

San Pedro river Arizona

The **San Pedro River** in Arizona is a northward-flowing river originating about 10 miles south of the U.S.-Mexico border in Sonora, Mexico, and flows approximately 140 miles through southeastern Arizona until it joins the Gila River near Winkelman, Arizona^{[1] [2] [3]}. It is notable as one of the last major **undammed desert rivers** in the American Southwest, making it ecologically significant.

The river is internationally recognized for its biological diversity, particularly as a **critical migratory flyway** for birds. Nearly 400 species of birds use the river corridor, and at peak migration, between 1 and 4 million birds can be found there^{[1] [3] [4]}. The San Pedro supports two-thirds of the avian diversity found in the United States, including 100 species of breeding birds and nearly 300 species of migrating birds^[2].

Its basin spans about 4,720 square miles across several Arizona counties and supports a variety of life including mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and plants typical of both the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts as well as species from neighboring mountain ranges^[5].

The river corridor passes through notable areas like Sierra Vista, where groundwater pumping has lowered the water table, threatening the river's flow and ecosystem health^{[1] [2]}. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area protects about 40 miles of the upper river and is a focus of conservation efforts by federal agencies and environmental groups to maintain water quality and habitat^[6].

The San Pedro River is also culturally and historically important, with archaeological sites and its role in the border region ecosystem. Conservation organizations continue to advocate for sustainable water use to preserve this unique desert river and its diverse habitats amid challenges from drought, water use, and border infrastructure^{[1] [5] [7]}.

Key highlights:

| Feature | Details |
|-------------------------|--|
| Origin | South of border in Sonora, Mexico |
| Length | ~140 miles through Arizona |
| Terminus | Confluence with Gila River near Winkelman, AZ |
| Ecological significance | Last major undammed desert river in Southwest |
| Biodiversity | Home to ~400 bird species, 84 mammals, others |
| Conservation status | Protected partly by San Pedro Riparian NCA |
| Threats | Groundwater depletion, drought, border wall impact |

The river is a vital natural resource for wildlife conservation and regional water management in the arid Southwest.

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1. <https://waterdesk.org/multimedia/photos/photos-san-pedro-river-arizona/>
2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Pedro_River_\(Arizona\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Pedro_River_(Arizona))
3. <https://southwest.audubon.org/conservation/san-pedro-river>
4. <https://www.sanpedrorivervalley.org>
5. <https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/san-pedro-river/>
6. <https://www.blm.gov/visit/san-pedro>
7. https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/public_lands/rivers/san_pedro_river/index.html