



# BEAR BLUFF BOG

Property Owners: Jackson County, WDNR  
 Recognitions & Designations: WI State Natural Area, WI Land Legacy Place, WI Wildlife Action Plan Reference Site, WI Bird Conservation Initiative Important Bird Area

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**Wisconsin  
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ASSOCIATION

[wisconsinwetlands.org](http://wisconsinwetlands.org)



## BEAR BLUFF BOG WETLAND TYPES

Coniferous swamp, coniferous bog, open bog, fen, marsh, shrub carr

*Eric Epstein*

## ECOLOGY & SIGNIFICANCE

Bear Bluff Bog, located in the bed of the extinct Glacial Lake Wisconsin, comprises the most intact remaining portion of the Great Swamp of Central Wisconsin. This vast, remote wetland complex includes coniferous swamp, coniferous bog, open bog, fen, marsh and shrub carr habitats. The site is important because of its size, wild character, diversity and the significant number of rare species it supports. Bear Bluff Bog provides connections to a number of other public conservation lands in the area, creating a large mosaic of protected wetland and upland habitats and supporting a wide diversity of wildlife species and excellent recreational opportunities.

## FLORA & FAUNA

This Wetland Gem features a coniferous swamp with a canopy dominated by white pine and red maple and including some yellow birch, black ash and tamarack. The shrub layer includes alder, winterberry, dewberry and poison sumac and the ground layer includes skunk

cabbage, cinnamon fern and three-leaved goldthread. Coniferous bog habitat is dominated by black spruce and tamarack. Open bog areas are dominated by sphagnum mosses, leatherleaf, blueberry species, few-seeded sedge, northern yellow lake sedge, bluejoint grass and bog birch with a number of other species including cottongrass, pond sedge, manna grass, bog rosemary, bog laurel and black chokeberry.

These high quality wetlands support a diversity of breeding birds, including sandhill crane, American bittern, northern harrier, green-winged teal, hooded merganser, black-billed cuckoo, veery, Wilson's snipe, yellow-bellied flycatcher, eastern wood-pewee, sedge wren, northern waterthrush, Nashville warbler, Canada warbler, Blackburnian warbler, purple finch, Lincoln's sparrow and Le Conte's sparrow. The Bear Bluff area contains one of Wisconsin's core breeding areas for the declining golden-winged warbler. Mammals using the site include black bear, fisher and several packs of timber wolves. The federally endangered Karner blue butterfly also uses this site.



*Green-winged teal — Scott Franke*

## THREATS

Many surrounding wetland areas have been ditched and otherwise altered for cranberry cultivation. Heavy deer browsing pressure threatens the regeneration of the site's conifer trees. Invasive species are also of concern; future invasion by the emerald ash borer beetle threatens the site's ash trees.

## ACCESS

Visit the Wisconsin State Natural Areas Program website: [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna).

## Sources:

Wisconsin State Natural Areas Program (WDNR)  
 Wisconsin Land Legacy Report (WDNR)  
 Wisconsin's Strategy for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need (WDNR)