



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

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Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org
www.kastehachapibird.org

Kern Audubon Society
Tuesday MAY 4, 2014 - 7:00pm
Kern Supt of Schools, 17th & L Sts.

"KERN COUNTY BIG YEAR"

Susan Steele, Presenter



By Bob Steele

From January 1st to December 31st 2011, Susan Steele did a Kern County "Big Year". She set out to break the record for the greatest number of species of birds seen in Kern County in one year. Did she do it? Many of you know, and will enjoy hearing some of the details of that crazy year's adventure/slog. Others will have to come to the program to find out. We'll hear about some of the many folks who helped, some of the serendipitous finds, and some of the species missed. There will also likely be some photos from Susan's husband, Bob Steele, who has presented several wonderful programs on his & Susan's world birding travels. (Above photo of a Greater Sage Grouse is by Bob.)

Susan's interest in birds began as a child in Idaho with evenings spent on the porch listening to meadowlarks. This interest blossomed into a passion when she moved to the California/Kern County desert more than 30 years ago. Recently she has taken to spending some of her free time in Aspendell, where she enjoys hiking, looking at flowers, and chasing birds.



UPDATE ON TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS

As many of you are aware, an extensive effort has been made in the past three weeks to save a colony of 50,000 Tricolored Blackbirds nesting in several fields owned by a dairy farmer in Madera, California. The flock of birds represented 25% of the state's population, making the preservation critically important to the preservation of the species. Efforts have been made to raise funds to pay the farmer for replacement feed/forage for his dairy and many of you have contributed to this effort, including the Executive Board of Kern Audubon which voted unanimously to send \$500 out of budgeted funds. Below is an excerpt from the letter received from the Executive Director of Audubon California, Brigid McCormack (April 9, 2014):

Thank you so much for your gift of \$500 to Audubon California...to save the Tricolored Blackbird colony. You and your fellow bird heroes have made a real difference--as of this writing, negotiations with the landowner continue and the fields that are home to this colony are not harvested....We knew the cost of replacement feed could range between \$40,000 - \$160,000. We asked you to help us raise an ambitious \$40,000 in 24 hours, and your response astounded us...Audubon friends contributed over \$110,000! You have made known the power of our network of bird lovers. Birds matter.

This colony is just part of Audubon's strategy with this bird. We are engaging other farmers to help save additional colonies as the breeding season begins, and creating a fund that can be on-hand for the next emergency. Most important for the long-term success of the species though, we are trying to prevent the birds from using agriculture by creating natural wetland habitat. Your contributions will help save this bird from extinction. Thank you for being a bird hero!

And most recently, this email note from Meghan Hertle, Working Lands Program Director, Audubon California:

Thank you again for your generosity and continued interest in the threatened colony of 50,000 Tricolored Blackbirds. Your contribution has helped delay the harvesting of the field with the Tricolored Blackbird colony until early May while negotiations continue. This should allow enough time for the colony's young to successfully fledge and for us to reach a financial agreement. Audubon California and bird heroes like you have come a long way toward saving this colony, but we still need to come to a final agreement with this landowner before we can claim success.

Thank you for being a bird hero today!

May Workday at Panorama Vista Preserve

On **Saturday, May 10**, KAS will have its monthly workday at the Preserve: **8-10 AM**. Spring has arrived in Bakersfield and the Preserve needs some weeding and other maintenance. Attendance at the April workday was sparse, with Andy Honig, David Schaad, and Al Caetano doing the work. However, if you know these three workers, it was equivalent to 10 people! What should you bring? Water, hat, gloves, and your favorite weeding tool. If you have any questions, contact Harry Love (805-1420, love3@bak.rr.com). Please come out to help the Preserve, the gem of Bakersfield, flourish---just 2 hours!



Water Bill Update: Your Input Works!

Assembly Bill 1331 passed the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee keeping in language to provide water for Central Valley wildlife refuges. This was accomplished in large part due to the strong support voiced by Audubon chapters. We heard from a number of legislative staffers that lawmakers were impressed by vocal support for birds prior to the March 25 hearing. So, a big thanks for weighing in. The Central Valley refuges, for the most part, are the last remnants of Central Valley wetland habitat, more than 95 percent of which was lost in the last century as the land was converted to agriculture. Water going to these refuges represents just a tiny fraction of the water used in the Central Valley, but it's of critical importance to millions of Pacific Flyway migratory birds. If the water bond is stripped of language providing water for refuges, it could have disastrous results for birds and make it even harder for California to comply with its legal obligations under federal and state law.

Garry George, Chapter Network Director Audubon California

(Note: Many Kern Audubon members contacted Senator Jean Fuller, a member of the committee, to vote to keep the refuge provision in the bill. Thanks to all of you!)

Endangered Species Day, May 16th

Endangered Species Day is an opportunity for people of all ages to learn about the importance of protecting endangered species and everyday actions they can take to help protect them. Started in 2006 by the United States Congress, Endangered Species Day is a celebration of the nation's wildlife and wild places. Every year on the third Friday in May (and throughout the month), zoos, aquariums, parks, botanic gardens, wildlife refuges, museums, schools, community centers, conservation groups and other organizations throughout the country hold tours, special speaker presentations, exhibits, children's activities and more to celebrate Endangered Species Day. Locally, you can visit Kern Wildlife Refuge and CALM. On Saturday, May 17, CALM is having its 31st Birthday Party. Visit either place; it is a great way to celebrate the work done there to protect endangered species.

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD 2013 - 2014

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LOOKING AHEAD TO TUES. JUNE 3, 2014, 6:30PM

--Kern Audubon's annual picnic & program at Jastro Park. Mark the date and plan for a fun evening!

WEBSITES to check out...

Info about birds? To learn more about birds, go to www.birds.cornell.edu, the website of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, world leader in the study and conservation of birds

Kern Birding For a great website about Kern County birding spots: www.natureali.org/birding.htm.

Audubon California has an excellent website: www.Audubon-ca.org

Audubon in the news - To learn about National Audubon go to: www.audubon.org or chapterleaders@audubon.org



KERN AUDUBON ON FACEBOOK

"Like" us on FACEBOOK and add your comments, photos, bird sightings, etc. as well as get updates on field trips and programs!

MAY FIELD TRIPS

May 3, Saturday - Windwolves Preserve

This is a special RSVP Tour by bus at Windwolves, 9 am to 12 pm. Limited to 25 people. Meet at the Stockdale Park n Ride (on Stockdale between Real Rd. & Hiway 99 behind Kaiser) leaving at **8 am** to meet at Windwolves Visitors Center at 9. Bring snack/lunch, bins, water. This trip is graciously made possible by Audubon member Jim Burrow's successful December auction bid! To see if space is available and get on the list, call Deb at 661-805-0232.

May 10, Saturday - Butterbredt Springs

Hard Core Birding experience available for any level who wants to participate! Naturalist Allison Sheehey will be leading birding at dawn at Butterbredt, which is located in Jawbone Canyon area of the Mojave desert. This means either campout or extra early drive over. It's the peak of migration so special birds are expected. After initial time at Butterbredt, the group will visit the Piute Mountain area and Kelso Valley Sanctuary with the drive home through the Kern River Canyon on Hwy178. Friday night rough camping is available near Butterbredt or also camping with a few more amenities 20 minutes away at Red Rock State Park. If you are interested in this extraordinary birding adventure or would like more information, call Deb at 661-805-0232.

May 14, Wednesday - 8 am Truxtun Lake

Bill Moffat will lead this field trip with a focus on beginning birding awareness and helpful hints. Meet in parking lot off of Truxtun extension west of Mohawk Ave. near the water tower. Bring bins (we have a few to loan,) and water. We'll be done by 11 am. Info call Bill at 661-201-9279

Sat. May 17 - Paradise Valley Rd, Tehachapi

Join KAS-Tehachapi for this walk up Tehachapi Mountain in search of breeding birds. Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Band-tailed Pigeon, and Green-tailed Towhee are just a few possibilities.

Meet in the Kmart parking lot near the Burger King at 7:00 AM. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. We will have lunch in town afterwards. Call Angela for information: 304-6816

Bakersfield birders will meet at the Park n Ride on Stockdale between Hlway 99 & Reald Rd. at 6:15am.

May 19, Monday late afternoon - "Twilight at Tule" - Will be at the Tule Elk State Natural Reserve 2 hours before sunset to watch nature's twilight performance: eloquent lighting, blackbirds(tri-colored, yellow-headed, and red-wing) coming into the tules to roost, lesser night hawks, owls, (vermillion flycatcher was seen last week!), more birds, tule elk, coyotes, ect., Viewing from park platform by tule pond and early short auto-tour to see burrowing owls and be closer to the elk. Carpool leaving at 5:30 pm from Riverwalk parking lot across from CSUB at Stockdale Hwy and Don Hart Drive . Bring bins, and optional snacks. Call Bill or Deb for info. 661-201-9279, or 661-805-0232.



June 14, Saturday - Kern River Audubon Preserve area and Greenhorn Ridge with Bob Barnes. 3 segments birders can choose to participate in: early morning, mid morning and afternoon. More info next month's Warbler or call Deb 661-805-0232.

PRESIDENT'S NEST



At the April meeting, Kathy Love and I talked about the need, as a premier volunteer environmental organization, for volunteers. Volunteer sign-up lists were passed out to the fifty members present listing areas of need: field trips, program, hospitality, publicity, fund appeal, newsletter, and conservation. The response was fantastic! Twenty-two members volunteered, listing their top three choices. At the May meeting, we will again solicit for more volunteers and during the summer, myself and Board members will start to fill in the areas of need with people who indicated they would like to help. Please come to the May program! Besides viewing a great program by Susan Steele on her 'Big Year of Birding', you, too, get a chance to join our list of volunteers. If you think we are strong now, just wait until we all get involved.

Harry Love, President

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www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

• Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Sat. May 3, 8am - Wind Wolves field trip
- Tues. May 6, 7:00pm - Program/meeting
- Sat. May 10, 9-11am - PVP Workparty
- Sat. May 10 - Butterbredt Springs field trip
- Wed. May 14, 8am - Truxtun lake field trip
- Sat. May 17 - Paradise Valley, Tehachapi field trip
- Mon. May 19, 5:30pm - "Twilight at Tule"

Membership Application -- KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY (C4ZC300Z)

If you would like to be part of a grass-roots conservation organization with a distinguished history, join the National Audubon Society and Kern Audubon! Please complete the form below and send with your check !

Membership includes *Audubon Magazine* (6 Issues) and the *Audubon's Warbler* (10 issues)

____New Member \$20

Make check payable to **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Send this form and your check for \$20 to:

Kern Audubon
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385

Name(s) _____ Amount enclosed _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone # _____