



Western Rivers Action Network

Arizona

The Colorado River

- In 2013, American Rivers named the Colorado America's Most Endangered River.
- The Bureau of Reclamation reported in December, 2012, that **there is not enough water in the Colorado River to meet the basin's current water demands or future demand.**
- **The Colorado River fuels six state's economies**, including Arizona's, and provides more jobs than the 19th largest employer on the *Fortune 500* list.
- **Virtually all of Arizona's rivers, including the Verde, San Pedro, Santa Cruz, Little Colorado, and Gila, are part of the Colorado River Watershed.** This means that **decisions made on any of these waterways will ultimately affect the health of the Colorado.**
- **The Central Arizona Project brings about 1.5 million acre-feet of water from the Colorado to Pima, Pinal, and Maricopa Counties each year.**
- **About 25 percent of Arizona's water comes directly from the Colorado River.** This does not include water from the State's others rivers and watersheds that is intercepted before it reaches the Colorado.
- **Outdoor recreation on the Colorado river supports 234,000 jobs across its basin, provides \$26 billion in economic output, and contributes \$3.2 billion in federal, state, and local taxes each year.**
- **36 million adults use the Colorado River and its tributaries for recreational activities** including picnicking, trail activities, wildlife watching, camping, fishing, water sports, bicycling and snow sports each year.
- The Colorado River **generates \$17.0 billion in retail sales.**
- The Colorado River provides enough state and local tax revenues to **fund over 29,000 teacher positions.**
- The Colorado River **creates \$10.4 billion in annual earnings, salaries, and wages.**
- **The fertile delta of the Colorado River in Mexico has been reduced** from its historical size of over 3,000 square miles **down to just 250 square miles.**
- **On Lake Mead and Lake Powell**, two of the Colorado River's major reservoirs, **bathtub-ring like mineral deposits formed by historic water levels tower nearly 100 feet over the current water levels.**
- **In Arizona alone, the Colorado River supports three continentally-designated and four globally-designated Important Bird Areas.** Species of concern that depend on these areas include California black rail, Yuma clapper rail, western yellow-billed cuckoo, and southwestern willow flycatcher.
- **Several species of native and federally endangered fish**, including the Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, bony-tail chub, and humpback chub, **depend upon the Colorado River for their continued survival.**



The western yellow-billed cuckoo: once a common bird along Arizona's rivers, this iconic riparian species was listed as a threatened species in 2014.

Photo Credit: Hunter McCall



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Arizona's Rivers



Where to Find More Information:

[Audubon Arizona](http://az.audubon.org), az.audubon.org

[Western Rivers Action Network - Arizona](http://az.audubon.org/western-rivers-action-network-0), az.audubon.org/western-rivers-action-network-0

[Maricopa Audubon Society](http://maricopa.audubon.org), maricopa.audubon.org

[Tucson Audubon Society](http://tucson.audubon.org), tucson.audubon.org

[Northern Arizona Audubon Society](http://northernarizona.audubon.org), northernarizona.audubon.org

[Huachuca Audubon Society](http://huachuca.audubon.org), huachuca.audubon.org

[Yuma Audubon Society](http://yuma.audubon.org), yuma.audubon.org

[Prescott Audubon Society](http://prescott.audubon.org), prescott.audubon.org

[White Mountain Audubon Society](http://whitemountain.audubon.org), whitemountain.audubon.org

[Sonoran Audubon Society](http://sonora.audubon.org), sonora.audubon.org

[Desert Rivers Audubon Society](http://desertrivers.audubon.org), desertrivers.audubon.org

[Trout Unlimited - Arizona](http://az-tu.org), az-tu.org

[Arizona Wildlife Federation](http://azwildlife.org), azwildlife.org

[Arizona Important Bird Areas Program](http://aziba.org), aziba.org

[Havasu National Wildlife Refuge IBA](#)

[Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge IBA](#)

[Cibola National Wildlife Refuge IBA](#)

[Imperial National Wildlife Refuge IBA](#)

[Imperial Reservoir IBA](#)

[Mittry Lake State Wildlife Area IBA](#)

[Lower Colorado River Gadsden Riparian IBA](#)

Join Audubon's Western Rivers Action Network as we rise to this historic challenge to create healthier western rivers for birds, other wildlife, and people.

<http://audubonaction.org/western-rivers>

For more information contact Arizona's WRAN coordinator Sarah Luna at lsarah@msn.com