

<p style="text-align: center;">PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT MAMMAL AREA #10 Chestnut Ridge/Laurel Ridge</p>

COUNTY(IES) Fayette, Indiana, Somerset, Westmoreland

APPROX. SIZE 500,000 acres

OWNERSHIP Public (Federal, State, Local), Private

REASON FOR SELECTION

- Supports significant populations of species or subspecies with specific habitat requirements
- Sustains a confirmed viable local population of a Species of Greatest Conservation Need and the species or subspecies regularly occurs at the site during one or more seasons
- Includes wild populations of mammals that can be viewed in their natural habitat
- Site is a natural area associated with an established educational program that interprets natural history of resident mammals

DESCRIPTION

These ridges are the dominant features of the Laurel Highlands Area of southwestern PA. Steep and heavily forested by deciduous trees, this area includes a variety of other general riparian and upland habitats, as well as caves and rocky areas. Focal sites within this IMA are Carnegie Museum of Natural History's Powdermill Biological Station, Roaring Run area of Forbes State Forest, Ohiopyle State Park, and Strangford Cave area along the Conemaugh River. Several state gamelands and state parks are located within the area.

MAMMAL NOTES

Unusual or special concern mammals known to occur on this IMA include the least shrew (specimen in Carnegie Museum), pygmy shrew, West Virginia water shrew, long-tailed shrew, eastern small-footed myotis, northern myotis, Indiana myotis, Appalachian cottontail, Allegheny woodrat, northern river otter, bobcat, and least weasel. The Youghiogheny River has been a northern river otter reintroduction site. These ridges both support fairly well-connected Allegheny woodrat populations. The area includes Powdermill Biological Station, which

provides ongoing educational programs on mammals as well as being a long-term monitoring site for small mammals.

CONSERVATION NOTES

This IMA includes two IBAs (IBAs #24, 26). Excessive logging in the past has left lasting detrimental effects, although recovery is underway. Although parts of the area are fully protected, ongoing habitat threats include encroachment due to development extending up from the adjoining valleys and increasing numbers of vacation homes in this public-private lands mosaic.