



# Western Rivers Action Network

## Arizona

### The Santa Cruz River

- The **over 8,000 square mile Santa Cruz River watershed covers 10% of Arizona and includes Tucson.**
- The Santa Cruz is **a river of international significance**, heading south from its headwaters in Arizona's San Rafael Valley, making a 25-mile loop through Sonora, Mexico, and returning to the United States near Nogales.
- **Extensive groundwater pumping for municipal and agricultural use has resulted in no flow conditions** along many of the Santa Cruz's once perennial and intermittent reaches.
- **Water pumping in the Santa Cruz watershed has dropped the water table beneath Tucson by 250 feet, draining the majority of the springs and cienegas** that once existed between Tubac and Tucson.
- The **majority of the perennially-flowing reaches of the Santa Cruz receive their flow from treated wastewater** being returned to the river.
- There are **four wastewater treatment plants releasing treated effluent into the Santa Cruz river** - one in Santa Cruz County and three in Pima County.
- The Santa Cruz watershed **contains eight designated Wilderness Areas and supports 22 threatened and endangered species** including the Sonoran tiger salamander, southwestern willow flycatcher, and Gila topminnow.
- The **Upper Santa Cruz River Important bird Area supports several species of concern that are rare in the United States** including nesting western yellow-billed cuckoo and gray hawk.



Western yellow-billed cuckoo, George Andreko, AZGFD



Gila River Basin: Kmusser (2007) Wikimedia Commons



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## FACT SHEET

### Arizona

### 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
- [Tucson Audubon Society](http://tucsonaudubon.org), tucsonaudubon.org
- [Huachuca Audubon Society](http://huachuca-audubon.org), huachuca-audubon.org
- [Sonoran Audubon Society](http://sonoranaudubon.org), sonoranaudubon.org
- [Trout Unlimited - Arizona](http://az-tu.org), az-tu.org
- [Arizona Wildlife Federation](http://azwildlife.org), azwildlife.org
- [Upper Santa Cruz River IBA](http://aziba.org), aziba.org
- [Friends of the Santa Cruz River](http://friendsofsantacruzriver.org), friendsofsantacruzriver.org

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>

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