

Easy guide to Arlington Valley Birding



Includes bonus Pelecanidae Family Album

Tom Locascio 1/26/2026 Features educational only eBird materials



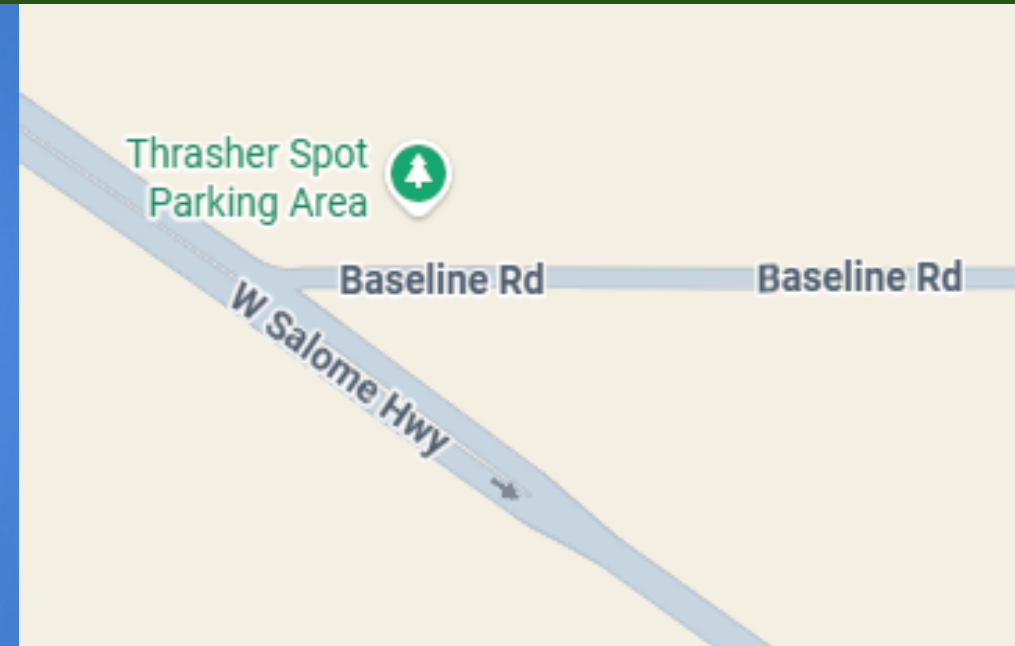
Arlington Valley Birding Guide Proto 2

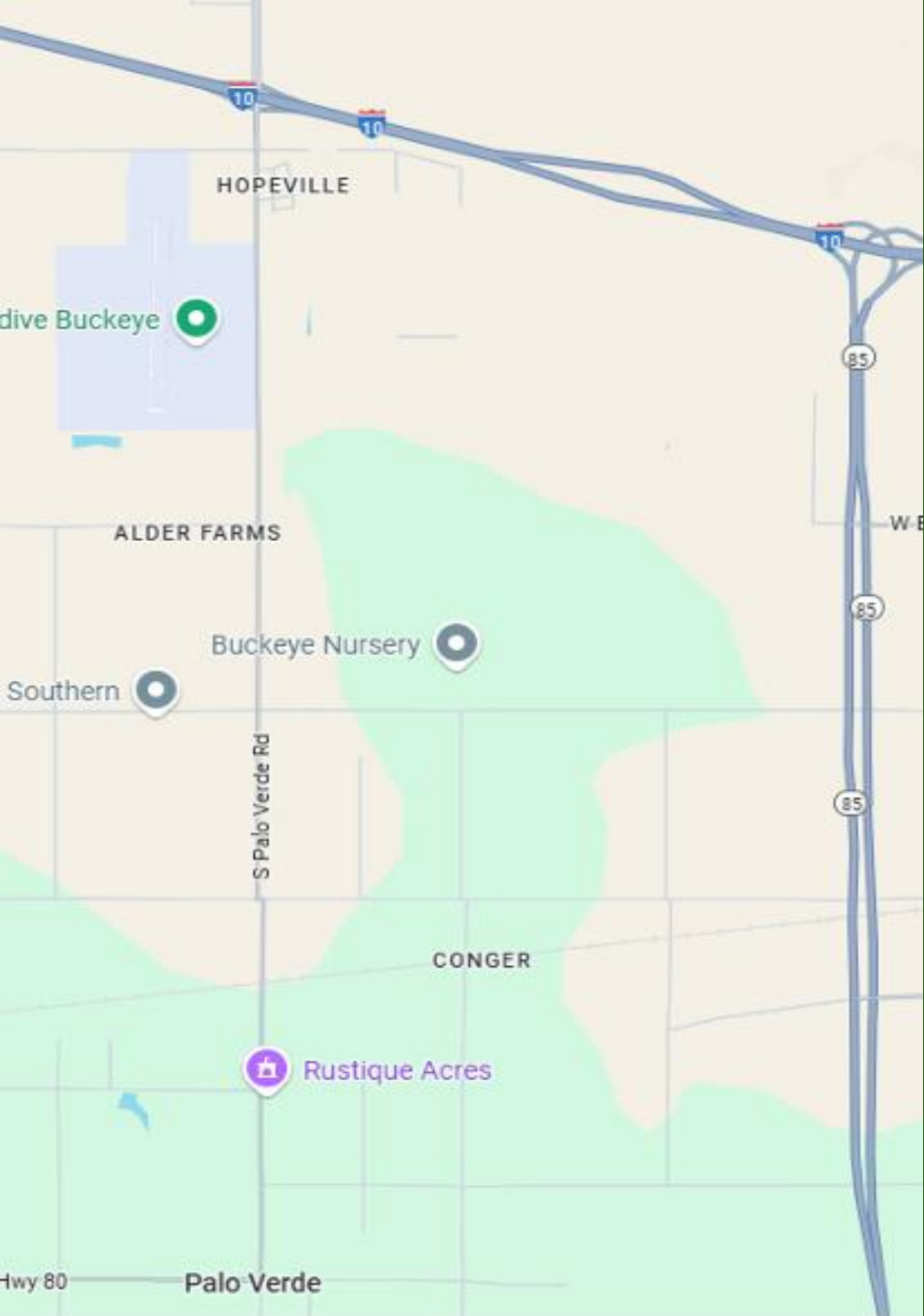
This is an overview of the area covered for suggested birding adventures. Each area will be covered on one or more of the following pages.

The Areas:

The end of Old Highway 80
Lower River Road Ponds
Arlington Wildlife Area
Gillespie Dam and Bridge

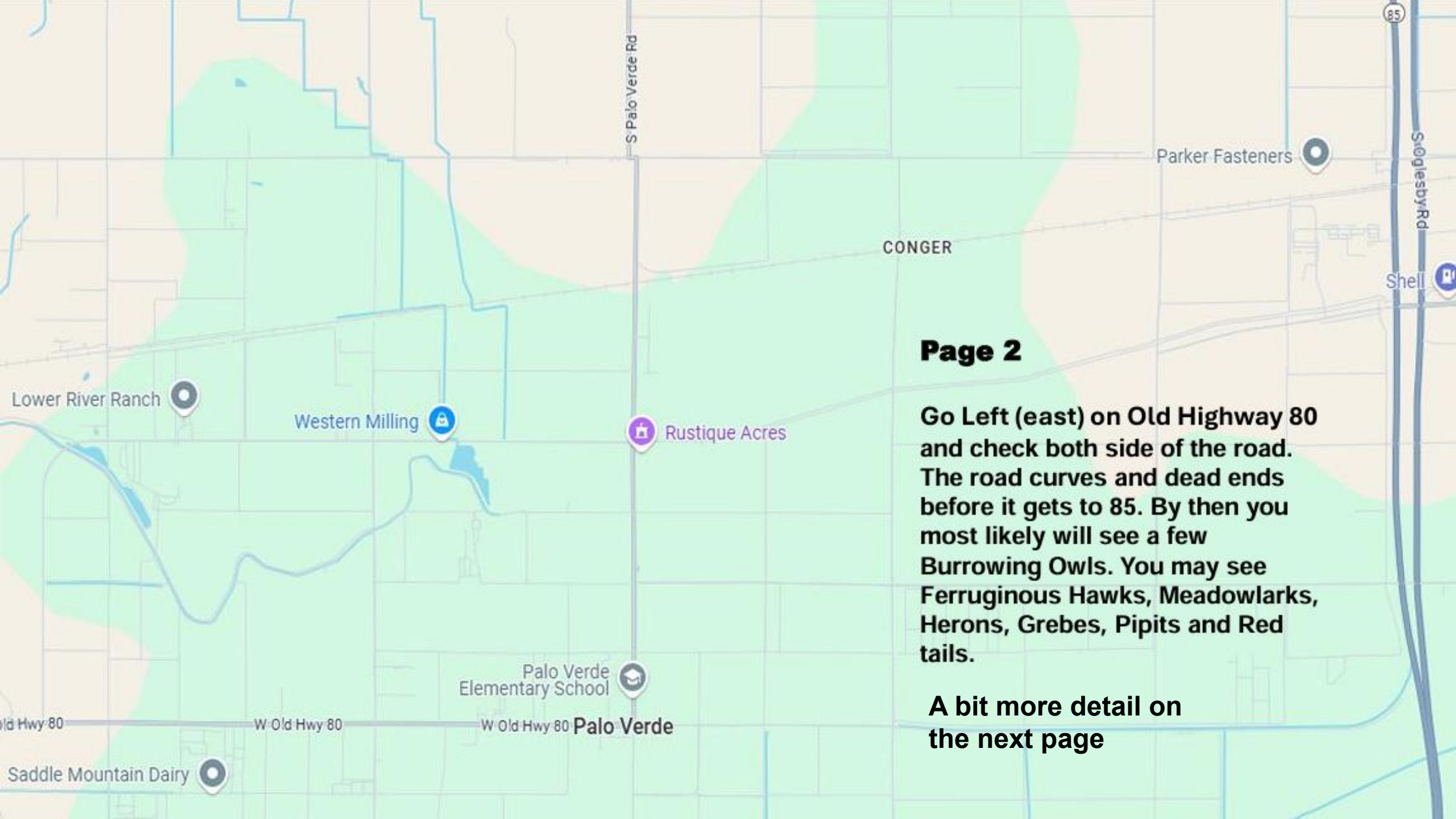
Optional Thrasher Spot Map Below





Page 1 Arlington Valley Birding Guide Proto 2

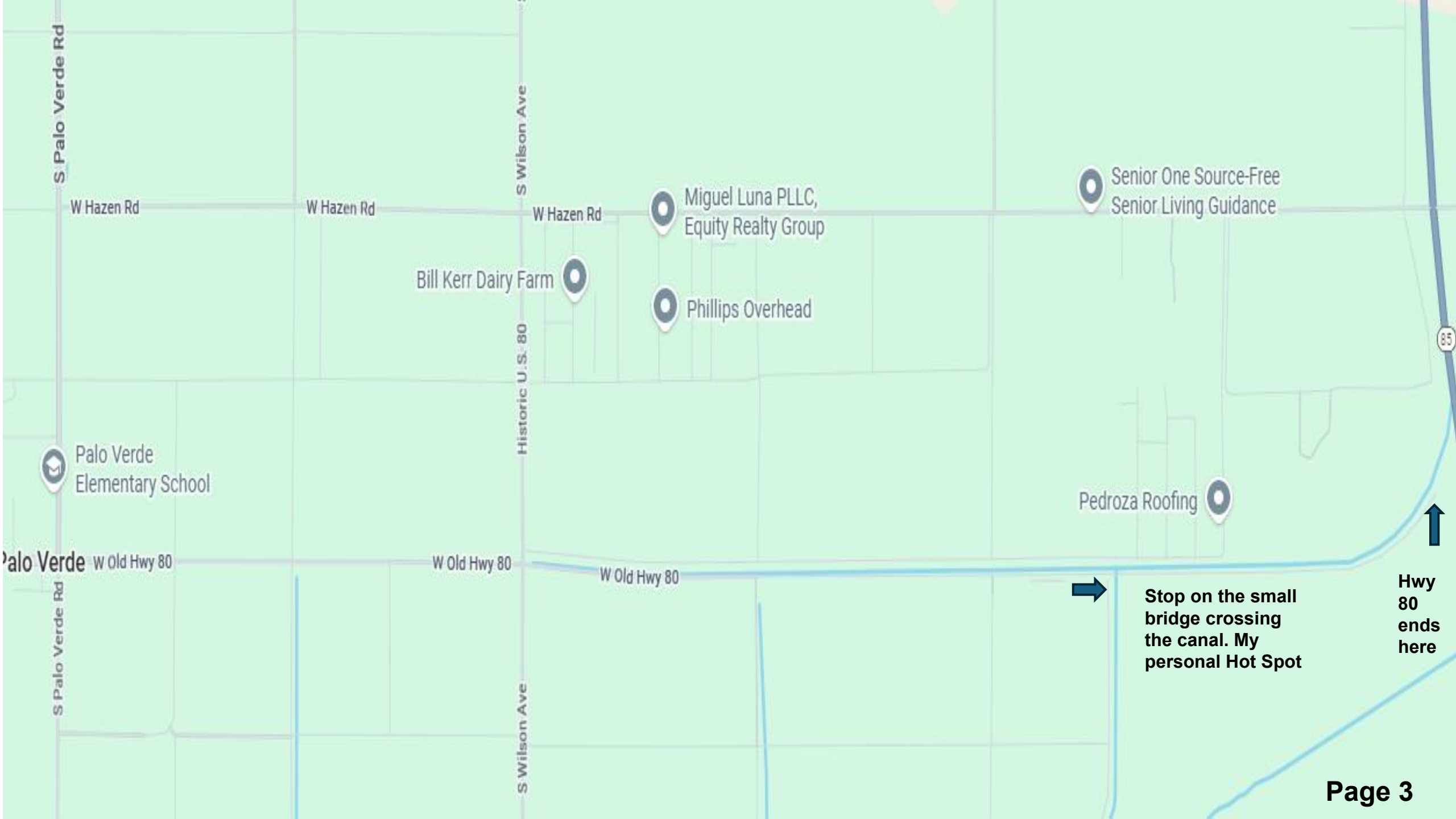
Go on I10 West and take the S. Palo Verde Rd. exit which is the first exit after Hwy 85. Go South past the Airport for about 4 to 5 miles Making a left at Baseline Rd. then a very quick right turn to get back on S. Palo Verde Rd. Continue to Old Highway 80. Birding is very good along the farms. Light traffic, lots of sparrows. Go Left on Highway 80 when you get to the town of Palo Verde. Now see page 2



Page 2

Go Left (east) on Old Highway 80 and check both side of the road. The road curves and dead ends before it gets to 85. By then you most likely will see a few Burrowing Owls. You may see Ferruginous Hawks, Meadowlarks, Herons, Grebes, Pipits and Red tails.

A bit more detail on the next page



S Palo Verde Rd

W Hazen Rd

W Hazen Rd

S Wilson Ave

W Hazen Rd

Miguel Luna PLLC,
Equity Realty Group

Senior One Source-Free
Senior Living Guidance

Bill Kerr Dairy Farm

Phillips Overhead

Historic U.S. 80

Palo Verde
Elementary School

Pedroza Roofing

Palo Verde W Old Hwy 80

W Old Hwy 80

W Old Hwy 80

S Wilson Ave

S Palo Verde Rd



**Stop on the small
bridge crossing
the canal. My
personal Hot Spot**



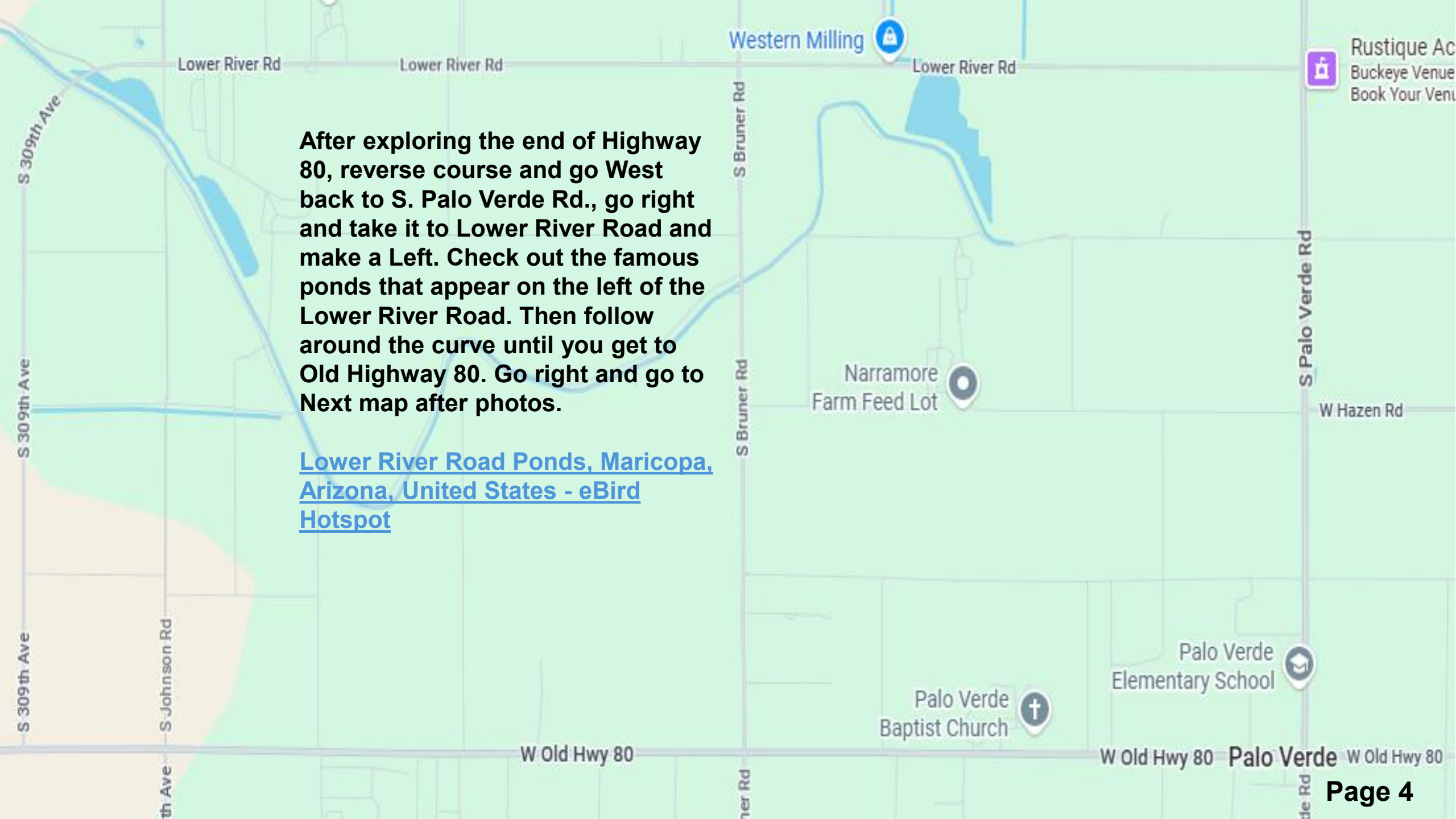
**Hwy
80
ends
here**



Check the fields for Cattle Egrets

After exploring the end of Highway 80, reverse course and go West back to S. Palo Verde Rd., go right and take it to Lower River Road and make a Left. Check out the famous ponds that appear on the left of the Lower River Road. Then follow around the curve until you get to Old Highway 80. Go right and go to Next map after photos.

[Lower River Road Ponds, Maricopa, Arizona, United States - eBird Hotspot](#)





Directions

Map

Lower River Road Ponds

Maricopa Arizona United States

 **219**
Species

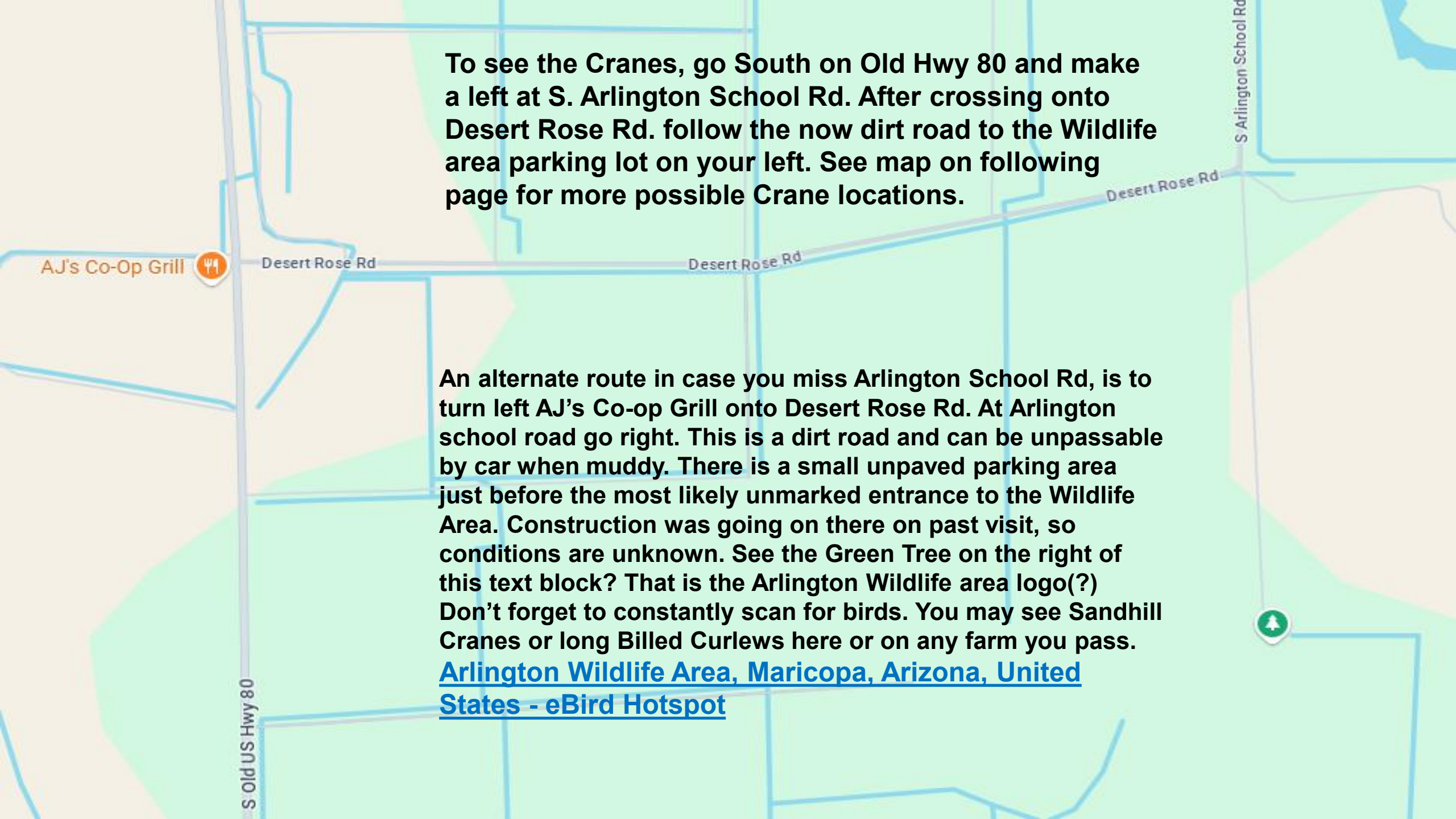
 **2268**
Checklists

 **714**
eBirders

My Stats  **74**  **8**  **0**  **0**





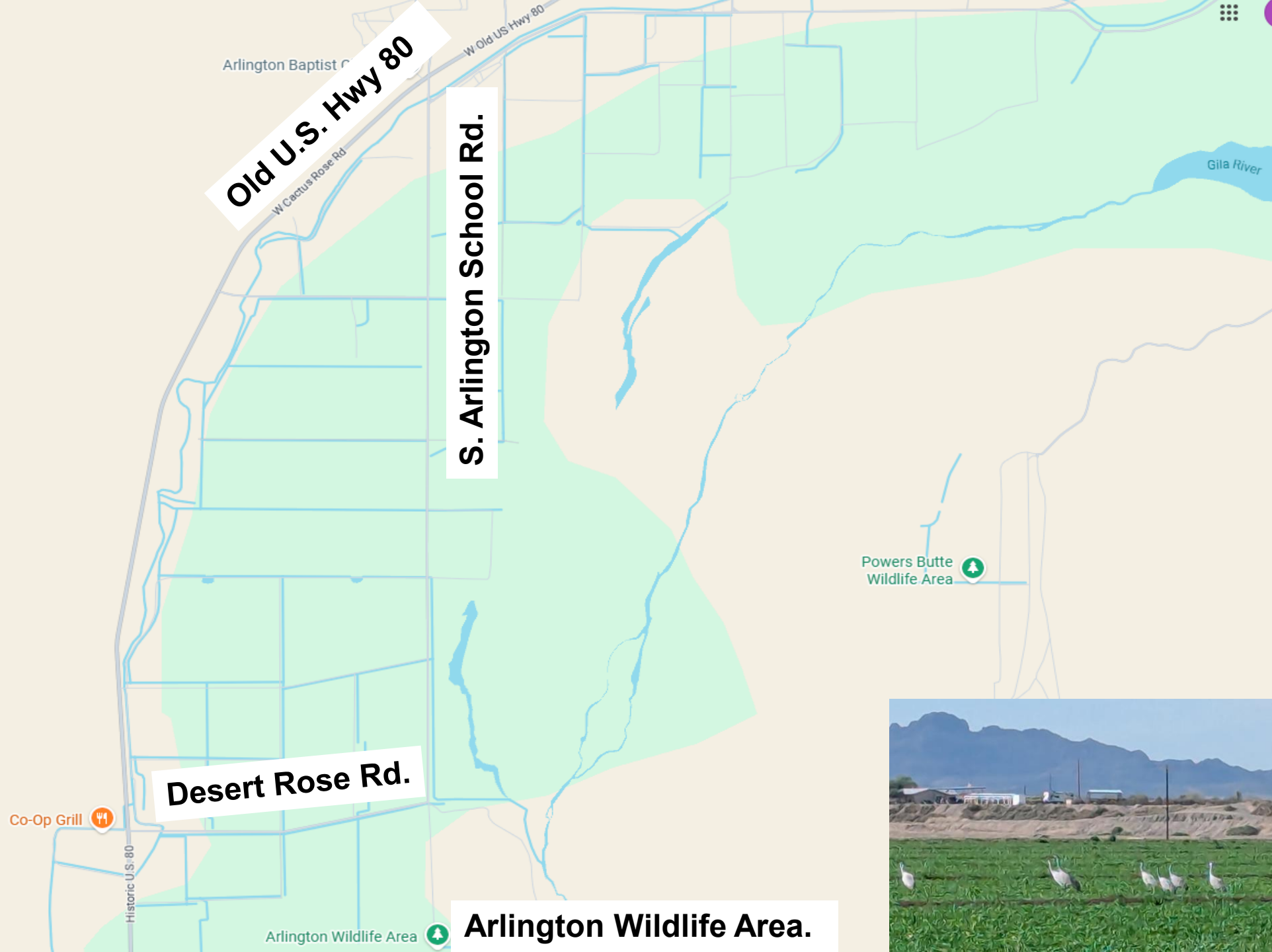


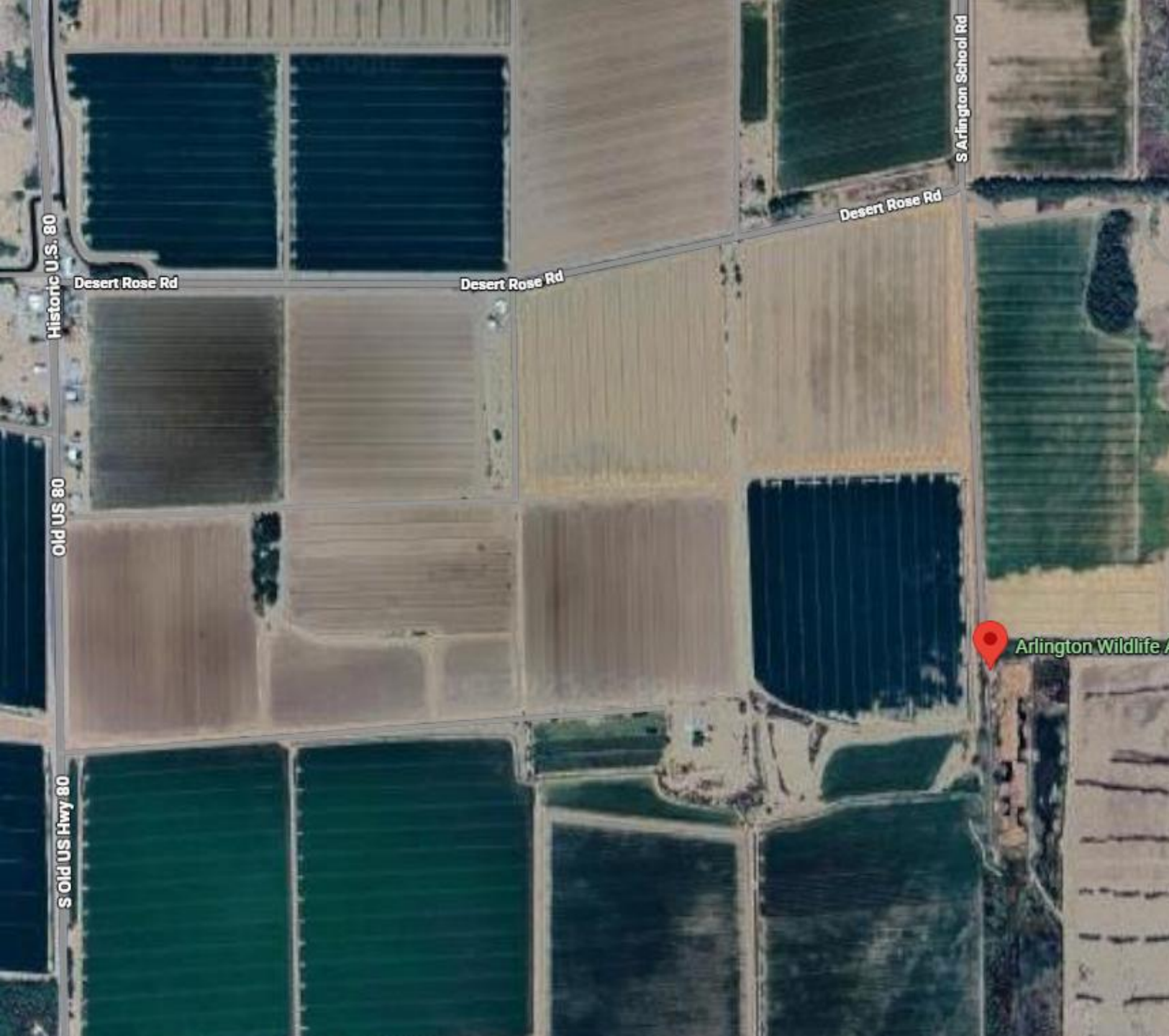
To see the Cranes, go South on Old Hwy 80 and make a left at S. Arlington School Rd. After crossing onto Desert Rose Rd. follow the now dirt road to the Wildlife area parking lot on your left. See map on following page for more possible Crane locations.

An alternate route in case you miss Arlington School Rd, is to turn left AJ's Co-op Grill onto Desert Rose Rd. At Arlington school road go right. This is a dirt road and can be unpassable by car when muddy. There is a small unpaved parking area just before the most likely unmarked entrance to the Wildlife Area. Construction was going on there on past visit, so conditions are unknown. See the Green Tree on the right of this text block? That is the Arlington Wildlife area logo(?) Don't forget to constantly scan for birds. You may see Sandhill Cranes or long Billed Curlews here or on any farm you pass.

[Arlington Wildlife Area, Maricopa, Arizona, United States - eBird Hotspot](#)

Go South on Old U.S. 80 and make a left at S. Arlington School Rd. After crossing Desert Rose Rd. follow the dirt road to the Wildlife area. The parking lot is on your left. We saw Sandhill Cranes in the fields on the right. Lifting our binoculars spooked them and they flew south and landed in the fields on the left side of S. Arlington school rd. closer to the Wildlife Area and were seen foraging with Great Egrets.





The Cranes could be foraging in any of the fields in the area as seen on the left overhead.

A closer look at the Wildlife Area is on the right. This is a wonderful spot in the early morning to hone your Rail, Sora, Gallinule, and coot call recognition skills. Perhaps you can even say you saw a Sora.





US Army Corps of Engineers

ARLINGTON WILDLIFE AREA HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Arlington Wildlife Area is located along the west bank of the Gila River approximately 15 miles southwest of Buckeye. The Arizona Game and Fish Department manages the wildlife area to conserve riparian and xeric-riparian habitats and provide food crops and nesting habitat for upland game birds, waterfowl and marsh birds. Arlington Wildlife Area also provides opportunities for wildlife-related recreation such as hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and hiking.

The wildlife area is managed passively with the exception of two constructed ponds and some agricultural production. Much of the area is now dominated by salt cedar, a non-native plant species. Flooding and bank erosion are also of concern.

HABITAT RESTORATION

Arlington Wildlife Area currently provides degraded habitat for the variety of wildlife species that occur here. The Arlington Wildlife Area Habitat Restoration Project will be implemented by the Arizona Game and Fish Department to restore approximately 208 acres of wetland and riparian habitat on lands protected in perpetuity by a Conservation Land Use Agreement. Restoration actions will be implemented as part of a statewide, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved in-lieu fee compensatory mitigation program.



RESTORATION OBJECTIVES

Gila River and Centennial Wash

- Improve bank stability through salt cedar removal, regrading, native vegetation establishment and installation of support materials.
- Restore historic connection of Centennial Wash to the Gila River to reduce flooding impacts.

Xeric-Riparian Mesquite Woodland

- Enhance floodplain habitat along the Gila River and Centennial Wash through salt cedar removal and native vegetation establishment.

Emergent Wetland

- Construct wetland habitat through excavation, berm construction and native vegetation establishment.

PROJECT STATUS

- Sold 25.36 credits to date.
- Submitted full restoration plan in 2018.
- Pilot restoration project is currently underway.
- Revegetation trial plot that is approximately 7 acres.
- Vegetation removal and regrading occurred in 2018.
- Native understory seeding will occur summer 2019 followed by mesquite plantings.
- Agricultural tail waters, existing pond overflow and installed irrigation will provide water to plantings.
- Lessons learned will be applied to the restoration project.



RESTORATION BENEFITS

Restoration actions are expected to benefit numerous wildlife species including migratory birds, waterfowl, wading birds, small mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Several federally listed species that occur at or near Arlington Wildlife Area are also expected to benefit. These species include the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and Ridgway's rail, and the threatened western yellow-billed cuckoo and northern Mexican gartersnake.



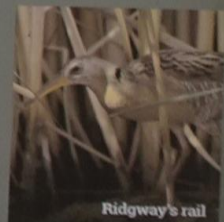
Northern Mexican gartersnake



Western yellow-billed cuckoo



Willow flycatcher



Ridgway's rail

NATIVE SPECIES THAT WILL BE USED FOR REVEGETATION.



Mesquite



Alkali sacaton by Sierra, *Cratogeomys*



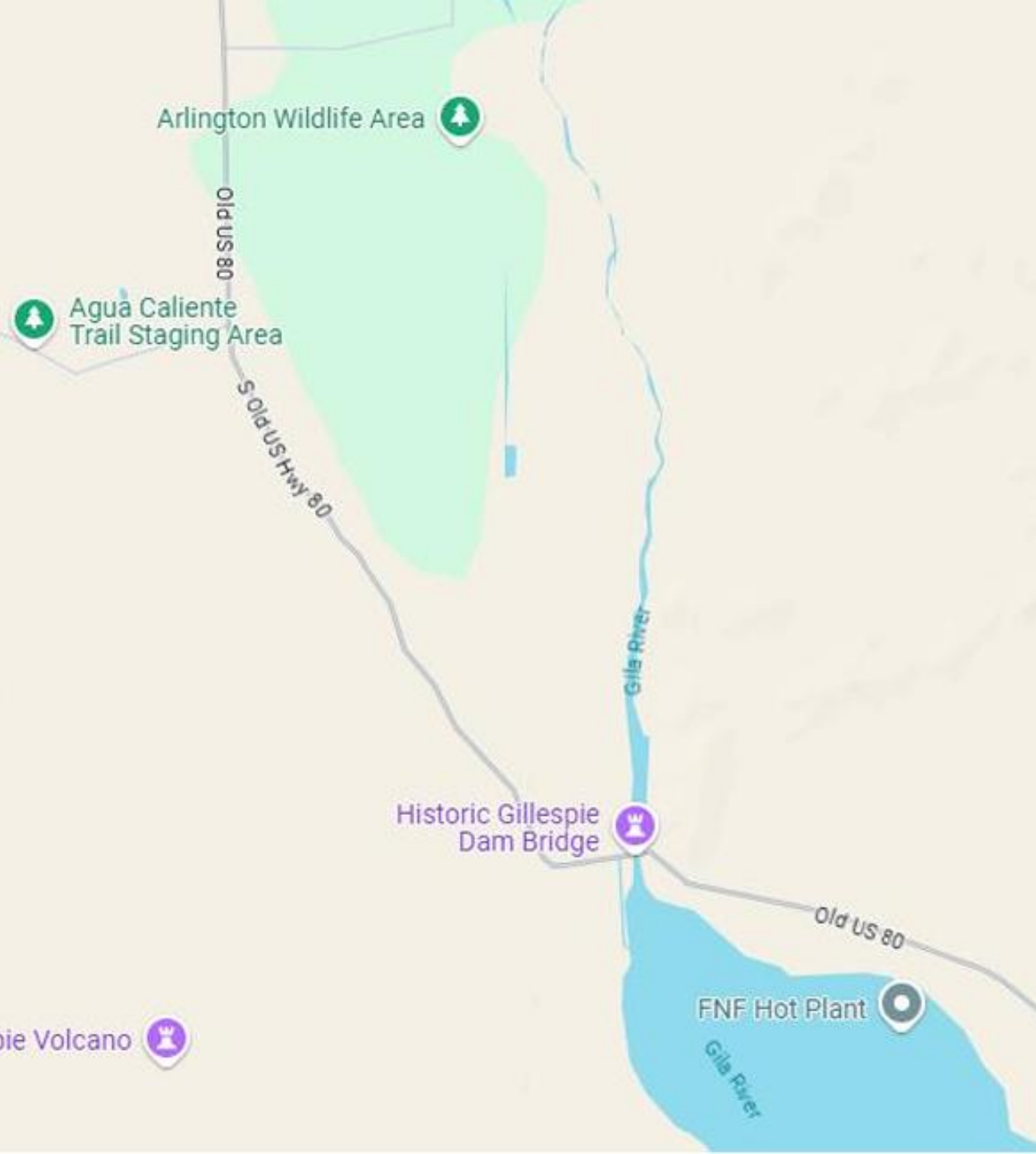
Desert globemallow



Sand dropseed




Big saltbush



Gillespie Dam

Maricopa, Arizona, United States

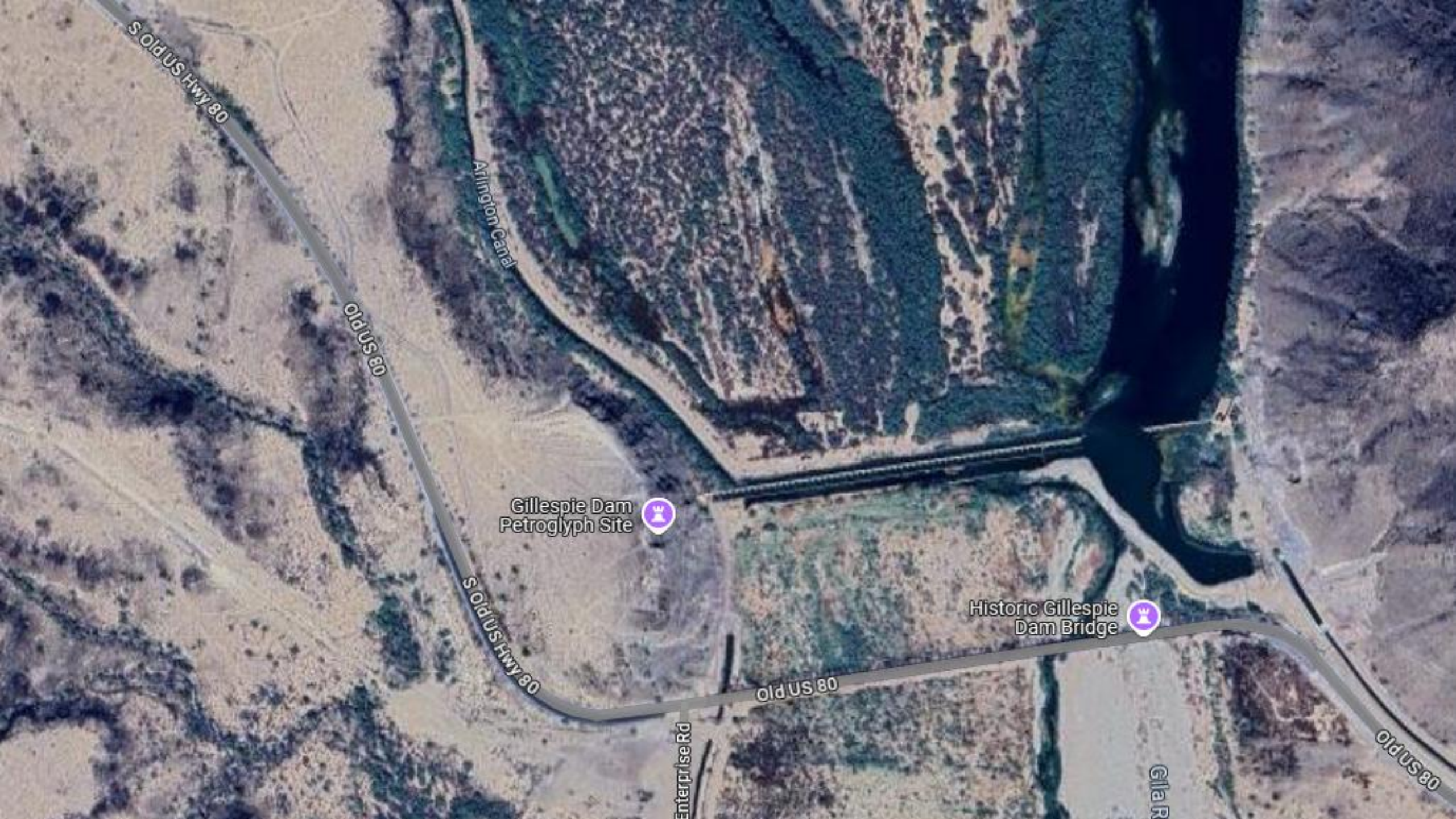
 **195**
Species

 **815**
Checklists

 **444**
eBirders

Return to Old 80 and go left (South) until you get to the Historic Gillespie Dam Bridge. Park in the parking lot at the end of the bridge and cross Old Hwy 80 to bird the areas around the broken Dam. Pelicans, (in season) Cormorants, and waders in good numbers. I also had my closest look at a Canyon Wren here.

[Gillespie Dam, Maricopa, Arizona, United States - eBird Hotspot](#)



S Old US Hwy 80

Arlington Canal

Old US 80

Gillespie Dam
Petroglyph Site



S Old US Hwy 80

Historic Gillespie
Dam Bridge



Old US 80

Enterprise Rd

Gila R

Old US 80



Bonus Pelecanidae Family Album

Above: American White Pelicans at the Gillespie Dam

The following pages are from a presentation I gave at Estrella Regional Park on January 10th, 2026

Original content and materials sourced from eBird's Birds of the World for educational purposes



CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
AWARDED TO



BIRDING CLUB OF SUN CITY

Banding Data

Band Number 0759-01596 96U **Banded** 07/23/2014
Species AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN **Sex** UNKNOWN
Age of Bird WAS TOO YOUNG TO FLY WHEN BANDED IN 2014
Location NEAR OGDEN, BOX ELDER COUNTY, UTAH, USA (COORDINATES: LAT: 41.34167; LON: -112.85833)
Bander THERESA POPE
STATE OF UTAH-NONGAME
1115 N MAIN ST
SPRINGVILLE UT 84663

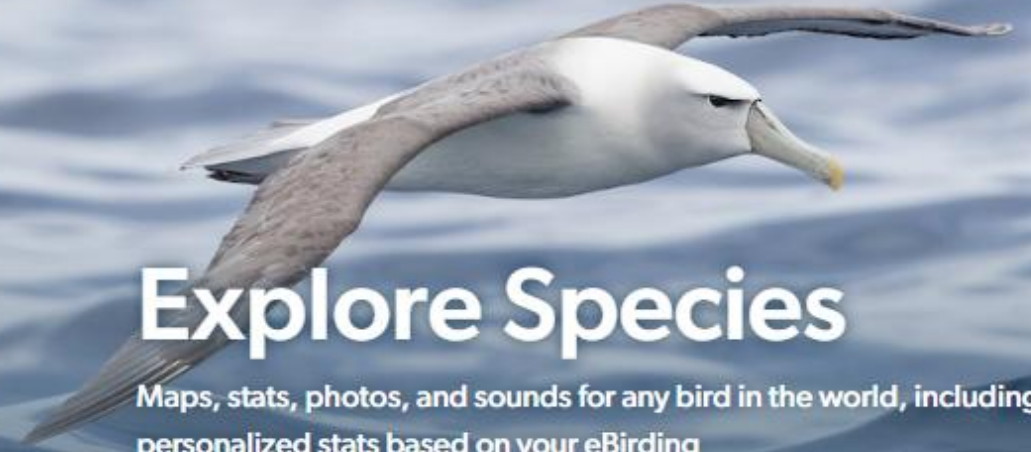
Encounter Data

Location 1.4 mi NW of MARICOPA VILLAGE,
MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES
Desc: 91ST AVENUE WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT, TRES RIOS **Encountered** 02/28/2019



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Explore Species

Maps, stats, photos, and sounds for any bird in the world, including personalized stats based on your eBirding

🔍 pelican



American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*

Peruvian Pelican *Pelecanus thagus*

Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*

Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens*

Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*

Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

Brown Pelican

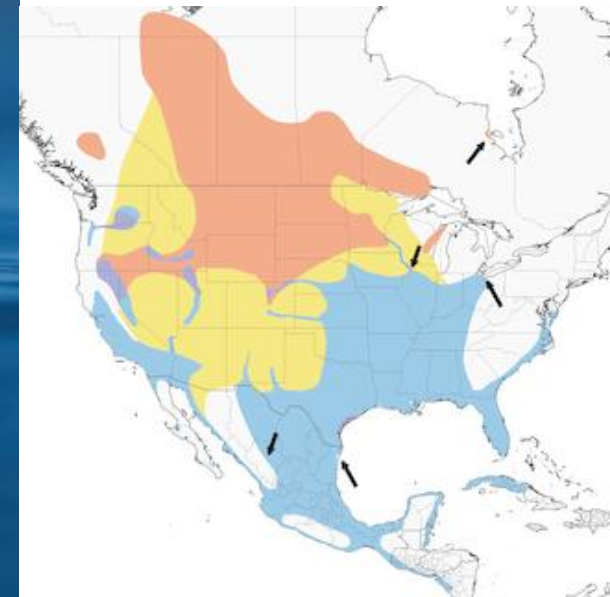
American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos ⓘ

LC Least Concern Names (35) Monotypic

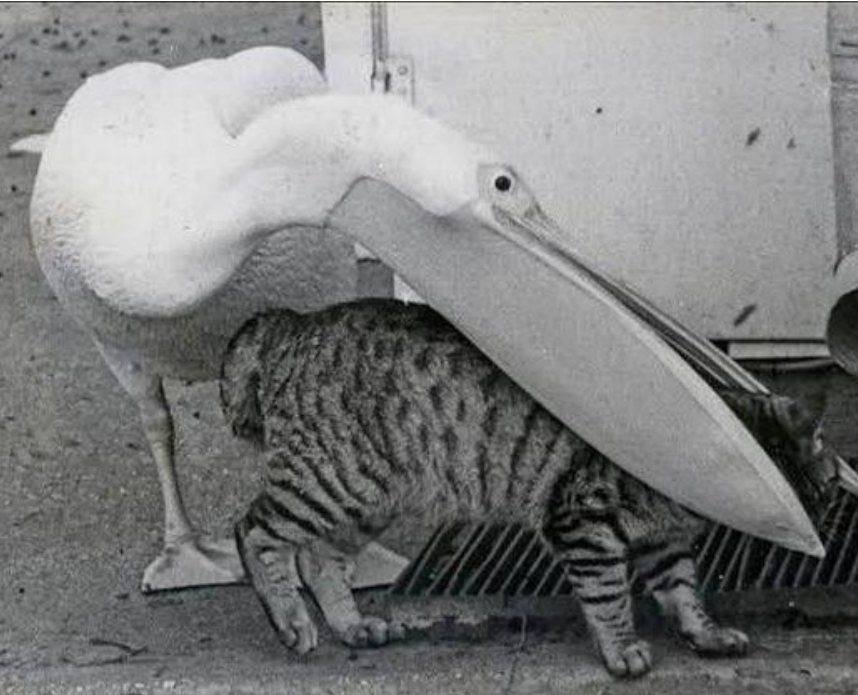


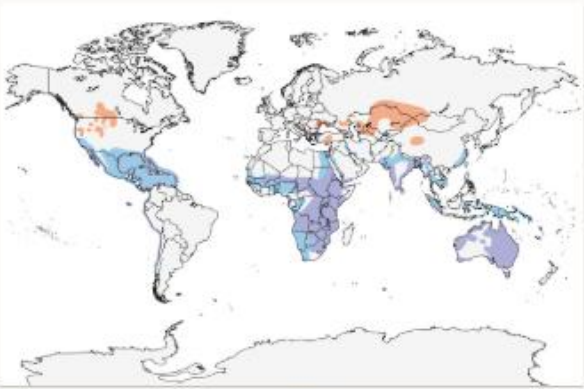
ORDER
Pelecaniformes
FAMILY
Pelecanidae
GENUS
Pelecanus



What birds are in the Pelecaniformes Order?

Pelecaniformes birds are medium to large aquatic birds with totipalmate feet (all four toes joined by web). Some have distensible gular sac located between the branches of the lower mandible.





■ Year-round
 ■ Breeding
 ■ Non-breeding

1
Genus

8
Species



Pelecanus 8 species

Account

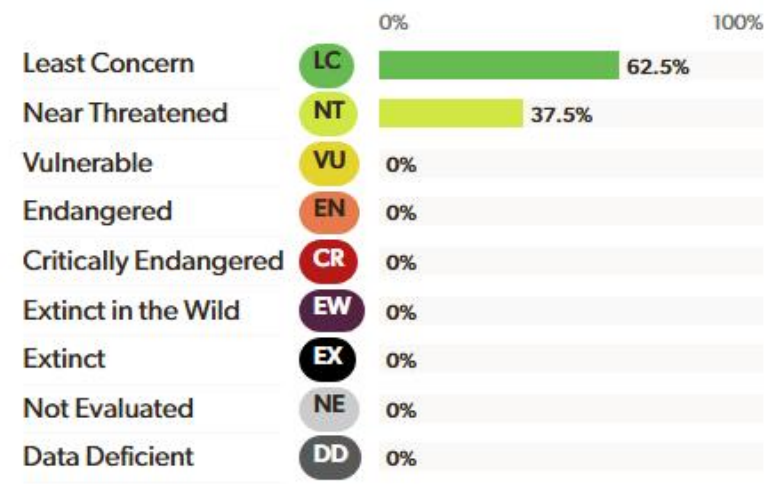
- General Habitat
- Diet and Foraging
- Breeding
- Conservation Status
- Systematics History

Species

Revision History

Often seen skimming low over the water in formation, pelicans also use their remarkable thermal soaring ability to commute, sometimes over 100 km each way, from resource-poor nesting areas to more productive fishing grounds. Pelicans use their flexible mandibles and greatly expanded gular pouches as hoop nets for capturing fish. These distinctive morphological adaptations are strictly for prey capture, not storage: once the water is drained out, pelicans usually swallow their precious prey, even while flying back to the nest to feed their young. The two brown pelican species are smaller, marine species that nest and forage along the coast. All the others are white or light gray with black in the wings, and breed around inland bodies of water.

Conservation Status



[Account](#)

[Species](#)

[Revision History](#)

[References](#)

Species

Pelecanus 8 species



American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos



Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*



Peruvian Pelican *Pelecanus thagus*



Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus



Australian Pelican

Pelecanus conspicillatus



Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens



Spot-billed Pelican

Pelecanus philippensis



Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus*

Now meet the other seven members of the *Pelecanus* Genus





Brown Pelican
Pelecanus occidentalis ⓘ
LC Least Concern Names (45) Subspecies (5)







Peruvian Pelican

Pelecanus thagus ⓘ

NT Near Threatened Names (33) Monotypic

Though closely related, the Peruvian Pelican is almost twice as large as its northern congener, the Brown Pelican.

Has a 7 ½ foot wingspan





© Canva News Agency



Australian Pelican

Pelecanus conspicillatus ⓘ

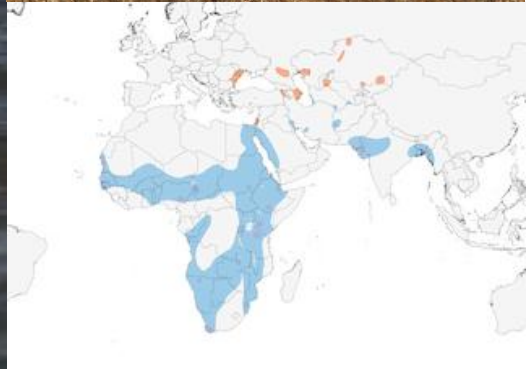
LC Least Concern Names (31) Monotypic

Besides Carp, may eat reptiles, amphibians, and probably even small dogs. Occasionally kleptoparasitic. Feeds in groups up to 1900. Wingspan is 8 ½ feet. Clutch 1–4 eggs, average 2





Great White Pelican
Pelecanus onocrotalus ⓘ
LC Least Concern Names (64) Monotypic





Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens ⓘ

LC Least Concern [Names \(42\)](#) [Monotypic](#)

Wingspan 9 ½ feet

Sexes similar in plumage, female averaging smaller.

Breeds in trees, often along waterfront.

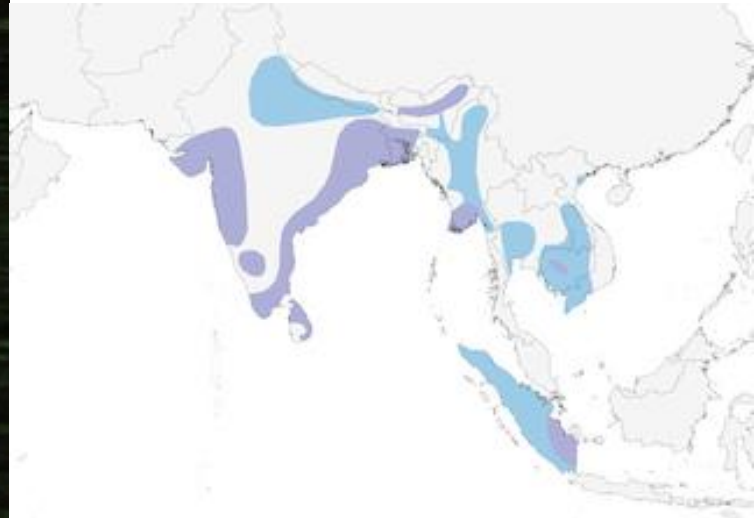




Spot-billed Pelican

Pelecanus philippensis ⓘ

NT Near Threatened | Names (44) | Monotypic



Dalmatian Pelican

Pelecanus crispus ⓘ

NT Near Threatened Names (54) Monotypic



This magnificent specimen has a wingspan of 11 ½ feet



A Sandhill Crane pair with each standing on one leg in one of the few open water sources. The Crane on the left kept his/her head tucked in against the cold, while the other was poking about in the water. While most of these birds migrate, a few will overwinter here in Michigan.



**One last Sandhill Crane and
Pelecaniformes member photo**

**Please Exit through
Gift Shop**

