

## Project Update: November 2009

Our first full field season began on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2009 and involved 2 months of intensive mist-netting and transects. Whilst the diversity of migrant species was not as high as expected, our data are showing that the Sierra is vital to certain migratory species in autumn. A striking example is that of the veery (*Catharus fuscescens*), a species with one of the longest migrations of all Neotropical migrants. Thousands of veery began arriving in the study area in early October 2009, many in poor condition after the long sea crossing from North America. Remarkably, in just 6-10 days these birds had deposited large fat stores by feasting on forest fruits and were ready to fly the final 3000 km to their wintering areas in southern Brazil! Veery captures/observations were concentrated in lowland forest, highlighting the need to protect the few remaining patches of lowland forest in the region.

