



WATCHLIST 2007

A State of the Birds Report *Winter 2007*

A place on WatchList 2007 is a dubious distinction for 73 of California's birds. Using the latest research, including the Christmas Bird Count and Breeding Bird Survey, Audubon and the American Bird Conservancy analyzed population size and trends, distribution, and threats to identify the most critically imperiled birds in the U.S. These species may seem less familiar than the declining "common" birds identified by Audubon in summer 2007, but they need our help even more. Together, we must do more than watch these species disappear from our world. The following are some of the species that depend on California and our conservation commitment. For more information visit Audubon California www.ca.audubon.org and National Audubon www.audubon.org.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CALIFORNIA'S WATCHLIST



CALIFORNIA CONDOR (*Gymnogyps californianus*)

Reduced to just 22 birds in 1988, this raptor is slowly recovering, thanks to captive breeding and the release of individuals in California and Arizona. There are now 302 individuals, including 79 free-flying birds in California. Lead bullets are a critical threat to long-term survival, as fragments poison wild condors that scavenge the remains of hunters' kills. Audubon California helped pass crucial legislation to eliminate lead bullets from historic condor range in California.



TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius tricolor*)

A highly social species, this bird is found in freshwater wetlands in the Pacific states, mainly California. With loss of wetland habitat, this species increasingly relies on agricultural fields for nesting, leaving chicks vulnerable to the harvest of hay and other crops. Audubon California is working with farmers to maintain agricultural nesting habitat long enough each season to allow the blackbirds to successfully raise their young – potentially spelling the difference between survival and extinction for this highly specialized bird.



ASHY STORM-PETREL (*Oceanodroma homochroa*)

Breeding populations are restricted to islands off the west coast of North America. Non-native nest predators and increased gull populations threaten breeding birds, and ocean pollution and overfishing threaten feeding birds. Audubon California is working to establish Marine Important Bird Areas and programs to save this and many other marine bird species in need of protection.



SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

The population that lives along the Pacific shoreline is federally threatened. Development along beaches, increased beach recreation, disturbance by pets, and increased predation require constant vigilance. Audubon California is supporting chapters in organizing beach surveys to monitor population trends and educating the public to enjoy the beach in plover-friendly ways.



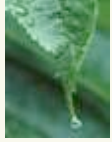
LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*)

The largest shorebird in North America, the curlew winters in the agricultural valleys and along the coasts of California. Estimates of how many curlews are left range from 20,000 to 160,000. Better estimates of how many curlews remain are needed with better understanding about what agricultural types and practices curlews depend. Audubon California and partners conducted a statewide survey of curlews and more than 28,000 birds were counted.



CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER (*Polioptila californica*)

This species' limited range, extending north from Mexico's Baja California to coastal southern California, and its specific habitat requirements, make it vulnerable and a high conservation priority. Burgeoning human populations have fragmented and destroyed suitable habitat for this species in southern California so that it was Federally listed as a threatened species in 1993.



CALIFORNIA HABITATS AT RISK

California is a globally recognized biodiversity hotspot. This diversity springs from the wide variety of habitats found in California, from the oak woodlands and agricultural lands of the Central Valley to the coniferous forests of the Sierra Nevada and Klamath Basin, and to the rocky coastline, bays, and estuaries along the Pacific. Less than five percent remains of many habitats in California, and birds face a number of additional threats, including global warming and development pressures.

Audubon California works to reverse habitat declines and promote wildlife friendly legislation and policies. Our 48 local Audubon chapters are key partners in accomplishing this work. Much of our success comes from our cooperative efforts tying chapter activities in local communities to state policy and best available science.



WHAT AUDUBON CALIFORNIA IS DOING

Across the state Audubon California enlists birdwatchers of all stripes to monitor bird populations and to promote sound stewardship on the ground. With 50% of California in private ownership, our Landowner Stewardship Program is working with landowners to manage their lands in bird friendly ways by offering technical assistance, implementing habitat restoration projects and conducting bird and plant monitoring surveys. Our network of wildlife sanctuaries provides refuge for both common and threatened wildlife. Audubon centers, along with local chapters, reach out into diverse communities to connect the public with nature.

At the state capital, Audubon California helps shape legislation, policy and public funding to protect wildlife and its habitats. Audubon is currently focused on ensuring maximum feasible protection of wildlife habitat and air quality at the Salton Sea, guiding the development of wind power regulations to reduce its impacts on wildlife, and helping to develop wetlands and riparian policies to protect important waters of the state.

Our Important Bird Areas program is identifying critical bird habitat throughout the state, and we are working directly with our chapters to promote the conservation and restoration of these areas.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Californians can help Watchlist species in a variety of ways. Landowners can work with Audubon California and its chapters to implement bird friendly management on their lands.

Volunteers can play a critical role in helping us determine bird population trends by taking part in bird monitoring projects. Participating in the Christmas Bird Count, the Great Backyard Bird Count, and entering bird observations into California eBird are all important ways to help ornithologists track bird populations.

Anyone can join the Audubon Advisory and make their voice heard on key decisions that affect birds and wildlife.

Audubon Advisory

<http://audubonaction.org/audubon/join.html>

California eBird

<http://ebird.org/content/ca/>

Important Bird Areas

<http://ca.audubon.org/iba/index.shtml>