

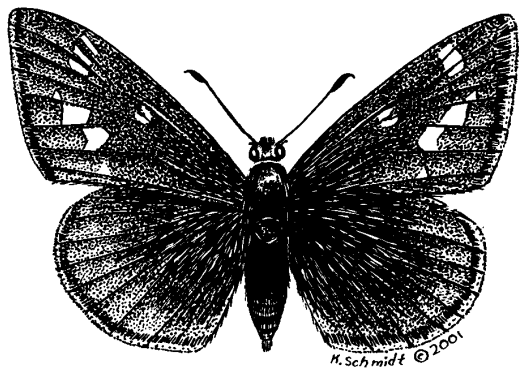


# RED CEDAR WOODLAND

Red cedar woodlands feature an overstory dominated by widely spaced eastern red cedar trees and grassy meadow remnants between them. Red cedar is one of the first woody plants to invade abandoned pastures on mildly acidic to alkaline soils in this region, and red cedar woodlands are often transitional between upland meadow and young forest habitats.



J. Tollefson 2003



Dusted skipper

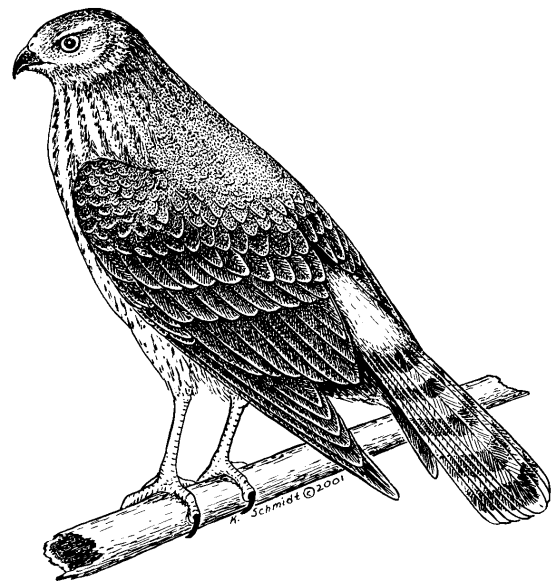
## TYPICAL PLANTS

- Eastern red cedar
- Kentucky bluegrass and other hayfield and pasture grasses; little bluestem on poorer soils
- Gray birch, red maple, quaking aspen, and red oak

## SPECIES OF CONSERVATION CONCERN

- Rare plants including Carolina whittow-grass, yellow wild flax, and Bicknell's sedge
- Foraging fruit-eating birds
- Roosting raptors such as northern harrier and short-eared owl
- Nesting wood turtle, eastern box turtle, and eastern hognose snake
- Olive hairstreak, dusted skipper (butterflies)

These are just a few of the species of regional or statewide conservation concern that are known to occur in red cedar woodland habitats. See Bell et al. (2005) for a more extensive list.



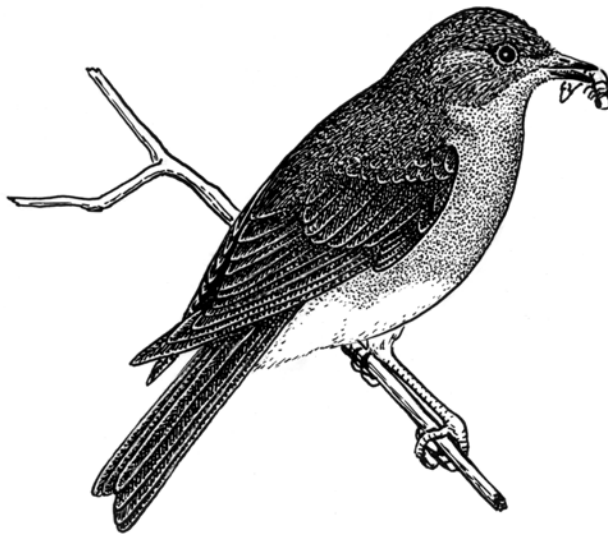
Northern harrier, © K. Schmidt 2001

## THREATS TO RED CEDAR WOODLANDS

Extensive occurrences of red cedar woodlands are restricted to particular regions of the Hudson Valley, and are often associated with less common habitat types. Red cedar woodlands on abandoned agricultural lands are often considered prime development sites, and thus are particularly vulnerable to **direct habitat loss or degradation**. Woodlands on steep slopes with fine sandy soils may be especially susceptible to **erosion** from ATV traffic and other human uses. Human disturbances may also facilitate the **invasion of non-native forbs and shrubs** that tend to diminish habitat quality by forming dense stands that displace native plant species.

## CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Prevent the direct loss or degradation of these habitats, and maintain unfragmented connections with nearby wetlands, forests, and other important habitats wherever possible.
- ❖ Use light grazing, occasional mowing, or occasional manual removal of tall woody plants where necessary to maintain meadow habitats for rare plants and to maintain unshaded reptile nesting areas.



Eastern bluebird, © K. Schmidt 2001

### References

Bell, K., C. Dickert, J. Tollefson, and G. Stevens. 2005. Significant habitats in the Town of Stanford, Dutchess County, New York. Report to the Millbrook Tribute Garden, the Dyson Foundation, the Town of Stanford, and the Dutchess Land Conservancy. Hudsonia Ltd., Annandale, NY. 123 p.