparrows, indigo buntings, American goldfinches and a diversity of wildflowers, butterflies and other pollinators.



Great Spangled Fritillary



Little Carpenter Bee



Indigo Bunting

Funded by the Middle Patuxent Environmental Foundation