

Bird-Friendly Habitat Management at Geprags Park

The Hinesburg Conservation Commission (HCC) is partnering with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to continue habitat management at Geprags Park in 2024. Work will begin this weekend ([February 23-25, 2024](#)) and will involve (loud!) mechanized equipment that will be cutting and grinding woody vegetation to both remove invasive species and promote the dense new shrub growth that is important to priority shrubland bird species in Geprags Park. Some trails may be temporarily closed for safety while this important work is happening. Signage will be present to alert visitors of management activity.

Since 2012 the HCC has been working with Audubon Vermont to manage Geprags Park for priority shrubland bird species. These include Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers, American Woodcock, Eastern Towhee and Brown Thrasher. Geprags was, in the past, home to one of the only Hooded Warblers in the state. Past work has focused on removal of invasive plant species (primarily honeysuckle and buckthorn) and maintenance of native shrub communities. These shrub communities, dominated by dogwoods and viburnums, provide important nesting habitat and a reliable food source for fall migrants. They also produce an abundance of flowers that are great for pollinators.

This work will create the disturbance necessary to promote the dense shrub regeneration these birds need. While small areas will look a bit shorn at first, the regrowth that happens will be incredibly beneficial for the birds and keep them coming back to Geprags Park and thriving.

For more information contact Audubon's Mark LaBarr (mark.labarr@audubon.org) or the Hinesburg Conservation Commission (hinesburgcc@gmail.com).