

Tale of Two Cousins

Northern spotted owl



In 1999, the year Headwaters Forest Reserve was established, the area contained six northern spotted owl territories. Since then, the number of spotted owl territories has declined due to competition from barred owls, close relatives of the spotted owl. The barred owl expanded its range into the western United States in the 1970's and was first documented in Headwaters in 2004. Compared to the northern spotted owl, barred owls feed on a broader selection of prey, use a greater variety of habitats and are more aggressive.



Often the spotted owl cannot compete with the barred owl and is forced to move to less desirable habitat, making survival and reproduction difficult. Listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, populations of the northern spotted owls are declining. The BLM and its partners are currently monitoring and studying both owl species in Headwaters to determine what steps, if any, should be taken to ensure the survival of northern spotted owls in Headwaters.

Marbled Murrelet



Marbled murrelet

The Headwaters Forest Reserve provides critical nesting habitat for the marbled murrelet, a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. In fact, the protection of the marbled murrelet was a key reason that Headwaters became public land. The marbled murrelet is a seabird that nests in coastal old-growth forests from Alaska to central California. As old-growth forests were logged, the population of marbled murrelets declined throughout the Pacific Northwest. The marbled murrelet does not create its own nest. Instead, it lays one egg on a lichen or moss covered branch in an old-growth tree, high up in the canopy. During nesting season, breeding pairs of murrelets must make several trips back and forth to the ocean to bring fish to their mate and chick. Their call is a high pitched *keer keer*.



Marbled murrelet on nest



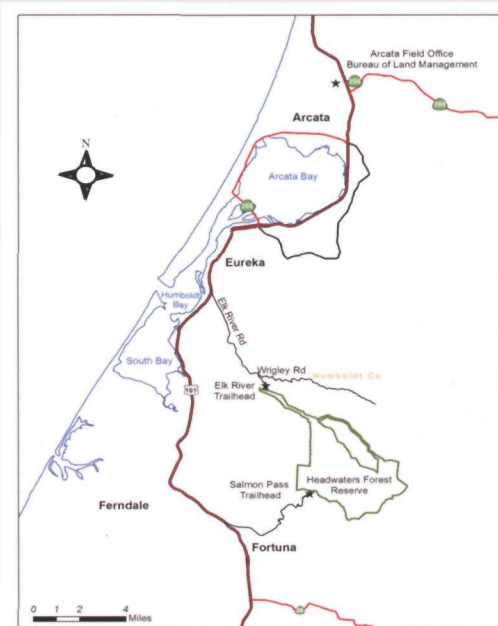
Marbled murrelet nest and egg
Photo, courtesy of Steve Sillet

All About the Birds



Cedar waxwing

The bird life of Headwaters is a direct reflection of the area's ecological diversity. The array of species is highest in riparian zones where sunlight is available. The interior old-growth forest (3,088 acres) is relatively quiet with only a few bird species. Many of the birds found in Headwaters are not present year-round and migrate south for the winter.



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Common Birds of the Headwaters Forest Reserve



Pacific wren



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