



Canada warbler

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

FUNDACIÓN JOCOTOCO: CONSERVING STATE PRIORITY FOREST BIRDS IN ECUADOR

For dozens of Neotropical migratory bird species, the key to full annual cycle survival lies thousands of miles south of their North American breeding grounds. Ecuador—a country roughly the size of Nevada—is one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, providing essential wintering habitat for 105 forest-breeding migratory bird species. To protect these vital habitats, Fundación Jocotoco has been leading the charge in Ecuador. Established in 1998, Jocotoco is a premier Ecuadorian conservation organization renowned for its strategic approach to habitat protection and community-led stewardship.

Supporting Shared Migratory Birds Through Southern Wings: Through Southern Wings, state fish and wildlife agencies have partnered with Fundación Jocotoco, American Bird Conservancy (ABC), and other local partners to support critical projects in Ecuador. Many of the migratory species that rely on Jocotoco's network of reserves are identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) across U.S. State Wildlife Action Plans. Key species benefiting from these efforts include Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Blackburnian Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, and Western Wood-Pewee.

By investing in wintering habitat protection and community-led stewardship in Ecuador through Southern Wings, state agencies ensure that the migratory birds we enjoy during the spring and summer breeding seasons have secure habitat throughout their entire annual cycle.

Strategic Conservation: Conserving Key Habitats: Jocotoco's primary strategy centers on the strategic acquisition and management of private reserves in high-priority ecosystems. Today, the foundation manages a network of 19 nature reserves protecting over 120,000 acres—ranging from high-altitude



cerulean warbler



olive-sided flycatcher

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Andean cloud forests to lowland Chocoan rainforests. A key element of Jocotoco's success is purchasing land adjacent to existing national parks, such as Antisana and Sumaco National Parks. By expanding protection right next to public reserves, Jocotoco creates continuous habitat corridors that dramatically amplify the total acreage protected for wildlife.

Linking Habitat and Community Stewardship: Effective conservation goes beyond reserve boundaries. Recognizing that land-use practices on surrounding private and agricultural lands directly impact bird habitat, Jocotoco works closely with local landowners, farmers, and local communities:

- **Shade-Grown Coffee & Cacao:** By pairing ecological restoration with sustainable agriculture, Jocotoco helps local farmers transition to bird-friendly shade-coffee and shade-cacao systems. Planting native shade trees in agricultural matrices provides critical habitat and connectivity for migratory birds while creating sustainable revenue for local families.
- **Habitat Restoration:** Through tree nurseries and active reforestation efforts, millions of native trees have been planted across degraded lands, restoring habitat connectivity across productive landscapes.
- **Community Engagement:** Working with local cooperatives and communities helps build long-term local capacity, ensuring ecosystems and watersheds are protected in perpetuity for both wildlife and people



LEARN MORE:

- **Watch the Video:** Learn more about Fundación Jocotoco's landscape-scale conservation work in the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Jocotoco Video Feature](#).
- **Impact Report:** Read [Fundación Jocotoco's 2025 Impact Report](#) to see their latest conservation milestones.

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