



April 15, 2024

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM PROJECT COMPLETION SUMMARY
Avian Nest Monitoring on Riparian Properties
2017-SWCA-1750K

The work for the above referenced project has been completed. Below is a summary of project related information.

The purpose of the above referenced project was:

The purpose of the project was to implement a cowbird control program on the Mesquite West Riparian Reserve flycatcher site and conduct an assessment of nest parasitism on the Mormon Mesa Riparian Reserve property. Data from annual surveys conducted along the Virgin River at the Mesquite West flycatcher site indicated consistently high rates of cowbird parasitism, and it is believed that parasitism has significantly contributed to the nest failures and low productivity at that site. A cowbird control program is recommended when parasitism rates of a threatened or endangered host reach 20%–30% or 50% for any host species. Monitoring of flycatcher nests is a component in determining whether a control program has an impact on the nesting success of flycatchers. Success rate of flycatcher nesting and rates of cowbird parasitism on the Mormon Mesa property were currently unknown. Other than cowbird egg addling and cowbird nestling euthanasia, no cowbird control is planned for Mormon Mesa; however, impacts from cowbird nest parasitism shall be monitored.

The major accomplishments or findings of this project include:

SWCA conducted nest monitoring and brown-headed cowbird control at Mesquite West from May through July 2022. Eleven confirmed nesting attempts were documented; seven of these attempts were successful. Seven adult and 16 nestling southwestern willow flycatchers were newly banded in 2022; three adults banded in a previous years were recaptured. Of the 16 nestlings banded at Mesquite West, 13 were confirmed to have fledged.

For more information about this project and/or for other Project Reports or Symposium Reports, please visit our [website](#).

If you have any questions about this project, please contact Caryn Wright, at (702) 455-2972.