

Rusty Blackbirds are in Trouble



Rusty Blackbirds have experienced an 85-99% population drop in the last half-century. Over the last 15 years, research on Rusty breeding and wintering ecology has allowed us to develop conservation strategies to protect this vulnerable species. But many questions still remain, and Rusty Blackbird migration habits are largely a mystery. Are there hot spots where many Rusties congregate during migration? Are similar migratory stopover areas used by Rusties each year, and are these areas protected?

The International Rusty Blackbird Working Group, in partnership with eBird, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Smithsonian, and the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, is launching a spring migration Blitz. The objectives of the Blitz are:

1. Identify migratory stopover sites
2. Determine consistency of numbers/timing of Rusty Blackbird migration
3. Strengthen relationships with state and federal agencies in order to advance Rusty Blackbird conservation
4. Engage the birding community and create increased awareness and excitement about Rusty Blackbirds

Will you accept a Rusty Challenge?

This spring, help advance our understanding of one of the most rapidly declining landbirds in

North America!

Go to <http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/> for complete information and to help!