

**PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF
WILD ANIMALS**



A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of the entire population of *Dendroica caerulea* population in Appendix I

B. PROPONENT: Government of Peru

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1.1 | Classis | Aves |
| 1.2 | Ordo | Passeriformes |
| 1.3 | Familia | <i>Parulidae</i> |
| 1.4 | Species | <i>Dendroica caerulea</i> |
| 1.5 | Common name(s) | English: Cerulean Warbler
French: Fauvette azurée; Paruline azurée
Spanish: Bijirita azulosa; Verdín azulado; Gorjeador ceruleo;
Chipe ceruleo; Reinita cerulea |

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution

The entire population of this species migrates. It breeds in eastern and central Canada and in the United States of America. The species winters in north-eastern South America, mainly in a narrow altitudinal zone east of the Andes, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru; perhaps a few individuals migrate accidentally to northern Bolivia each year.

2.2 Population

The population is estimated at 560,000 individuals, and is thought to have undergone a rapid decline. In addition, it is listed as Vulnerable by IUCN.

2.3 Habitat

It breeds in mature deciduous forests, often in the vicinity of swamps. The nest is built in the branch of a tree. Migrating birds are recorded from a variety of forest woodland, secondary growth and scrub habitats. Wintering birds are found in Andean submontane forest, mainly between 1,000 and 2,000 meters altitude. In parts of its wintering habitat, the species apparently has an affinity towards native species of the Genus *Inga*, in the shade of traditional coffee plantations where the *Inga* is a dominant species and whose flowers attract a wealth of insects.

2.4 Migrations

On its migration route, the species passes through the Bahamas, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Caribbean regions of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama. It reaches its breeding grounds in spring (April), takes off around July, and arrives at its wintering grounds in early August.

3. **Threat data**

3.1 Direct threat

Some sources believe that nest parasitism by *Molothrus ater* is a major threat leading to a decline in the population. Little is known about the potential effects of pesticides and other toxic substances.

3.2 Habitat destruction

Degradation of habitat through land use changes is the major threat to this species. Conversion of deciduous mature forests to farmland or urban areas, fragmentation and isolation of remaining mature forests, change to shorter rotation periods and even-aged management, and loss of key tree species to disease, are all threats at the breeding grounds. Wintering habitat is also threatened by conversion to other land uses such as pasture land, subsistence crops and coffee plantations. Coca plantations have a detrimental effect on primary forest habitat. Attempts to eradicate coca plantations can also potentially damage forests. High-altitude mining is a known, but as yet uncontrollable threat.

3.3 Indirect threat

None known.

3.4 Threats connected especially with migrations

The species migrates at night and collisions with pylons or artificial structures are frequent; it is not known as of yet whether this has a significant impact on the population of this species. Adverse climatic conditions in the Gulf of Mexico are known to kill the birds on their migrations in either direction. Should hurricane frequency increase drastically as a consequence of climate change, for example, this could have a detrimental effect on the species and other species with similar habits.

3.5 National and international utilization

None known.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1 National protection status

The species is protected in most of its range states.

4.2 International protection status

Not listed in Appendix II of CMS.

4.3 Additional protection needs

States parties where the species is not specifically protected should remedy this. Since the species appears to rely on primary forest ecosystems in its wintering grounds, those should be formally protected: this is particularly pressing for key sites. Prior to any mining activities in its forest habitat, environmental impact assessments must be conducted to ensure that measures are taken to prevent habitat loss and mitigate other negative consequences.

5. **Range States¹**

Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Colombia, COSTA RICA, CUBA, ECUADOR, Guatemala, HONDURAS, Jamaica, Mexico, PANAMA, PERU, United States of America, Venezuela. Possibly also BOLIVIA.

6. **Comments from Range States**

7. **Additional remarks**

Even though the reproductive ecology and conservation status of the species have been widely studied in North America, very little is known about the species outside its breeding areas and period.

¹ CMS Parties in capitals.

8. References

- BirdLife International (2008) Species factsheet: *Dendroica cerulea*. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 20/6/2008.
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- Jones, J., P. Ramoni-Perazzi, E. H. Carruthers, & R. J. Robertson. 2000. Sociality and foraging behavior of the Cerulean Warbler in Venezuelan shade-coffee plantations. *Condor* 102: 958-962.
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- Robbins, C. S., J. W. Fitzpatrick, & P. B. Hamel. 1992. A warbler in trouble: *Dendroica cerulea*. Pp. 549–562 in Hagan, J. M., & D. W. Johnston (eds.). *Ecology and management of Neotropical migrant landbirds*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington DC.
- Veit, M. L., R. J. Robertson, P. B. Hamel, & V. L. Friesen. 2005. Population genetic structure and dispersal across a fragmented landscape in Cerulean Warblers (*Dendroica cerulea*). *Conserv. Genetics* 6: 159-174.