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## *Celebrating our Student Researchers!*

*September 2010*

Richard Chandler successfully defended his dissertation titled, "Avian Ecology and Conservation in Tropical Agricultural Landscapes with Emphasis on the Golden-winged Warbler" on August 30, 2010, satisfying the requirements for a Doctoral degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation at the University of Massachusetts. Work was conducted in collaboration with the Mesoamerican Development Institute and the Montes de Oro Coffee Cooperative with funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Division of Habitat Conservation and the US Forest Service Office of International Programs.

Richard's dissertation includes analysis of 2,298 birds of 148 species captured in mistnets that show that Integrated Open Canopy (IOC) coffee, in which an amount of forest equal to the area of cultivated coffee provides habitat for many forest species that do not occur in shade coffee. This provides a promising new strategy for stemming the losses in tropical biodiversity associated with advancing agricultural development.

Richard also collected several years of data on winter ecology of the Golden-winged Warbler, a Neotropical migrant that breeds in the US and spends the winter in Latin America. The Golden-winged Warbler is considered by many as the most threatened Neotropical migrant species not already protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

This research was a phenomenal accomplishment from both a logistical standpoint, as well as its potential contribution to the conservation of this species, which had never been studied systematically during the non-breeding season.

Richard has accepted a Post Doctoral Research Fellowship at the esteemed USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center where he will be working with scientists from both the USGS and the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center on a variety of cutting edge in bird conservation issues.

