

Sonoran Desert Borderlands

IBA web pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://aziba.org/?page_id=586 • http://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/sonoran-desert-borderlands • Arizona Game and Fish Conservation Opportunity Area
Priority	State
Qualifying Criteria	<p>Site Important to Special Status Avian Species (<i>Gilded Flicker, Bendire’s Thrasher, Le Conte’s Thrasher, Sage Thrasher, Costa’s Hummingbird, Abert’s Towhee, Brewer’s Sparrow, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Elf Owl, Loggerhead Shrike</i>)</p> <p>Rare, Unique, or Exceptional Representative Habitat/Ecological Community (<i>Sonoran Desertscrub Ecosystem</i>)</p> <p>eBird Bar Chart Bar Charts - eBird</p>
IBA Polygon Center Point (Latitude, Longitude)	32.01° N, 112.83° W
Size	1,184,668 acres
County	Yuma and Pima
Local Communities	Ajo, Yuma
Description	<p>The Sonoran Desert Borderlands IBA is a landscape level Arizona Important Bird Area of exceptional habitat quality and expansiveness. This largely intact, undeveloped, and unfragmented IBA encompasses Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (in its entirety), Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (in its entirety), and the Barry Goldwater Range East and West Units (pending military acceptance).</p> <p>As a protected area, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument allows the life of the Sonoran Desert to flourish under nearly ideal wilderness conditions. The monument is an outstanding natural preserve where one of the of the Earth's major ecosystems survives almost unspoiled. Ninety-five percent of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is designated wilderness. Recognizing its significance, the United Nations in 1976 designated the monument as an International Biosphere Reserve.</p> <p>Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge is the third largest NWR in the lower 48 states and is situated in southwestern Arizona just west of the town of Ajo. The 1,000 square mile refuge, which encompasses Arizona’s largest Wilderness Area, shares a 56 mile international border with Sonora, Mexico. The Refuge’s seven mountain ranges and multiple valleys are home to the endangered Sonoran Pronghorn and Lesser Long-nosed Bat, as well as 420 species of plants, over 20 species of snakes, and 212 species of birds. The Barry M. Goldwater</p>

	Range includes the Cabeza Prieta NWR and BLM lands to the north, east and west of the refuge.
Mission/Goals	To conserve and protect an exceptional example of Sonoran desertscrub habitat and the special status avian species that depend on it.
Current Habitat Conservation, Planning, and Management Activities	<p>To learn more about conservation efforts at the various sites within this IBA, please visit their individual websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Cabeza_Prieta/what_we_do/conservation.html • Barry Goldwater Range: http://www.sonorannews.com/archives/2016/160608/news-barry-goldwater-range.html • Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument: https://www.nps.gov/orpi/learn/nature/interagency-restoration.htm
<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>53.06 Sonoran/Mohave Desertscrub, Mohave Desertscrub (<i>Bendire's Thrasher, Costa's Hummingbird, Abert's Towhee, Brewer's Sparrow, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Elf Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, Golden Eagle, Gila Woodpecker, Desert Purple Martin, Bell's Vireo</i>)</p> <p>39.04 Sonoran Desertscrub: Uplands (<i>Gilded Flicker, Costa's Hummingbird, Abert's Towhee, Brewer's Sparrow, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Elf Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, Golden Eagle, Gila Woodpecker, Desert Purple Martin, Bell's Vireo</i>)</p> <p>4.33 Sonoran Desertscrub: Lower Colorado River (<i>Le Conte's Thrasher, Bendire's Thrasher, Sage Thrasher, Brewer's Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Golden Eagle, Western Burrowing Owl, Gila Woodpecker</i>)</p> <p>1.79 Xeroriparian Wash, Mesquite, Riparian (<i>Abert's Towhee, Gila Woodpecker, Lucy's Warbler, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Bell's Vireo</i>)</p> <p>1.31 Rock (<i>Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon</i>)</p> <p>0.11 Other (Interior Chaparral, Urban/Residential, Pinyon Pine-Juniper Woodland, Semiarid Sonoran/Savannah Grassland,)</p>
Related Habitat Accounts*	Sonoran Desert

<p>Biological Description</p>	<p>Cabeza Prieta Refuge bird records indicate 212 species recorded over its history (USFWS 1991) including Audubon WatchList species - Gilded Flicker, Bendire’s Thrasher, Brewer’s Sparrow, Costa’s Hummingbird, Sage Sparrow, Le Conte’s Thrasher, Abert’s Towhee, Loggerhead Shrike, and Sage Thrasher. Also, as a prime example of Sonoran Desert scrub vegetation the refuge is recognized as one of the last remaining undisturbed and isolated desert terrains in the United States. It supports a full range of bird species expected in such a habitat and populations of Gambel’s Quail, American Kestrel, Greater Roadrunner, White-throated Swift, Say’s Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Rock Wren, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Phainopepla, Black-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia, House Finch, and Lesser Goldfinch can be found here.</p> <p>Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is an excellent example of xeric riparian habitat and the Arizona Upland Sonoran desertscrub ecosystem and supports species of conservation concern including Gilded Flicker, Costa’s Hummingbird, and Elf Owl. The monument also provides habitat for an outstanding number of native resident species including Cooper’s Hawk, White-throated Swift, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Canyon Wren, Bewick’s Wren, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Phainopepla, Canyon Towhee, Northern Cardinal, and Pyrrhuloxia. Additionally, the monument supports many over-wintering species and migrants that find the lush, dense riparian habitat within its canyons ideal for their needs. These species include Gray Flycatcher, “Western” Flycatcher, Violet-green Swallow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Western Bluebird, Townsend’s Solitaire, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Orange-crowned Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, Spotted Towhee, Brewer’s Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln’s Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Hooded Oriole.</p>
<p>Focal Bird Species</p> <p>Bold Type are Road to Recovery species</p>	<p><u>AGFD Species of Greatest Conservation Need (2022)</u></p> <p>Tier 1: American Peregrine Falcon, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy Owl</p> <p>Tier 2: American Kestrel, American Pipit (winter), Bendire’s Thrasher, Black-chinned Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, Black-throated Gray Warbler (migration), Brewer’s Blackbird, Brewer’s Sparrow (winter/migration), Broad-billed Hummingbird, Black-throated Hummingbird, Buff-collared Nightjar, Cactus Wren, Canyon Towhee, Costa’s Hummingbird, Desert Purple Martin, Gilded Flicker, Gila Woodpecker, Golden Eagle, Gray Vireo (winter/migration), Hermit Thrush (migration), Hooded Oriole, Horned Lark (winter), Inca Dove, Lark Bunting (migration), LeConte’s Thrasher, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Long-eared Owl (migration), MacGillivray’s Warbler (migration), Northern</p>

	<p>Harrier (winter), Olive-sided Flycatcher (migration), Prairie Falcon, Pyrrhuloxia, Red-winged Blackbird, Sage Thrasher (winter), Scot's Oriole, Swainson's Hawk (migration), Swainson's Thrush (migration), Verdin, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Western Burrowing Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Western Wood Pee-wee (migration)</p> <p><u>Federal Threatened or Endangered Species</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern</u></p> <p>National – Peregrine Falcon, Costa's Hummingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo, LeConte's Thrasher,</p> <p>USFWS Region – Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Burrowing Owl, Costa's Hummingbird, Gilded Flicker, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo, Bendire's Thrasher, Le Conte's Thrasher,</p>
NABCI Bird Conservation Region	33: Sonoran and Mohave Deserts
Ownership	Federal, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service
Conservation Land Status**	National Monument (Organ Pipe), Wilderness (Organ Pipe and Cabeza Prieta), National Wildlife Refuge (Cabeza Prieta), and US military range (Barry Goldwater Range)
Human Population Density	Rural
Legislative District(s)	Arizona Congressional District 7 and State Legislative District 23
NRCS Major Land Resource Area	52: Sonoran Basin and Range
Visitation, main access, and permits needed	<p>Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge/Barry Goldwater Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Cabeza_Prieta/visit/plan_your_visit.html • Permits: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Cabeza_Prieta/visit/permits.html <p>Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation: https://www.nps.gov/orpi/planyourvisit/index.htm • Permits: https://www.nps.gov/orpi/planyourvisit/permitsandreservations.htm <p>Barry M. Goldwater Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation: https://www.mcasyma.marines.mil/Portals/152/Docs/Range/Range%20Guide-Map.pdf • Permits: http://www.rangeaccess.com/RangeAccess.aspx

*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	M	Ajo-Cabeza Prieta and Organ Pipe Cactus NM	Encourage volunteers to participate. Extract data from the CBC's
IBA Continental designation	H	surveys for elf owls and gilded flickers	Requires coordination with managing agency partners
Bird Surveys	L	BBS on Organ Pipe NM and contract surveys	Gather data from these sources for entry into IBA database
IBA Signage	H	Install signs identifying the site as an IBA	Coordination needed with partners
IBA Dedication	H	A formal recognition event	Date needs to be set with partners

Partners:

Name	Role(s)	Contact Information	Actions
Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge	Land Manager	1611 North Second Street Ajo, AZ 85321 Phone: (520) 387-6483 Fax: (520) 387-5359 Email: Cabeza Prieta Refuge Staff	Coordination for any field wrk and data sharing
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument:	Land Manager	10 Organ Pipe Drive Ajo, AZ 85321 Phone: (520) 387-6849 x7302	Coordination for any field work and data sharing
Barry Goldwater Range	Land Manager	MCAS Yuma Range Management Department Box 99134, Yuma, AZ 85369-9134 56 th Range Management Office 7224 N. 139 th Dr. Luke Air Force Base, AZ 85039 623-856-8516	Coordination for any field work and data sharing
Arizona Game and Fish Department	Wildlife Managers	Region IV, Yuma	Coordination for any field work and data sharing

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
Xeric Riparian Microphyllic Woodland Birds	Fair

Conservation Target	Current Condition
Sonoran Desert Birds	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 pose the greatest threats to birds within this IBA.

Challenges	Sonoran Desert Birds	Xeric Riparian Birds	Summary Rating
Non-Native Plants	Medium	High	Medium
Drought	Medium	Very High	High
Vehicle Impacts	Medium	High	Medium
Military Disturbances	Low	Medium	Low
Summary Ratings:	Low	Medium	Medium

Sonoran Desert Borderlands				Severity (1-3)	Scope (1-3)	Permanence (2-4)
Threats on National Database						
Disturbance to birds	Land-based vehicles	8		3	2	3
Disturbance to birds	Military	6		1	2	3
Invasive species	Non-native plants	8		1	2	3
Drought		8		3	3	2

Sonoran Desert Borderlands Important Bird Area

