

An Assessment of Arizona's Cormorant Populations, their Impacts on Fish, and Potential Management Strategies to Reduce Impacts

Overview and Information for Potential Volunteers

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Project Objectives:

1. Determine the spatial distribution of cormorant (double-crested and neotropical) colonies in Arizona, with a focus on locations of feeding and nesting sites used by primary colonies,
2. Determine the level of connectivity among primary cormorant colonies in Arizona,
3. Estimate minimum population size of each species at primary colonies in Arizona,
4. Estimate the composition of fish by species and size, and associated fish losses (e.g., pounds of fish), taken by primary cormorant colonies in Arizona,
5. Estimate fish losses (e.g., pounds of fish) from cormorant predation at community fishing program locations, and examine factors that influence the loss of fish to cormorants at these sites.
6. Based on the outcomes of objectives 1-5, recommend methods of reducing fish losses.

Three Options for Helping Out:

- A. Assist with a one-day cormorant count at an assigned site or area. This one-day count will take place during 7:00 am – 12:00 pm, and will occur 4 times per year:
 - a. Winter count: January 21
 - b. Spring count: March 18
 - c. Summer count: May 13
 - d. Fall count: September 16
- B. Visit this same site or area at least once a month or 3 additional times during the quarter (not including the above count) to document and record the presence and location of marked birds. Time of day is flexible. This effort will start after January 2017 and will be dependent on our ability to capture and mark birds.
- C. Assist with direct observations of feeding birds to determine size (and species as feasible) of fish being eaten by cormorants at each site. This will require commitment to additional training and additional commitment to visit designated sites during specific quarters of the year.

How to sign up!:

- Complete the attached page and return to Larisa Harding (lharding@azgfd.gov, or via mail: WMRS: L. Harding, 5000 W Carefree Hwy, Phoenix, AZ 85086) by December 16.
- If you plan to help with "A" and/or "B" above, be prepared to attend a webinar or in-person training during the week of January 2nd. Training may take up to 2 hours.
- If you plan to help with "C" above, be prepared to attend additional webinar or in-person training during the week of January 2nd. Training may take up to 3 hours.
- Be prepared to complete some simple Department volunteer forms.
- Share this information with your friends and family, and recruit a buddy to be part of your observation team!

If you're interested in helping out, please complete this form and return to Larisa Harding (lharding@azgfd.gov) by December 16:

Name:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	
Address (city is adequate):	
How far are you willing to drive to your volunteer site?	
How far are you willing to hike to your volunteer site?	
Do you have reliable transportation?	
Do you have access to binoculars?	
Do you have any birding experience? If so, please describe.	
Which volunteer option are you interested in? (A, B, or C)	
If volunteer option A, which count are you available for? (winter, spring, summer, or fall)	

For more information, please contact

Larisa Harding (lharding@azgfd.gov, 623-236-7301)

Or

Esther Rubin (erubin@azgfd.gov, 623-236-7379)