

Western Rivers Action Network

Protecting rivers across the Colorado River Basin



Ridgway's Rail.

Photo: Emerald Louise, Great Backyard Bird Count



Gila River Basin.

Photo: Knusser, Wikimedia Commons



Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

Photo: Mary Miguez/Audubon Photography Awards

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 states' 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.**

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ARIZONA NEW MEXICO

Gila River Basin.

Photo: Knusser, Wikimedia Commons



Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

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- **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 Ridgway's 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.**

- [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://desert.audubon.org), desert.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](http://aziba.org/?page_id=386), http://aziba.org/?page_id=386
- [Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=272), http://aziba.org/?page_id=272
- [Cibola National Wildlife Refuge IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=340), http://aziba.org/?page_id=340
- [Imperial National Wildlife Refuge IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=411), http://aziba.org/?page_id=411
- [Imperial Reservoir IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=422), http://aziba.org/?page_id=422
- [Mittrey Lake State Wildlife Area IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=490), http://aziba.org/?page_id=490
- [Lower Colorado River Gadsden Riparian IBA](http://aziba.org/?page_id=436), http://aziba.org/?page_id=436

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