



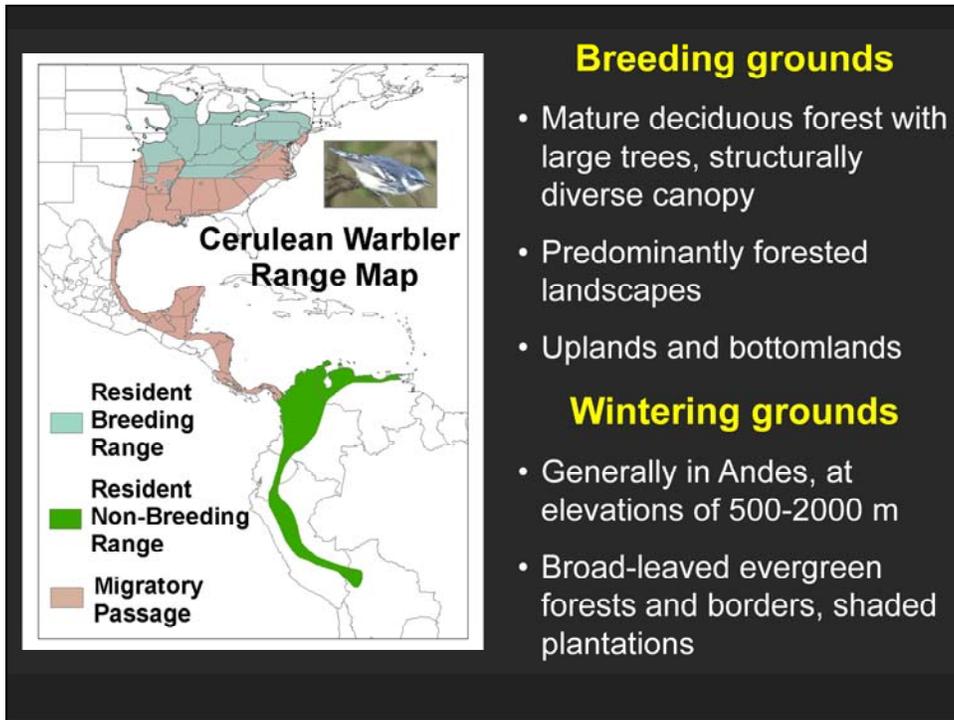
**Cerulean Warbler Technical Group:
coordinating international research
and conservation**

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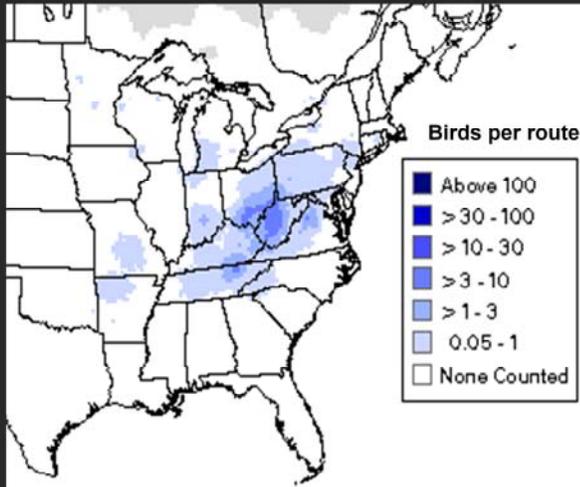
Setophaga cerulea

Our species has had a name change! Change published in 52nd Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds, published in *The Auk* this past July.



Some evidence that it's a trans-Gulf migrant, with some identified stopover locations in Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala.

Cerulean Warbler Breeding Range



Source: North American Breeding Bird Survey
Mean counts, 1994-2003

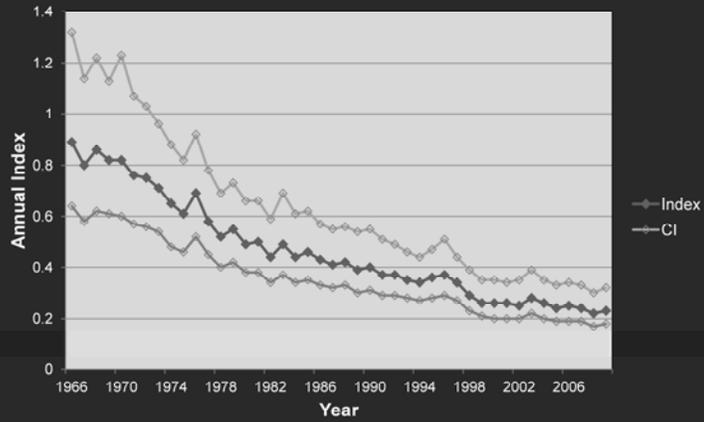


Highest mean abundance in the Ohio Hills & Cumberland Plateau physiographic areas



Cerulean Warbler Population Trends

North American Breeding Bird Survey



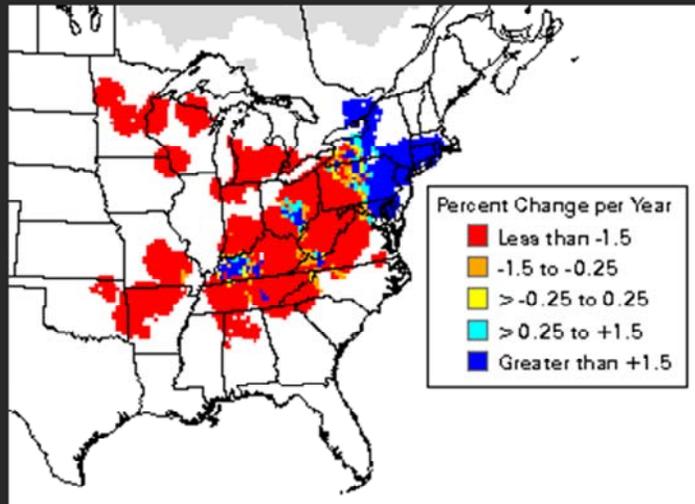
**-3.0 % per year
1966 – 2009**

Concerns about these population declines led environmental groups to petition the USFWS to list Cerulean Warbler as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Cerulean Warbler Population Trends

North American Breeding Bird Survey

1966-2003



significant declines in the core of the range

A Threatened Species?

Concerns about population declines led conservation groups to petition USFWS in 2000 to list Cerulean Warbler as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act





- Formed in June 2001
- Coalition of biologists, managers, and conservationists from federal & state agencies, NGOs, academia, and industry
- Goal: Develop a coordinated, comprehensive, biologically sound approach to Cerulean Warbler conservation



From the start, we wanted to include stakeholders. Cerulean Warblers generally live in forested landscapes, and the forest industry owns or manages a lot of land. We were hoping that forestry could be used to enhance habitats for the species. Much of the core breeding range is underlain by coal, and mountaintop removal has become the common mining technique.

Threats and Limiting Factors

Non-breeding season

- Habitat loss or degradation on wintering grounds and along migration routes
- Hazards during migration
 - Towers, power lines, windows, etc.
 - Hurricanes

We knew a lot less about Cerulean Warblers in the non-breeding season, but knew that land use changes were causing habitat loss or degradation on the wintering grounds and along migration routes. Hazards during migration not unique to CERW, but loom for any migratory species

Cerulean Warbler Summit, December 2002



National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, WV

Funded by U.S. Geological Survey

- **65 participants**
 - US, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela
- **Identified and prioritized information & conservation needs**
- **Developed action plans to address them**

Broadened scope beyond breeding grounds to consider issues relevant to CERW conservation on the wintering grounds

Cerulean Warbler Summit, December 2002



Committees established:

- Breeding Season Research
- Breeding Season Surveys & Monitoring
- Breeding Season Conservation
- Non-breeding Season Surveys, Research, & Conservation

Membership and participation in various committees flexible, but usually a core group of individuals involved, with others drawn in as needed or interested



El Grupo Cerúleo, Dec 2002

Cerulean Warbler Conservation Initiative

Launched in 2004 to address information needs

Funding support:

- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
 - Total \$1 million awarded, 2004-2007
 - Matched by contributions from participating institutions, forest industry, NGOs, individuals
- USDA Forest Service
- The Nature Conservancy



Launched to address a set of information needs that we felt were critical to focus on-the-ground conservation efforts

Cerulean Warbler Conservation Initiative **Completed or In Progress**

Breeding Season

- Collaborative research on CERW response to forest management
- Surveys on private lands in core breeding range
- Models of CERW distribution & abundance
- Forest management guidelines/BMPs
- Identify mined lands for reforestation to benefit CERW
- Meetings with forest and coal industries to discuss approaches/prescriptions for CERW conservation

Cerulean Warbler Conservation Initiative Completed or In Progress

Non-breeding Season

- Compile & map documented observations
- GIS workshop, Quito 2005
- Models of winter distribution
- Surveys on wintering grounds and at migration stopover sites in Central America
- Research on winter ecology and demography



Concurrent Activities

- Dec 2006: USFWS ruled that listing CERW as Threatened was not warranted, but committed to supporting collaborative conservation efforts
- Feb 2007: Cerulean Warbler Summit 2
 - Discuss general strategy for CERW conservation and management, set population objectives
- June 2007: Rangewide conservation action plan finalized



Morgantown, WV

Rangewide conservation action plan produced for USFWS Division of Migratory Bird Management

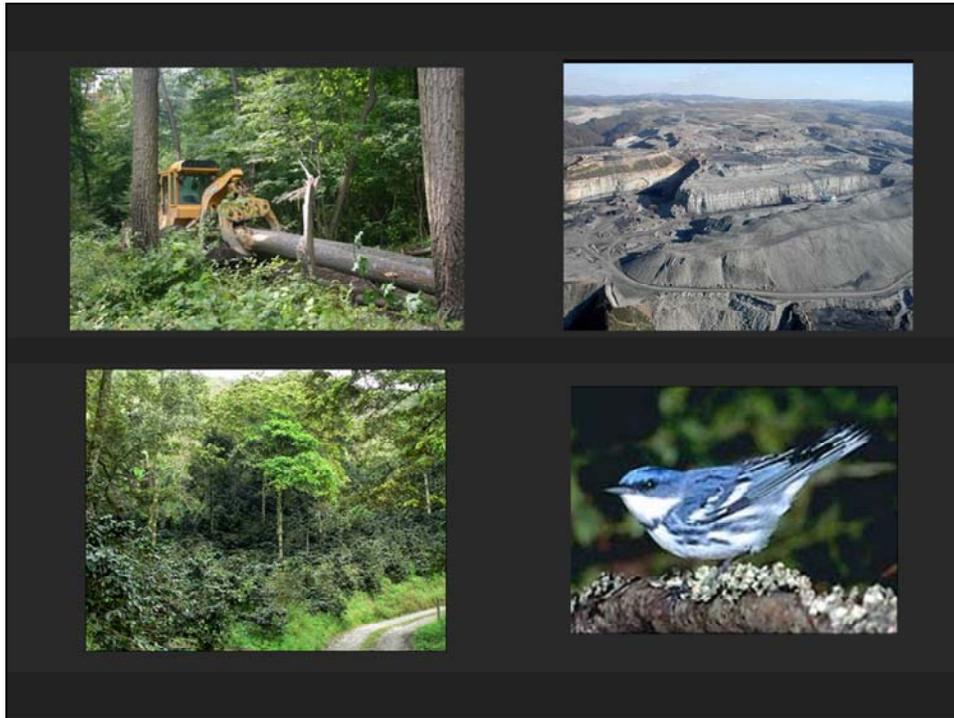
Concurrent Activities 2

- Oct 2008: CERW/GWWA Summit held in Bogotá and San Vicente de Chucurí, Colombia
 - Identify & prioritize remaining information needs, opportunities for conservation on non-breeding grounds



- New reserves established to protect CERW habitat, including first South American reserve for a North American-nesting songbird
- Conservation Plan for CERW non-breeding range

American Bird Conservancy and Fundación ProAves in Colombia played key roles



So, we've accomplished a lot in the past decade, and now need to move forward with on-the-ground conservation. To be successful, it's critical that we partner with industry: the forest and coal industries on the breeding grounds, and the coffee industry on the wintering grounds.



Research and surveys conducted in the past decade have added considerably to our knowledge of the species' ecology, demography, habitat use, and spatial distribution on both the breeding and non-breeding grounds. The talks in this afternoon's symposium will detail some of what we've learned, identify remaining information needs, describe initial on-the-ground conservation efforts, and discuss the opportunities and challenges for further conservation actions on the species' behalf.