

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### Warblers

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature

Warblers, warblers, warblers. If you spend much time around birders in the Southern Appalachians, they seem to get really excited about warblers. While the term warblers is used to describe different groups of birds around the world, in North America it almost always refers to members of the family parulidae, also called New World warblers. There are dozens of North American warblers, most of which are insect eaters, and in our region they can be found in a variety of habitats, from the grasslands of the Southern piedmont, to the spruce-fir forests atop Appalachia's highest mountains.

These birds don't fly particularly fast, like a peregrine falcon. They aren't steeped in symbolism, like the bald eagle. You can't hunt or eat them like a turkey. So what's the allure of the warblers? Birders will tell you they captivate through their behavior, diversity, bright plumage, and of course their songs. Some warblers, such as the Blackburnian and the Blackthroated Blue, nest at high elevations here in the Southern Appalachians, while seeing others is a seasonal treat as they're only migrating through the Southern Appalachians. Tiny birds, they can be difficult to spot foraging among high tree branches, making them a challenge to identify, however experienced birders can identify them by their songs.

Warblers have also made their mark in science as the subjects of research that helped establish some of the foundations of ecology - deepening our understanding of how species interact and find their ecological niche or their own place among myriad habitats.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.