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**MONITORING OF A GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER
RESTORATION PROJECT IN GEORGIA**

Geoff Nelson¹ and Janice Crook-Hill¹

¹University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, GA

Abstract: Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) populations are declining throughout much of their range, and the decline has been especially extreme in Georgia where the species has been close to extirpation. Habitat loss is thought to be a major factor in the species' decline in the Southeast, and in 2010, the U.S. Forest Service and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources began a habitat enhancement project involving selective logging and controlled burns on Brawley Mountain, the only location in Georgia where Golden-winged Warblers are currently known to breed. We have established a monitoring program of the Brawley Mountain population in an attempt to assess the effectiveness of the habitat manipulations. Here we report the early results of the monitoring program, which we plan to continue in subsequent years.

**VEGETATION ANALYSIS OF A
GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER HABITAT
ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

John Paris White¹ and Janice Crook-Hill¹

University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, GA

Abstract: The Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) population in Georgia has declined to single digits during the last fifty years and is confined to a few acres on Brawley Mountain located in Fannin County. In an attempt to prevent extirpation of the species in Georgia and to promote population growth, a habitat enhancement plan was begun in 2010 and is ongoing. The habitat enhancement involved selective thinning of approximately 400 acres of deciduous forest on Brawley Mountain. To assess

suitability of the enhanced habitat for Golden-wings, we conducted a vegetation analysis comparing occupied territories and unoccupied, recently thinned areas. Using the line intercept method, we found significant differences in percent cover of shrub, herbaceous, and tree canopy of the two habitat types. This suggests that the enhanced habitat is currently unsuitable for Golden-wings. However, as ecological succession progresses, the enhanced area may become able to support a growing Golden-winged Warbler population. We plan to continue to track both the Golden-winged Warbler population and the vegetation changes on Brawley Mountain to better understand the temporal nature of this type of habitat and to determine the long-term effectiveness of environmental enhancement.