

ECOLOGICAL DISRUPTION IN MOTION

A Warning from the Birds

February, 2009

The long-term threats of global climate change—though widely accepted as real—continue to be mistakenly perceived as far off in both time and locale. But new analyses by Audubon scientists reveal that 40 years of avian habitat shifts add up to a very different message: Ecological disruptions caused by climate change have been happening across North America for decades and are having a measurable and visible impact on familiar bird species.

Nearly 60% of species that winter in North America have moved northward or inland, with climate playing a likely role in shifts that can exceed hundreds of miles. Arizona's wintering birds' ranges often fluctuate in response to food availability and drought—and these variables may be exacerbated by climate change. Though implications for individual species can appear benign, the long-term environmental disruptions they portend are serious for birds, other wildlife and people alike.

Visit www.birdsandclimate.org to learn more on findings and to join Audubon's campaign to curb global warming and shape a better future for birds and all life on Earth. Global climate change is happening now. What happens tomorrow is up to us.

ARIZONA BIRDS SHOW THE SIGNS



CACTUS WREN (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*)

The Cactus Wren, Arizona's state bird, has expanded northward from its traditional desert home into the scrubby grasslands near Prescott. Greater Roadrunner and Curve-billed Thrasher, two other desert denizens, are now found further north in the Verde valley and in the Prescott area as well.



BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*)

Water birds such as the Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal, White-faced Ibis, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, and Long-billed Curlew normally winter further south than Arizona. All have recently taken advantage of warmer winters, and many individuals now end their southward migration here in our state.



VERMILLION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

The brilliant Vermillion Flycatcher is one of several flycatcher species pushing their established breeding ranges further north. Along with the Vermillion, the Sulfur-bellied Flycatcher and the Tropical Kingbird are both being noted further north and are reported more frequently during breeding season than in previous years.



SCALED QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*)

Many grassland dwellers, such as the Scaled Quail, have NOT shown range expansions. It is likely that they would move north, but that no suitable habitat exists there. The combination of global warming and ongoing habitat loss will result in continued declines for grassland birds.

Help Arizona Birds and Habitats in a Shifting Climate



- **Take Action!** Urge our elected officials to make global warming a top priority by signing our petition at birdsandclimate.org. Voice your support for new approaches to help solve global warming, move us toward a 100 percent clean energy future, reduce our dependence on oil, and protect our environment.
- **Support conservation** initiatives that protect and restore essential bird habitat. Audubon Arizona's Important Bird Areas (IBA) program is building a statewide network of conservation stewards. Volunteer to get involved in your community.
- **Become a citizen scientist.** By taking part in Audubon's Christmas Bird Count or the Great Backyard Bird Count in February, you can provide scientists with the data they need to monitor the impacts of global warming and other environmental threats to birds.

Join the Fight Against Global Warming



- **Join Audubon Arizona!** Learn about native birds & help us monitor them!
- **Join Audubon's activist team** and urge our policy-makers to make climate change a top priority by signing our petition at www.birdsandclimate.org.
- **Streamline your own energy profile.** There are many things you can do to make a difference. Visit Audubon.org and Tucsonaudubon.org for ideas.