



## Park Flight and Migratory Bird Conservation



The Wilson's Warbler is a migratory bird species shared between North Cascades National Park (left) and Mombacho Volcano Natural Area in Nicaragua (right), both *Park Flight* project sites.

The U.S. National Park System provides habitat critical to many species of migratory birds, from raptors and shorebirds to songbirds. Continental and local declines in these bird populations have led to a concern for their future. Because these species use parks on a seasonal basis, their protection cannot be assured without conservation efforts occurring in the habitats the birds use throughout the year. This requires cooperative and coordinated efforts between the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean, such as the *Park Flight Migratory Bird Program*, to protect breeding, migration, and wintering habitats, as well as a proactive approach to migratory bird conservation within the National Park Service (NPS).

The assistance provided to U.S., Canadian, Latin American and Caribbean national parks and protected areas is integrated and projects focus on two areas relating to migratory birds: 1) species monitoring, protection, and management; and 2) park interpretation, environmental education, and outreach. Another component is technical assistance, including training workshops, personnel exchanges, and participation of Latin American Caribbean, and Canadian professionals in U.S. National Parks through the NPS Office of International Affairs Volunteers in Parks Program.

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*“Hemispheric solidarity is new among statesmen, but not among the feathered navies of the sky.”*

--Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

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The *Park Flight Program* works to protect shared migratory bird species and their habitats in U.S., Canadian, Latin American, and Caribbean national parks and protected areas through developing bird conservation and education projects and creating opportunities for technical exchange and cooperation. *Park Flight* is a partnership between NPS, the National Park Foundation, American Airlines, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and the University of Arizona. The program is made possible through the generous support of American Airlines, the NPS Natural Resource Challenge, and the *Park Flight* partners. Technical direction is provided through the University of Arizona Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit and the NPS Biological Resource Management Division.

The NPS migratory bird conservation efforts will include involvement in Partners in Flight activities, such as International Migratory Bird Day, and coordination with the North American Bird Conservation Initiative and other national and international bird conservation initiatives. The program will focus on migratory bird conservation efforts in U.S. National Parks, and enhance collaboration with other agencies and organizations on migratory bird conservation efforts, provide information regarding compliance with migratory bird legislation, and participate in bird conservation partnerships.

The *Park Flight Program* was selected in 2004 by former Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton to receive the Secretary's Four C's Award, and was selected in 2002 by former NPS Director Fran Mainella to receive the National Park Partnership Director's Award.

## U.S. *Park Flight* Projects

**Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, California** - Partners in Protection: A Cooperative Approach to Conserving Migratory Birds

**North Cascades National Park, Washington** - Promote Conservation and Education of Neotropical Migratory Birds; Assess Black Swift Breeding Habitat in North Cascades and Teach about Neotropical Migratory Birds

**Bandelier National Monument, Pecos National Historical Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument, Capulin Volcano National Monument, Fort Union National Monument, New Mexico** - Assess Neotropical Birds and Provide Educational Field Trips to Five Parks; Continue to Assess Neotropical Birds and Provide Educational Park Field Trips

**New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route, New Jersey** - Preserving Oases Along the Flyway: Critical Stopover Habitat in New Jersey for Migrating Songbirds, Phase I and II

**Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio** - Managing Park Forests for Viable Songbird Populations; Assessing Quality of Grassland and Shrubland Habitats for Birds

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee** - Conduct an Assessment of Golden-winged Warblers at Purchase Knob and Provide Public Education; Conduct an Assessment of Cerulean Warblers in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Provide Public Education

**Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, California** - Conservation of Neotropical Migratory Birds in Riparian Habitat

**Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Alaska** - Assess Landbird Species Diversity, Density and Habitat within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve



NPS and NFWF provide technical assistance to biologists and park rangers for a bird monitoring training in Honduras. *Park Flight* has provided technical assistance to eight countries.



Salvadora Morales, a *Park Flight* intern from Nicaragua, leads a migratory bird interpretive walk in Sequoia and Kings Canyon. *Park Flight* has hosted 34 interns from ten countries.

## Latin American and Caribbean *Park Flight* Projects

**Parque Ecológico de la Ciudad de México, Mexico** - Bird Education and Outreach at Ajusco Medio, Phase I and II

**Parque Deportivo Ecológico Cayalá; Área Protegida de Cerro San Gil, Guatemala** - Educational School Trips on Bird Conservation in Cayala Ecological Park; Capacity Building for Neotropical Bird Conservation in Guatemala

**Parque Nacional Montecristo and Parque Nacional El Imposible; Parque Nacional Los Volcanes and Area Protegida Barra de Santiago, El Salvador** - Environmental Education for Bird Conservation in El Imposible and Montecristo National Parks; Strengthening Bird Conservation in Eastern El Salvador

**Reserva Natural Volcan Mombacho; Reserva Natural Chocoyero-El Brujo, Nicaragua** - Birds, Cloud Forest and Coffee Plantations: Environmental Interpretation in Mombacho Volcano Natural Area; Environmental Interpretation and Promotion of Tourism Services for the Sustainability of the Chocoyero-El Brujo Nature Reserve

**Parque Nacional Cerro Azul Meambar, Honduras** - Training of Honduran Biologists and Park Guards in Field Techniques for Bird Conservation

**Bahía de Panamá, Parque Internacional La Amistad, Parque Nacional Santa Fe, Parque Nacional Chagras; Parque Natural Metropolitano, Panama** - Community-based Conservation of Panama's Birds; Canal to Canal: Panama-Ohio Migratory Bird Trail

**Protected Coastal Areas of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay** - Strengthening Provincial and National Park Guard Knowledge on Migratory Bird Monitoring and Conservation in Argentina

**Grenada (island-wide)** - Grenada Pride Campaign with Rare

For more information, contact the Biological Resource Management Division at the Natural Resource Program Center, 970/225-3592 or *Park Flight* Program Coordinator, Carol Beidleman, 970/586-3776 or BeidlemanC@aol.com.