

Key Forest Areas for Threatened Birds in Latin America



Map Projection: Interrupted Goode's Homolosine

Citation: World Resources Institute - PAGE, 2000

Notes:

Analytical Overview:

BirdLife International identified Key Areas on the basis of documented evidence for, or strong likelihood of, an extant population of the species in question. Preference was given to sites that were larger, more intact, already protected, or that would ensure representation of the entire range of a species. If the Key Areas identified by BirdLife International were to be adequately protected, the conservation of 280 (97 percent) of threatened species in the Neotropics would be greatly advanced. Throughout the Neotropics, according to BirdLife International, the primary threat to birds is habitat loss or alteration. Almost 75 percent of the threatened species are regarded as threatened in part because of habitat loss, while 48 percent are regarded as threatened solely because of habitat loss. In addition, hunting is an important component of the threat profile for 15 percent of species, and trade is a threat to 11 percent. Neither of these factors is believed to be the sole threat facing any species.

Map Description:

BirdLife International has mapped the location of about 7,000 sites where threatened bird species are known to occur and, using a set of criteria, reduced these sites to a smaller list of 596 Key Areas for these species. The forest ecosystems of the non-Caribbean Neotropics provide exceptionally rich habitat for birds. Approximately 3,600 species inhabit the region, of which 290 (8 percent) are listed as threatened in *Threatened Birds of the Americas* (Collar et al., 1992). These 290 species represent 25 percent of all threatened bird species in the world. Map 12 shows the Key Areas that are the most important areas currently known for the conservation of threatened birds in the Neotropics (Wege and Long, 1995). The three main habitat types that support the threatened birds in the region are wet forest, dry forest, and grassland areas. Of the 596 Key Areas, more than 70 percent are in forests. The Atlantic coastal forests of Brazil are of critical importance; the majority of Key Areas in the country support populations of 10 or more endangered species. The northern Andes and adjacent lowlands, particularly in western Colombia, are also highlighted. Wet forests support two to four times as many threatened bird species as other habitat types. Dry forests, which include deciduous forest and dry scrub, are of most importance in southwest Ecuador and northwest Peru. Another important cluster of dry forests is found in the states of Central Brazil; many of these forests have been badly damaged by clearance for agriculture and charcoal production.

Source:

1. Wege, D.C., and A.J. Long. Key Areas for Threatened Birds in the Neotropics.