

# Biocarta



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## THE CERULEAN WARBLER: A SPECIES SUSPENDED BETWEEN COFFEE AND COAL

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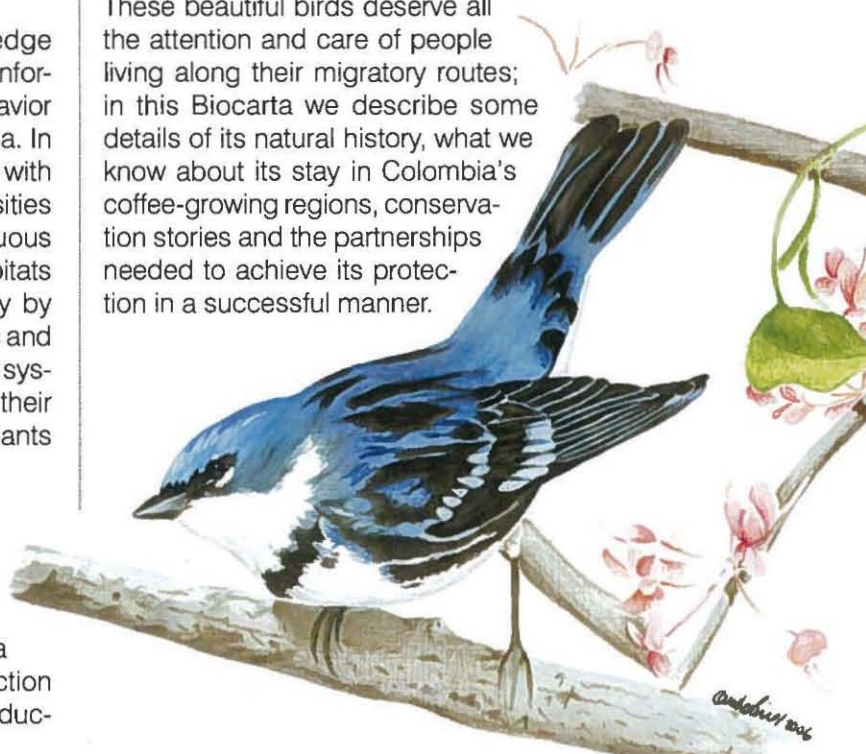
The Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) is a migratory bird whose fate depends on actions taken towards its conservation in the Andean regions, where coffee is produced, and in the northeastern United States, where coal is extracted. This brings two enormous challenges: first, we need to identify and take measures to adapt coffee-growing and coal-exploiting regions so that instead of threatening this species, they promote its conservation; second, we need cooperation among people working towards its conservation throughout the whole hemisphere.

Even with significant advances in knowledge about its distribution and preferred habitats, information gaps remain regarding migratory behavior and ecology during its stay in South America. In the coming years we need to identify areas with a high conservation priority and high densities of individuals, in order to implement continuous monitoring programs that teach us which habitats and landscapes can be used successfully by these birds. This research must result in tools and strategies to promote compatible productive systems and remnant ecosystems throughout their distribution range, while protecting those plants and animals that share their habitats.

There have also been advances in the formation of alliances and partnerships to work towards their conservation, including representatives from both regions, and a variety of actors interested both in the protection of migrant birds, and in the agricultural produc-

tivity of the regions they inhabit. Because of the economic and social importance of coffee in Colombia, to help the Cerulean Warbler we must find incentives for coffee-growers to take charge of their conservation process, and markets for biodiversity friendly coffee provide such opportunity. Being a migrant and vulnerable species, the Cerulean Warbler helps us get the attention of the international community, and the support to strive for environmental sustainability in Colombia's coffee industry.

These beautiful birds deserve all the attention and care of people living along their migratory routes; in this Biocarta we describe some details of its natural history, what we know about its stay in Colombia's coffee-growing regions, conservation stories and the partnerships needed to achieve its protection in a successful manner.





## Partnerships – Benefits and Challenges in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation

Carol Lively

### On the importance of the Cerulean and Golden-winged Warblers summits in the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia in Bogotá.

Paul B. Hamel

Cerulean Warbler is a bird with problems; this migratory bird lives in environments on which large numbers of people depend for an adequate productive livelihood, energy, high quality wood products, coffee, and cacao. Solving the biological problems of this species in its complex environments poses a difficult challenge. The Cerulean Warbler Technical Group was formed in 2001 to provide a forum to share information about this bird, and to identify and test solutions to the problems it faces. Members of this successful effort are dedicated to developing and sharing information in a spirit of mutual respect, open communication and trust. In October 2008 we visited Bogotá and San Vicente de Chucurí to meet with those colleagues that can better understand the conditions on the non-breeding grounds, seeking to forge partnerships between actors from the North American breeding grounds and actors from South and Central America; addressing the problems faced by the birds in socially responsible, and economically productive ways. We were joined by colleagues with similar aspirations for collaborative solutions to the problems of another migratory bird, the Golden-winged Warbler.

Why have partnerships become so important to conservation in the last few years? Financially and politically it makes sense to combine forces rather than work in isolation. Financial resources are scarce in the conservation world, and only by leveraging funding can we accomplish "on-the-ground" results. Confrontations and regulations by themselves may not provide the best solutions. Collaborative efforts that involve diverse partners result in more long-term and satisfactory conclusions. Partnerships are not always easy, however, and flexibility and compromise must be part of the process. Trust, regular and open communication, innovative thinking and commitment are critical. There are scores of thriving conservation partnerships world wide, that have broadened the impact of their conservation activities by including not only biological factors, but also social and economic factors, and work with private landowners and urban audiences. Collaboration, cooperation and cross border thinking about common conservation goals have become the tools that many people reach out for when beginning new projects. Whether it is for the Cerulean Warbler or other conservation objective, the first decade of the 21st century is seeing the benefits of these new and successful conservation partnerships.

**Sources of information.** Alianza Alas Doradas, Amanda Rodewald, American Bird Conservancy, Audubon Society, Birdlife International, Cornell University's Ornithology Lab, El Grupo Cerúleo, Fundación ProAves, Gabriel Colorado, Ken Rosenberg, Melinda Welton, Partners in Flight, Paula Caycedo, Paul Hamel, Pete Marra, The Nature Conservancy, Tomás Cuadros, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service and all other participants of the summit.

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