

Project Update: October 2009

The fieldwork component of this project is now well underway, and we already have some exciting findings. During 20 days in April 2009 we carried out a pilot study in the study region, during which we captured 236 individuals of 11 neotropical migrant species and recorded a further 9 species during transects.

This initial exploration suggested that for at least two species, Blackburnian warbler *Dendroica fusca* and gray-cheeked thrush *Catharus minimus*, the Sierra is a critical fuelling site for thousands of individuals prior to crossing the Caribbean in spring. These two species inhabit quite different habitats, with the former preferring montane forest from around 1000-2500 m whilst the later was primarily observed in lowland forest from 0-1000 m. This case highlights the need for forest protection across a range of altitudes in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.



Left: Blackburnian Warbler. Right: Gray-cheeked Thrush.