

With a minute range in the montane forests of north-east Venezuela, this warbler is currently known from just one area within a national park. The forests in this region are being extensively depleted.

DISTRIBUTION The Grey-headed Warbler, like a number of other threatened birds (see White-tailed Sabrewing *Campylopterus curvipennis* account for details), is restricted to the Cordillera de Caripe which runs along the borders of north-easternmost Anzoátegui, Monagas and Sucre states of north-east Venezuela.

This species has been recorded from an area of c.350 km², with localities (roughly from south-west to north-east and coordinates from Paynter 1982) as follows: Cerro Peonía (10°11'N 64°07'W), November 1941 (see Remarks); Cerro Turumiquire (10°07'N 63°52'W, the summit being in Monagas), where a male was taken at 2,410 m in 1925 (Chapman 1925), with five males and 10 females (in FMNH, LSUMZ) taken between 1,525 and 2,440 m during February and March 1932, and five birds (in COP) taken between 1,850 and 1,950 m in February 1963; La Trinidad (c.10°12'N 63°57'W), which was apparently a coffee plantation (Chapman 1925) on the northern slope of Cerro Turumiquire, where three birds were collected in 1925 (Chapman 1925) with another three (in COP) taken between 1,700 and 1,750 m from late January to early February 1963; Carapas (c.10°12'N 63°56'W; also on the northern slope of Cerro Turumiquire, and adjacent to La Trinidad, Sucre), where three birds were taken at c.1,700 m in 1925 (Chapman 1925); "Los Palmales" (c.10°17'N 63°45'W; apparently in the mountains near San Antonio, between Campo Alegre and Caripe), where a specimen was taken in December 1898 (Chapman 1899); Cerro Negro (c.10°14'N 63°30'W), where 15 birds (in COP, USNM) were collected between 1,400 and 1,600 m during August 1943, with birds recorded fairly frequently there until April 1991 (M. L. Goodwin *in litt.* 1992: see Threats under White-tailed Sabrewing); "in the neighbourhood of Caripe" (c.10°12'N 63°29'W; on the eastern slope at the eastern end of the coastal range, Monagas), where the type-specimen was collected in June 1867 (Sclater and Salvin 1868a), presumably on the slopes of Cerro Negro (10 km to the north-west).

POPULATION Almost nothing has been published concerning the abundance of this species, although Sclater and Salvin (1868a) reported the original collector finding the bird "very rare" in 1867. Ridgely and Tudor (1989) maintained that it is "scarce in what little remains of its... habitat": this conclusion is certainly supported by the almost total absence of recent observations, but the fact that 15 birds were taken between 20 February and 9 March 1932 on Cerro Turumiquire with another 15 between 7 and 25 August 1943 on Cerro Negro suggests that in suitable habitat the Grey-headed Warbler was not uncommon. The species was recorded relatively frequently on Cerro Negro until April 1991 (M. L. Goodwin *in litt.* 1992), although the numbers involved are unknown. Ridgely and Tudor (1989) suggested that habitat destruction has had a severe impact on the overall numbers of this species.

ECOLOGY This warbler is essentially unknown in life (Ridgely and Tudor 1989), although Meyer de Schauensee and Phelps (1978) mentioned that it has been recorded from cloud-forest, second growth and clearings where it forages in "the lower tier of the trees"; however, contrary to both these sources (which give elevations of 1,200-1,600 m), the Grey-headed Warbler has been recorded from between 1,200 and 2,440 m, with the majority of specimens taken between 1,400 and 2,100 m (see Distribution). Chapman (1925) described the area around Carapas (1,700 m) and the adjacent coffee plantation at La Trinidad as having "a few natural clearings filled with bramble and bracken-fern... between extensive stands of forest"; at this altitude the first tree-ferns appeared. The slopes of Cerro Turumiquire were described as precipitous and covered with "tangled vegetation", the upper slopes carrying heavy forest (Chapman 1925). The humid forest of El Guácharo National Park contains the following common trees: *Eugenia* sp., *Byrsonima martinicensis*, *Gustavia augusta*, with species of *Lecthidaceae* dominating; and associated with these trees are tree-ferns, many epiphytes, *Peperomia* spp., *Araceae* spp., *Piperaceae* spp., *Orchidaceae* spp., *Ericaceae* spp., with *Blechnum l'herminieri* apparently the commonest species (CNPPA 1982). Unfortunately, no details have been published on the recent observations around Cerro Negro (see Population), although these could obviously add significantly to current knowledge.

THREATS Extensive deforestation of this species's montane forest habitat over much of its known range is the main threat to the Grey-headed Warbler, and has presumably had a great impact on its abundance;

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the fact that forest understorey, possibly its chief habitat, is often cleared (for coffee cultivation) also suggests that it is at grave risk (Ridgely and Tudor 1989: see equivalent section under White-tailed Sabrewing for details of the threats in the Cordillera de Caripe).

MEASURES TAKEN El Guácharo National Park (82,900 ha) covers Cerro Negro and nearby areas, where birds were recorded up until April 1991 (see Population; also Threats and equivalent section under White-tailed Sabrewing).

MEASURES PROPOSED The current status of the Grey-headed Warbler is in urgent need of assessment: surveys must be undertaken on and around Cerro Negro (as a priority) to determine whether a viable population exists in the national park, and also on Cerro Turumiquire, which appears to have been the bird's other main "stronghold" (see Distribution). Its ecological requirements are essentially unknown, as is the status of remaining habitat. All studies and initiatives should if possible integrate with work on all five threatened species in this area (see Threats under White-tailed Sabrewing).

REMARKS Two specimens (in COP) collected at 1,200 m on 30 November 1941 are seemingly labelled "Cerro Peonía, Bergantín": Bergantín (10°01'N 64°22'W, and at c.300 m) is c.35 km south-west (calculated from the coordinates) of Cerro Peonía (10°11'N 64°07') and was presumably used as a base for collecting trips to the cerro (which stands astride the borders of Anzoátegui, Monagas and Sucre).