Western Rivers Action Network
Arizona’s Important Bird Areas

Audubon’s Important Bird Area Program

Founded by BirdLife International and managed in the United States by the National Audubon Society, the Important Bird Area (IBA) Program identifies a network of sites critical to maintaining the long-term viability of wild bird populations while engaging the public to conserve those areas of critical habitat.

Arizona contributes 48 sites to this network of over 8,000 sites in 178 countries. Many of these sites depend on the health of the Colorado River and its tributaries.

The Colorado River

The Colorado River alone supports three continentally-designated and four globally-designated IBAs. Within these IBA’s, critical marshland and riparian habitat support several species of concern including the California Black Rail, Yuma Ridgway’s Rail, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Colorado River Important Bird Areas

- Cibola National Wildlife Refuge
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=340
- Imperial National Wildlife Refuge
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=411
- Havasu National Wildlife Refuge
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=386
- Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=272
- Mittry Lake State Wildlife Area
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=490
- Imperial Reservoir
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=422
- Imperial National Wildlife Refuge:
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=411
- Lower Colorado River Gadsen Riparian Area
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=436
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The Verde River

The Verde River and its watershed are vital to Arizona’s birds. In fact, the river and its watershed support 78% of the United States’ breeding bird species. In addition, over 50 miles of the Verde are included in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Verde River Important Bird Areas

- Upper Verde River State Wildlife Area
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=685
- Lower Oak Creek
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=444
- Tuzigoot
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=638
- Salt/Verde Riparian Ecosystem
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=953

The San Pedro River

The San Pedro River is one of Arizona’s greatest treasures. It supports one of the best examples of desert riparian habitat in the southwestern United States, hosts the largest intact mesquite bosque community in Arizona, has one of the highest densities of breeding Western Yellow-billed Cuckoos in the United States, and is one of only four major north-south migratory bird corridors in the southwest.

San Pedro River Important Bird Areas

- San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area: http://aziba.org/?page_id=539
- Lower San Pedro River
  http://aziba.org/?page_id=461