

Lower Oak Creek

IBA web pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/lower-oak-creek http://aziba.org/?page_id=444
Priority	State
Qualifying Criteria	<p>D1: Site Important to Special Status Avian Species (<i>Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Yellow Warbler, MacGillivray’s Warbler, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Gila Woodpecker, Abert’s Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Bell’s Vireo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Virginia’s Warbler, Lucy’s Warbler, Common Black-Hawk</i>)</p> <p>D3: Rare, Unique, or Exceptional Representative Habitat/Ecological Community (Low-elevation Riparian)</p> <p>D4vii: Important migratory stop-over/seasonal concentration for migratory land birds (<i>Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Lucy’s Warbler, MacGillivray’s Warbler, Virginia’s Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Hammond’s Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Western Tanager, Nashville Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler</i>)</p>
IBA Polygon Center Point (Latitude, Longitude)	34.7932° N: 111.9001° W
Size	3,685 acres
County	Yavapai
Local Communities	Sedona, Cornville, Village of Oak Creek
Description	<p>Oak Creek begins as a fissure on the Mogollon Rim and drains a riparian wooded canyon linking the Colorado Plateau to the upper Sonoran Desert. Lower Oak Creek emerges from the steep canyon walls among the red ramparts of Sedona - just a mile or two upstream of Red Rock State Park and meanders the next several miles to Page Springs where it meets the onrush of 21st century development. Most of the surrounding land is managed by the U.S. Forest Service (Coconino National Forest) interspersed with a few small private in-holdings in the riparian zone. The 175-acre Arizona Game and Fish Department property, Page Springs Fish Hatchery, comprises riparian gallery (cottonwood/willow/sycamore), mesquite/hackberry bosque, recovering floodplain terrace, and upslope prickly pear grassland. Other mature riparian gallery forests on well-developed floodplains occur at Echo Valley, Hidden Valley, Deer Creek, and Red Rock State Park. The identified IBA is the river</p>

	<p>corridor, extending upslope to approximately the rim level on either side of the river, from Red Rock State Park south to just south of Page Springs Fish Hatchery. Northern Arizona Audubon Society (NAAS) and AGFD jointly manage the vegetated land at Page Springs for the benefit and diversity of wildlife. A public-access trail system with educational signage has been put in place and plant restoration programs are on-going. The Northern Arizona Audubon Society is the steward for this site. More information about Northern Arizona Audubon Society and how you can help as a volunteer can be found at http://www.nazas.org/</p>
<p>Mission/Goals</p>	<p>To conserve and protect an exceptional example of low-elevation riparian habitat and the populations of breeding and migratory birds that depend on it.</p>
<p>Current Habitat Conservation, Planning, and Management Activities</p>	<p>At Page Springs Fish Hatchery near the southern end of the IBA, the Northern Arizona Audubon Society and the Arizona Game and Fish Department jointly manage the vegetated land at Page Springs for the benefit and diversity of wildlife.</p> <p>Red Rock State Park, also within the IBA, is a 286-acre nature preserve and environmental education center with a mission to preserve the riparian habitat of Oak Creek, provide environmental education and limited passive recreation.</p> <p>On the US Forest Service lands within this IBA, efforts are under way to control Russian olive, tamarisk and other invasive/non-native plants that are preventing re-colonization of native plants following flooding.</p> <p>The Northern Arizona Audubon Society is the steward for this site. More information about Northern Arizona Audubon Society and how you can help as a volunteer can be found at http://www.nazas.org/</p>
<p>Land Cover Type¹ (%) and Associated Priority² Birds</p> <p>¹Southwest Regional Gap Analysis modified to align with ABBA/SWAP habitat types</p> <p>²AGFD SGCN and IBA Qualifying Species</p>	<p>51.27 Pinyon Pine-Juniper Woodland (<i>Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Virginia’s Warbler, Gray Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler</i>)</p> <p>18.56 Semiarid/Sonoran Savannah Grassland (<i>Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Gila Woodpecker, Savannah Sparrow</i>)</p> <p>18.45 Riparian (<i>Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Duck, Yellow Warbler, Macgillivray’s Warbler, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Gila Woodpecker, Abert’s Towhee, Bell’s Vireo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Virginia’s Warbler, Lucy’s Warbler, Common Black-Hawk, Hammond’s Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Western Tanager, Nashville Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler</i>)</p>

	<p>8.13 Interior Chaparral (<i>Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Gray Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler</i>)</p> <p>2.25 Mohave Desertscrub (<i>Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Gila Woodpecker</i>)</p> <p>1.34 Other (Madrean Pine-Oak Woodland, Sonoran Desertscrub: Uplands, Wash , Urban/Residential, Rock) (<i>Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Gila Woodpecker, Abert’s Towhee, Virginia’s Warbler</i>)</p>
<p>Related Habitat Accounts*</p>	<p>Pinyon Juniper Low Grassland Lowland Riparian Sonoran Desert Madrean Pine-Oak</p>
<p>Biological Description</p>	<p>Lower Oak Creek supports a broad array of species because of its location at the convergence of Colorado Plateau to the north and the Sonoran Desert to the south. This riparian corridor IBA is exceptional for Arizona in two respects. First, it is a significant migration corridor that supports exceptional landbird diversity and abundance in spring and fall migration. Second, it contains a premier, old growth riparian corridor that supports numerous riparian obligate species, many of which are species of conservation concern in Arizona as well as a great abundance of cavity-nesting species.</p>
<p>Focal Bird Species</p>	<p><u>IBA Qualifying Species</u></p> <p>State: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Yellow Warbler, Macgillivray’s Warbler, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Gila Woodpecker, Abert’s Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Bell’s Vireo, Virginia’s Warbler, Lucy’s Warbler, Common Black-Hawk Olive-sided Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Hammond’s Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Western Tanager, Nashville Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler</p> <p><u>AGFD Species of Greatest Conservation Need</u></p> <p>Tier A: Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon</p> <p>Tier B: Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Common Nighthawk, Yellow Warbler, Macgillivray’s Warbler, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Gila Woodpecker, Abert’s Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Bell’s Vireo</p> <p><u>Federal Threatened or Endangered Species</u></p>

	<p>Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher</p> <p><u>USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern</u></p> <p>National – Peregrine Falcon, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Bell’s Vireo, Virginia’s Warbler, Lucy’s Warbler</p> <p>USFWS Region – Golden Eagle, Common Black-Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Bell’s Vireo, Lucy’s Warbler, Yellow Warbler</p>
NABCI Bird Conservation Region	34: Sierra Madre Occidental
Ownership	This IBA contains land managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona State Parks, U.S. Forest Service (Coronado National Forest), as well as private land.
Conservation Land Status**	National Forest (Coconino), State Parks (Red Rock),
Human Population Density	Mostly rural with growing urbanization
Legislative District(s)	Arizona Congressional Districts 1 and 4 and State Legislative District 6
NRCS Major Land Resource Area	50: Mogollon Transition
Visitation, main access, and permits needed	<p>Red Rock State Park is immediately south of Sedona. The best way to the park is travel on I-17 to Arizona highway 260 west to Arizona Highway 89A and north to Red Rock Loop Road. Page Springs and Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery is north of Cornville. Take the Rim Rock exit on I-17 and travel west to Page Springs Road, immediately east of Cornville, and travel north to the parking lot and access to the hiking trails and observation platform. The Verde Valley Birding Trail has excellent information for birding in this area.</p> <p>http://verdebirdingtrail.com/birdsites/hotspot</p>

*References available written narratives (located on the SJV website) for general habitat types occurring within the IBA.

**Identifies whether the IBA or portions of the IBA have a special land management designation such as: wilderness, primitive area, wildlife area, refuge, park, monument, designated conservation area, conservation easement, or other similar designation

IBA Activities:

Issue or Activity	Priority	Description	Actions
CBC	H	Sedona circle	Annual volunteer surveys
AZ IBA Surveys	M	Annual breeding bird surveys	Replaced with eBird records
IBA Signage	M	Maintain signs identifying the site as an IBA	All signs are in good condition
IBA Dedication	Completed	A formal recognition event	Anita MacFarland Ramada dedication at Bubbling Ponds 2015
Update	July, 2021		

Partners:

Name	Role(s)	Contact Information	Actions
Northern Arizona Audubon Society	Site Steward	http://www.nazas.org/	Volunteer projects that include trail maintenance, signage, and habitat restoration projects. Host birding trips
Arizona Game & Fish Department	Page Springs Fish Hatchery and Bubbling Ponds Native Fish Hatchery	1600 N Page Springs Rd, Cornville, AZ 86325 https://www.azgfd.com/fishing/hatcheries/bubblingponds/ 1970 N Page Springs Rd, Cornville, AZ 86325 (928) 634-4466	Management of riparian and wetland areas. Trails maintenance.
US Forest Service Coconino National Forest	Land manager	https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recreation/outdoorlearning/recarea/?recid=81575&actid=120 Red Rocks Ranger District	Cornville trails system
Red Rock State Park	Land manager	https://azstateparks.com/red-rock/ 4050 Red Rock Loop Rd Sedona, AZ 86336	Nature education center

Conservation Targets:

These are species, communities, or ecological systems that represent and encompass the full array of biodiversity found in this IBA.

Conservation Target	Current Condition
Cottonwood/Willow Riparian Birds	Good
Marsh Birds	Good

Conservation Target	Current Condition
Waterfowl	Good

Conservation Challenges:

Conservation challenges are primarily human activities that immediately affect what we are trying to conserve. Through a Miradi process, it was found that grazing of livestock, invasive plant species, water diversion, and groundwater /springhead use pose the greatest threats to birds within this IBA.

Challenges	Waterfowl and Waterbirds	Cottonwood/Willow Riparian Birds	Marsh Birds	Summary Rating
Forest Grazing	NA	Medium	NA	Medium
Invasive Salt Cedar, Russian Olive	NA	Medium	Low	Low
Fire	NA	Medium	Low	Low
Groundwater Depletion/Springhead use	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Water Ditch Diversions	Low	High	Low	Medium
Summary Ratings:	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium

Lower Oak Creek		Severity (1-3)	Scope (1-3)	Permanence (2-4)
Threats on National Database				
Forest Grazing	5	1	3	1
Groundwater depletion and springhead use	6	2	1	3
Water Diversions (irrigation ditches)	5	1	2	3
Natural events	Fire, Drought	4	1	2
Invasive Species	Tamarisk, Russian Olive	5	1	2