



SADDLEBACK: FRAGILE ALPINE ZONE

WHAT IS A FRAGILE ALPINE ZONE?

The alpine zone is a regional habitat that occurs above tree line at high elevations, where the climate is too cold and windy to support tree growth. Less than 1% of the New England's land area is in the alpine zone. These areas are isolated communities rich in diverse, unique plant and animal species. Due to the harsh mountain weather and geographical isolation, many of the species in these areas are rare or threatened.

Although alpine plant communities can withstand high winds, low temperatures, snow, and ice, they are damaged by hikers' footsteps. Walking off trail in the alpine zone kills plants, causes soil erosion, and

compacts the soil so that no plants can grow there. Some birds, including the Bicknell's Thrush and Blackpoll Warbler, rely on the alpine zone to survive. These tiny songbirds migrate to their wintering grounds in the Caribbean and South America, some flying more than 7,500 miles! Keep pets on leash to avoid disturbing these amazing birds.



Blackpoll Warbler
(*Setophaga striata*)



Alpine
Blueberry
(*Vaccinium boreale*)



Mountain Cranberry
(*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*)



Bigelow's Sedge
(*Carex bigelowii*)



Bicknell's Thrush
(*Catharus bicknelli*)



Cushion-plant
(*Diapensia lapponica*)



Sheep-laurel
(*Kalmia angustifolia*)

HELP TAKE CARE OF THE INCREDIBLE PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN THE ALPINE ZONE:



LEAVE NO TRACE.
PACK OUT WHATEVER YOU PACK IN.



DO NOT MODIFY OR BUILD NEW ROCK PILES.
THESE ARE OFFICIAL TRAIL MARKERS.



DOGS MUST BE ON LEASH.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG.



CAMPING IS PROHIBITED ABOVE TREE LINE.
CAMP ONLY AT DESIGNATED SITES.



STAY ON THE TRAIL. DO NOT DAMAGE FRAGILE
PLANTS AND SOILS IN THE ALPINE ZONE.

