



Hot Springs National Park

Background

Birds are useful indicators of ecological change because they are highly mobile and generally conspicuous. As climate in a particular place changes, suitability may worsen for some species and improve for others. These changes in climate may create the potential for local extirpation or new colonization. **This brief summarizes projected changes in climate suitability by mid-century for birds at Hot Springs National Park (hereafter, the Park) under two climate change scenarios (see Wu et al. 2018 for full results, and Langham et al. 2015 for more information regarding how climate suitability is characterized).** The high-emissions pathway (RCP8.5) represents a future in which little action is taken to reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases. The low-emissions pathway (RCP2.6) is a best-case scenario of aggressive efforts to reduce emissions. These emissions pathways are globally standardized and established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for projecting future climate change. The findings below are model-based projections of how species distributions may change in response to climate change. A 10-km buffer was applied to each park to match the spatial resolution of the species distribution models (10 x 10 km), and climate suitability was taken as the average of all cells encompassed by the park and buffer.

Results

Climate change is expected to alter the bird community at the Park, with greater impacts under the high-emissions pathway than under the low-emissions pathway (Figure 1). Among the species likely to be found at the Park today, climate suitability in summer under the high-emissions pathway is projected to improve for 4, remain stable for 14, and worsen for 14 species. Suitable climate ceases to occur for 20 species in summer, potentially resulting in extirpation of those species from the Park (e.g., Figure 2). Climate is projected to become suitable in summer for 24 species not found at the Park today, potentially resulting in local colonization. Climate suitability in winter under the high-emissions pathway is projected to improve for 7, remain stable for 26, and worsen for 13 species. Suitable climate ceases to occur for 9 species in winter, potentially resulting in extirpation from the Park. Climate is projected to become suitable in winter for 63 species not found at the Park today, potentially resulting in local colonization.

IMPORTANT

This study focuses exclusively on changing climatic conditions for birds over time. But projected changes in climate suitability are not definitive predictions of future species ranges or abundances. Numerous other factors affect where species occur, including habitat quality, food abundance, species adaptability, and the availability of microclimates (see Caveats). Therefore, managers should consider changes in climate suitability alongside these other important influences.

We report trends in climate suitability for all species identified as currently present at the Park based on both NPS Inventory & Monitoring Program data and eBird observation data (2016), plus those species for which climate at the Park is projected to become suitable in the future (Figure 1 & Table 1). This brief provides park-specific projections whereas Wu et al. (2018), which did not incorporate park-specific species data and thus may differ from this brief, provides system-wide comparison and conclusions.

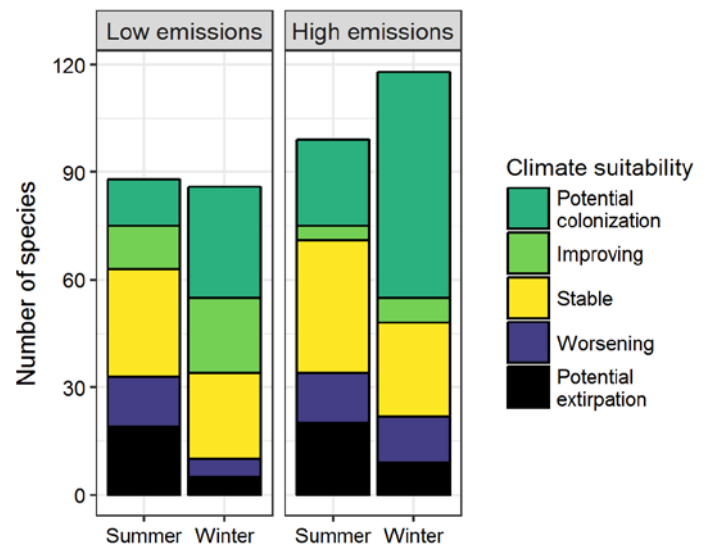


Figure 1. Projected changes in climate suitability for birds at the Park, by emissions pathway and season.

Results (continued)

Potential Turnover Index

Potential bird species turnover for the Park between the present and 2050 is 0.23 in summer (36th percentile across all national parks) and 0.27 in winter (41st percentile) under the high-emissions pathway. Potential species turnover declines to 0.17 in summer and 0.15 in winter under the low-emissions pathway. Turnover index was calculated based on the theoretical proportions of potential extirpations and potential colonizations by 2050 relative to today (as reported in Wu et al. 2018), and therefore assumes that all potential extirpations and colonizations are realized. According to this index, no change would be represented as 0, whereas a complete change in the bird community would be represented as 1.

Climate Sensitive Species

The Park is or may become home to 3 species that are highly sensitive to climate change across their range (i.e., they are projected to lose climate suitability in over 50% of their current range in North America in summer and/or winter by 2050; Table 1; Langham et al. 2015). Suitable climate is not projected to disappear for these 3 species at

Management Implications

Parks differ in potential colonization and extirpation rates, and therefore different climate change adaptation strategies may apply. **Under the high-emissions pathway, Hot Springs National Park falls within the intermediate change group.** Parks anticipating intermediate change can best support landscape-scale bird conservation by emphasizing habitat restoration, maintaining natural disturbance regimes, and reducing

Caveats

The species distribution models included in this study are based solely on climate variables (i.e., a combination of annual and seasonal measures of temperature and precipitation), which means there are limits on their interpretation. Significant changes in climate suitability, as measured here, will not always result in a species response, and all projections should be interpreted as potential trends. Multiple other factors mediate responses to climate change, including habitat availability, ecological processes

the Park; instead the Park may serve as an important refuge for these climate-sensitive species.



Figure 2. Although currently found at the Park, suitable climate for the American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) may cease to occur here in summer by 2050, potentially resulting in local seasonal extirpation. Photo by John Benson/Flickr (CC BY 2.0).

other stressors. Furthermore, park managers have an opportunity to focus on supporting the 3 species that are highly sensitive to climate change across their range (Table 1; Langham et al. 2015) but for which the park is a potential refuge. Monitoring to identify changes in bird communities will inform the selection of appropriate management responses.

that affect demography, biotic interactions that inhibit and facilitate species' colonization or extirpation, dispersal capacity, species' evolutionary adaptive capacity, and phenotypic plasticity (e.g., behavioral adjustments). Ultimately, models can tell us where to focus our concern and which species are most likely to be affected, but monitoring is the only way to validate these projections and should inform any on-the-ground conservation action.

More Information

For more information, including details on the methods, please see the scientific publication ([Wu et al. 2018](#)) and the [project overview brief](#), and visit the [NPS Climate Change Response Program website](#).

References

eBird Basic Dataset (2016) Version: ebd_relAug-2016. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York.

Langham et al. (2015) Conservation Status of North American Birds in the Face of Future Climate Change. PLOS ONE.

Wu et al. (2018) Projected avifaunal responses to climate change across the U.S. National Park System. PLOS ONE.

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Species Projections

Table 1. Climate suitability projections by 2050 under the high-emissions pathway for all birds currently present at the Park based on both NPS Inventory & Monitoring Program data and eBird observation data, plus those species for which climate at the Park is projected to become suitable in the future. "Potential colonization" indicates that climate is projected to become suitable for the species, whereas "potential extirpation" indicates that climate is suitable today but projected to become unsuitable. Omitted species were either not modeled due to data deficiency or were absent from the I&M and eBird datasets. Observations of late-season migrants may result in these species appearing as present in the park when they may only migrate through. Species are ordered according to taxonomic groups, denoted by alternating background shading.

* Species in top and bottom 10th percentile of absolute change

^ Species that are highly climate sensitive

- Species not found or found only occasionally, and not projected to colonize by 2050

x Species not modeled in this season

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Mottled Duck	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Cinnamon Teal	-	Potential colonization
Northern Bobwhite	Worsening	Worsening*
Wild Turkey	x	Potential extirpation
Pacific Loon	-	Potential colonization
Least Grebe	-	Potential colonization
Eared Grebe	-	Potential colonization
Wood Stork	Potential colonization	-
Magnificent Frigatebird	-	Potential colonization
Neotropic Cormorant	-	Potential colonization
Anhinga	Potential colonization [^]	-
Great Blue Heron	Stable	Stable

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Great Egret	-	Potential colonization
Snowy Egret	-	Potential colonization
Little Blue Heron	-	Potential colonization
Tricolored Heron	Potential colonization [^]	-
Cattle Egret	-	Potential colonization
Green Heron	Stable	-
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	-	Potential colonization
White Ibis	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Roseate Spoonbill	-	Potential colonization
Black Vulture	Improving*	Stable
Turkey Vulture	x	Improving
Osprey	-	Potential colonization

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Mississippi Kite	Stable	-
Bald Eagle	-	Stable
Harris's Hawk	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Red-shouldered Hawk	Stable	Stable
Red-tailed Hawk	Stable	Improving
Ferruginous Hawk	-	Potential colonization
Virginia Rail	-	Potential colonization
Sora	-	Potential colonization
Killdeer	Potential extirpation	Stable
Spotted Sandpiper	-	Potential colonization
Lesser Yellowlegs	-	Potential colonization
Stilt Sandpiper	-	Potential colonization
Long-billed Dowitcher	-	Potential colonization
Yellow-footed Gull	-	Potential colonization
Rock Pigeon	Potential extirpation	Potential extirpation
White-winged Dove	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Mourning Dove	Stable	Improving
Inca Dove	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Common Ground-Dove	Potential colonization	-
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Improving	-
Greater Roadrunner	Potential colonization	-
Groove-billed Ani	-	Potential colonization
Eastern Screech-Owl	x	Improving
Great Horned Owl	x	Potential extirpation

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Barred Owl	x	Stable
Lesser Nighthawk	Potential colonization	-
Common Nighthawk	Improving*	-
Common Pauraque	-	Potential colonization
Chuck-will's-widow	Stable	-
Chimney Swift	Worsening	-
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Stable	-
Buff-bellied Hummingbird	-	Potential colonization
Ringed Kingfisher	-	Potential colonization
Belted Kingfisher	Stable	Stable
Lewis's Woodpecker	-	Potential colonization
Red-headed Woodpecker	Stable	Worsening*
Gila Woodpecker	Potential colonization	-
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Stable	Stable
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	Stable
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	-	Potential colonization
Downy Woodpecker	Worsening	Potential extirpation
Hairy Woodpecker	Potential extirpation	Potential extirpation
Northern Flicker	Stable	Worsening
Pileated Woodpecker	Stable	Worsening*
Crested Caracara	-	Potential colonization
American Kestrel	x	Worsening
Peregrine Falcon	-	Potential colonization
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Worsening	-
Acadian Flycatcher	Stable	-
Gray Flycatcher	-	Potential colonization
Dusky Flycatcher	-	Potential

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
		colonization
Eastern Phoebe	Worsening	Stable
Vermilion Flycatcher	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Great Crested Flycatcher	Worsening	-
Couch's Kingbird	Potential colonization	-
Western Kingbird	Potential colonization	-
Eastern Kingbird	Worsening	-
Loggerhead Shrike	Stable	-
White-eyed Vireo	Improving	Potential colonization
Yellow-throated Vireo	Stable	-
Warbling Vireo	Potential extirpation	-
Red-eyed Vireo	Stable	-
Blue Jay	Stable	Worsening
American Crow	Stable	Worsening
Fish Crow	Stable	-
Chihuahuan Raven	Potential colonization	-
Purple Martin	Stable	-
Barn Swallow	Worsening	-
Cave Swallow	Potential colonization	-
Carolina Chickadee	Stable	Improving
Bridled Titmouse	-	Potential colonization
Tufted Titmouse	Worsening	Stable
White-breasted Nuthatch	Potential extirpation	Potential extirpation
Brown Creeper	-	Worsening
Rock Wren	-	Potential colonization
Marsh Wren	-	Potential colonization
Carolina Wren	Stable	Stable
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Worsening	Potential

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
		colonization
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	Potential colonization	-
Golden-crowned Kinglet	-	Worsening
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	Improving
Eastern Bluebird	Stable	Stable
Mountain Bluebird	-	Potential colonization
Hermit Thrush	-	Stable
Wood Thrush	Worsening	-
American Robin	Potential extirpation	Worsening
Gray Catbird	Potential extirpation	Potential colonization
Curve-billed Thrasher	Potential colonization	-
Brown Thrasher	Potential extirpation	Stable
Bendire's Thrasher	-	Potential colonization
LeConte's Thrasher	Potential colonization	-
Sage Thrasher	-	Potential colonization
Northern Mockingbird	Stable	Stable
European Starling	Potential extirpation	-
Sprague's Pipit	-	Potential colonization
Cedar Waxwing	-	Potential extirpation
Ovenbird	Potential extirpation	-
Black-and-white Warbler	Stable	Potential colonization
Kentucky Warbler	Stable	-
Common Yellowthroat	Potential extirpation	-
Hooded Warbler	Stable	-
Northern Parula	Stable	-

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Pine Warbler	Stable^	Stable
Yellow-rumped Warbler	-	Stable
Yellow-throated Warbler	Stable	-
Prairie Warbler	Stable	-
Black-throated Gray Warbler	-	Potential colonization
Yellow-breasted Chat	Stable	-
Green-tailed Towhee	-	Potential colonization
Eastern Towhee	Potential extirpation	x
Rufous-winged Sparrow	-	Potential colonization
Cassin's Sparrow	-	Potential colonization
Chipping Sparrow	Potential extirpation	Stable
Brewer's Sparrow	-	Potential colonization
Field Sparrow	Worsening*	Stable
Lark Sparrow	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Sagebrush/Bell's Sparrow (Sage Sparrow)	-	Potential colonization
Lark Bunting	-	Potential colonization
Grasshopper Sparrow	-	Potential colonization
Henslow's Sparrow	-	Potential colonization
Fox Sparrow	-	Worsening*
Song Sparrow	-	Worsening
White-throated Sparrow	-	Stable
Dark-eyed Junco	-	Stable

Common Name	Summer Trend	Winter Trend
Summer Tanager	Worsening	-
Scarlet Tanager	Potential extirpation	-
Northern Cardinal	Stable	Improving
Blue Grosbeak	Worsening*	-
Indigo Bunting	Stable	Potential colonization
Red-winged Blackbird	Potential extirpation	-
Eastern Meadowlark	Stable	-
Western Meadowlark	-	Potential colonization
Common Grackle	Potential extirpation	Stable
Great-tailed Grackle	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Bronzed Cowbird	Potential colonization	Potential colonization
Brown-headed Cowbird	Potential extirpation	Stable
Orchard Oriole	Stable	-
Hooded Oriole	Potential colonization	-
Altamira Oriole	-	Potential colonization
Baltimore Oriole	Potential extirpation	-
House Finch	Potential extirpation	Potential extirpation
Purple Finch	-	Potential extirpation
Pine Siskin	-	Stable
American Goldfinch	Potential extirpation	Stable
House Sparrow	x	Worsening