



# AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 44. no. 9 - November 2015  
Newsletter of **Kern Audubon Society**  
A chapter of National Audubon Society  
[www.kernaudubonsociety.org](http://www.kernaudubonsociety.org)

**Kern Audubon**  
**Tues. November 3, 2015 - 7:00pm**  
Kern Supt of Schools City Center  
17th & L Sts. - (parking lot @18th & K Sts.)

**"Native Plants are for the Birds!"**  
**Steve Kranyak, Presenter**



Steve Kranyak has a passion for all things native in the garden, a love which began with his first home garden 30 years ago. He's lived in suburban Concord (east Bay Area), the Sierra foothills in Placerville and in Bakersfield for the past 18 years and has used 100% native plants in all his garden landscapes. He's experimented with lots of different plants to see which ones are best for our area and looks forward to sharing his experience, including how birds respond to his gardens. Steve and his love of native plants was featured on the front page of *The Bakersfield California's Eye Street* on October 11th. He'll show pictures of his own garden which boasts native grasses, manzanita, paintbrush, mountain mahogany and much more. Now is the time, Steve says, to get started on our own gardens, especially in this time of drought. Join us for a timely and lively program!

## NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS

### **Tuesday, Nov. 10, 8:00am - Buena Vista Aquatic Recreation Area**

Join Ranger Bill Moffat for a morning of birding at the Buena Vista Rec. Area about 30 miles west of Bakersfield where we can expect to see migrating songbirds, raptors and shorebirds. Meet **8:00am** at the Kern River Parkway parking lot on Stockdale Hiway across from CSUB or at **8:30am** at Buena Vista Rec. Area. Bring water, snacks, binocs, sun hat; returning after lunch at the Buena Vista golf course (or bring own lunch). Call Deb (805-0232) or Bill (201-9279) for info.

### **Saturday afternoon/evening, Nov 14 - Atwell Island & Pixley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge**

This promises to be a great afternoon & evening of birding just north of Kern county. We will meet at **1:30pm** at the Rosedale Costco near the gas station to carpool. Bring a SACK DINNER, snacks & water, binoculars and jackets for the evening. After a quick birding visit (1 hr) to Atwell Island (a Bureau of Land Management restoration project near Alpaugh) where we should see redwing, tricolor & yellow-headed blackbirds as well as other wetland birds, we will head to nearby Pixley NWR for the "Return of the Sandhill Cranes" event. Starting at 4:00pm there will be welcoming by the refuge staff & refreshments before an easy 1/2 mile walk to the observation deck. Sunset is the best time to see the Sandhill Cranes as they fly back to the protection of the refuge for the night. Bring flashlights! Please help carpool drivers with \$10 for gas!

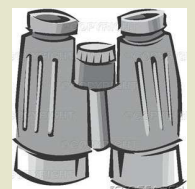
*Those wishing to only attend the Sandhill Crane event can meet at Pixley NWR at 4pm. It's a 45 minute drive from Bakersfield to Earlimart via Hiway 99. Go west at Avenue 56 approx 5.7 miles to a sign to refuge. Turn right (north) on Road 88 and go 1 mile to the refuge parking lot.*

*Contact Bill Moffat; 661-201-9279 or Deb See; 661-805-0232 for further information.*

### **Saturday November 21 - Paradise Valley Rd., Tehachapi**

Join KAS-Tehachapi leader Greg Hargleroad for a morning of birding along beautiful Paradise Valley Road in Tehachapi. We'll be looking for migrants and year-round resident birds. Meet at the Burger King on Tehachapi Blvd (Kmart shopping center) at **8:00am**. Bring binoculars, dress in layers, snacks.

Bakersfield birders will meet to carpool at **7:15pm** at the ParknRide on Stockdale Hiway between Real Rd & Hiway 99. Call Greg for info: 818/645-3664.



## PRESIDENT'S NEST



October was a fantastic month for our Chapter! Our Tehachapi group is now being led by an expanded team. **Greg Hargleroad, Dixie Coutant, Hal Morgan & Kristie Bret-Harte** have joined **Mary Dufrain** and **Carol Gates** to provide increased interest and expertise which will continue to attract new folks to participate in programs & field trips!.... On October 6, Kern Audubon hosted our first 'outreach' program to attract new members. Ali Sheehey presented a program of inspired insight about the diversity of the natural wonders, wildlife, and birds of Kern County. Thanks to the members of the Executive Board, invitations were placed in libraries and handed out at events of other organizations. Many KAS members also handed out invitations to friends and neighbors. Success breeds excitement!.... Ten members have now joined our children's education team after hearing about and seeing **Susan and Barbara Castle's** puppet show...Our Chapter is blessed with very talented members who volunteer their time to spread the message of the Audubon Society, that is, "**Birds Matter**".

Harry Love, President



## WORKPARTY AT PANORAMA VISTA PRESERVE

Our November work day will be changed to the **third Saturday, November 21, 8-10 AM**. With fall in the air, we will work to get the trees ready for winter, which involves mulching around the trees. We will also do weeding of the pesky tumble weeds. Bring water, shovel, hat, and gloves. Meet at the east end of Roberts Lane. Want to join the fun? Contact Harry Love (805-1420 [love3@bak.rr.com](mailto:love3@bak.rr.com)) for more information.

If you'd like to find out what similar groups to Audubon are doing, consider a social media web site called **Meetup**. You get email reminders of events and, it's free! To become a member of Meetup, go to [www.meetup.com/Kern-Audubon-Society](http://www.meetup.com/Kern-Audubon-Society) and follow the easy instructions.



Do you shop on the internet? Do you use Amazon? If so, you can help Kern Audubon through **Amazon Smile**, a site that allows you to shop for the same items and price as the regular site but with the added feature that .5% of what you pay to Amazon will go to KAS. You have the same choices and you pay no more. You do need to register ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) and select your charity of choice, the Kern Audubon Society. Then, when buy something, just go to the Smile site. It is easy and Kern Audubon will benefit!



## CONSERVATION TEAM FORMED

The Conservation Committee has been formed and had its first meeting. **Sherry Dolan, Pat Bonas, Sami Neymark, Ashleigh Pryor**, and I are the members of the team that will analyze local conservation topics. Of interest to the team are key local conservation topics: solar and wind energy projects, desert issues, habitat restoration projects, and species protection policies. The members will take on several duties, from writing letters to attending hearings and meetings. All of them are excited to be a part of Audubon's legacy of providing constructive advice to policy makers. You too can become a member of this team by contacting me (805-1420 [love3@bak.rr.com](mailto:love3@bak.rr.com)). I hope you will take up the challenge.

Harry Love, Conservation Chair

## WEBSITES to check out...

**Info about birds?** Go to [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://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](http://www.natureali.org/birding.htm).

**Audubon California** has an excellent website: [www.Audubon-ca.org](http://www.Audubon-ca.org)

**Audubon in the news** - To learn about National Audubon go to: [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) or [chapterleaders@audubon.org](mailto:chapterleaders@audubon.org)

**BIRD FESTIVALS** are fun! You meet other birders, visit new places, see lots of birds, hear interesting presentations, support local economies and much more. For information about festivals around the country, go to...

[www.Americanbirding.org/festivals](http://www.Americanbirding.org/festivals)  
[www.birdwatchersdigest.com](http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com)

**Nov. 13-15, 2015 SWAN FESTIVAL**  
Marysville CA  
[www.CASwanFestival.com](http://www.CASwanFestival.com)

**March 3-6, 2016 SAN DIEGO BIRD FEST**  
[www.sandiegoaudubon.org](http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org)



## KERN AUDUBON ON FACEBOOK

"Like" us on FACEBOOK! Add your comments, photos, bird sightings and get updates on field trips and programs!

## **HOW TO WELCOME WINTER BIRDS**

Sad some of your favorite birds are going south for the winter? Don't worry—others are coming to take their places. As birds that breed in the lower 48 states head to Central and South America, those from the boreal forests of Canada and Alaska are also heading south in search of warmer climes. One study found that in California's Central Valley, there are just as many different bird species around in the winter as in the summer. Jeff Wells, Science and Policy Director for the Boreal Songbird Initiative, states: "There's this massive sea of a billion or more birds that come down into the U.S. and become, often, the common birds of backyards and parks and lakes and ponds, yet we don't think so much about where they're coming from and what their needs are."

Helping these winter visitors out could help sustain their populations in both their wintering and summering grounds. Birds have the same needs—food, water, shelter—in winter as they do any other time. Winter habitat has also been shown to affect breeding success.

So what can you do to welcome the boreal birds to your backyard this winter?

**Create a songbird border** of native trees and shrubs to shelter your yard from the wind. Choose berry-producing landscape plants, such as juniper trees and shrubs like dogwood, serviceberry, and viburnum; many boreal birds, such as the Cedar Waxwing, the Yellow-rumped Warbler, and several sparrow species, eat berries during the winter.

**Make a brush pile** in the corner of the yard to shelter the birds from predators and storms and to provide night roosting places. Put larger branches on the bottom and layer smaller branches on top.

**Rake leaves up under trees and shrubs**—and leave them there. The resulting mulch will make a lush environment for the insects and spiders that these birds, such as the Savannah Sparrow and Golden-crowned Sparrow,

## **TEHACHAPI BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROJECT UPDATE**

Twelve of the Tehachapi nest box monitors gathered for lunch on October 12th at Kohnen's Bakery to celebrate efforts on behalf of Bluebirds. If you couldn't make it, you were missed! Madi Elsea (past president of Kern Audubon) was gracious to attend and thank us all for our continued efforts with the bluebird nest box program. We said good-bye to Jennifer who has been joyfully participating for so many years, and we will miss her!

This was our 16th nesting season for collecting nest box data for Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch Citizen Science Program. Compared to the prior 15 years, 2015 was an average year for numbers of fledglings per box monitored. This spring there were two cold weather events in the Tehachapi mountains, a leading cause of nestling and egg mortality in the Tehachapi nest boxes. Regardless, the birds laid a second clutch after failed attempts, and some second clutches were successful!

In 2015 the total number of nest boxes monitored was 68. There were 92 nesting attempts: 24 of these attempts were second clutches, and one was a third clutch.

Three notable results this year include:

- 1) A continued trend toward earlier nesting starts or "first egg" laid in a nest box. In 2015 we saw the earliest "first egg" for Brite Lake nest boxes. All of the 9 active boxes at Brite Lake had "first eggs" in March. The earliest were 2 nest boxes with "first egg" on March 11th. For our area, early April is the expected date for breeding behavior, or first egg.
- 2) The nest box with 3 clutches fledged a total of 13 western bluebirds! Three clutches are rare and this is a record number of young fledged from one box for Tehachapi nest boxes (and presumably from one pair of bluebirds). Additionally, this box had THE earliest "first egg" EVER for Tehachapi nest boxes, February 27th.
- 3) Another notable is that all young fledged from the nest boxes in 2015 were western bluebirds. On all years prior to 2015, one or more other cavity nesting species have fledged young from the nest boxes. This year only one box contained an ash-throated flycatcher nest and eggs, but the eggs did not hatch.

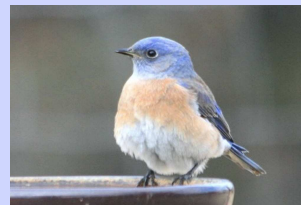
### **2015 Results - All Western Bluebird (unless noted)**

**Nest Boxes: 68**

**Eggs: 337 (2 ash-throated flycatcher)**

**Young: 273**

**Fledged: 198**



In a sad note, we lost our master bluebird nest box builder, Ed Sterling (below), who passed away last spring. He had built dozens of beautifully crafted nest boxes over many years, as well as helped to monitor the boxes along with his late wife, Fran. The program is now in need of an occasional bluebird box to keep a supply of replacement boxes on hand. Anyone who is interested in donating your time and talents for the western bluebird program, for building nest boxes or participating in the monitoring program, please contact me!

Karen Pestana, Coordinator ( [kptehachapi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kptehachapi@sbcglobal.net) )

## ***Project FeederWatch***



Project FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. The FeederWatch season starts November 8th and ends April 3, 2016, so go to [www.FeederWatch.org](http://www.FeederWatch.org) for more information and to register. It's great fun & an important contribution to science!

Anyone interested in birds can participate. Participants watch their feeders as much or as little as they want over two consecutive days as often as every week (less often is fine). New participants are sent a Research Kit with complete instructions for participating, as well as a bird identification poster and more. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. There is an \$18 annual participation fee for U.S. residents (\$15 for Cornell Lab members).

## Greater Sage-Grouse Off Endangered Species List

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that the Greater Sage-Grouse, an iconic bird of the American West, does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act. Conservationists, ranchers, politicians, and industry have been on edge for months in anticipation of the decision, which was announced just days before a court-ordered September 30 deadline. Many conservationists worried that a formal listing could undermine the serious—and pioneering—voluntary efforts taken to protect the bird's sagebrush habitat in recent years.

"This is a new lease on life for the Greater Sage-Grouse and the entire sagebrush ecosystem," said National Audubon Society President and CEO David Yarnold. "Unprecedented cooperation by private landowners, states, and the federal government has created a framework for conservation at a scale unique in the world." When FWS first announced that the bird would be considered for a federal listing in 2010, regional conservation efforts had already been underway. "This is exactly what Audubon has been working toward for 10 years," says Brian Rutledge, VP and Central Flyway policy advisor for Audubon. Rutledge and his team helped create a science-based approach to sage-grouse protections that significantly reduces disturbance in core habitat—an approach that's been adopted in state and federal plans alike. "This is the kind of cooperation the Endangered Species Act was designed to encourage," he says. "It wasn't intended to list everything under the sun; it was to motivate conservation before listing became necessary."

### **The Enormous Effort to Stave Off a Listing**

The sage-grouse is inextricably linked to this sagebrush ecosystem: The plants provide cover from raptors and other predators, serve as shelter for nesting birds in the summer, and supply the grouse's sole source of food in the winter—in fact, the birds actually gain weight eating the leaves during the harsh winter months. But as the habitat has shrunk, the birds' numbers have plummeted, from millions a century ago to between 200,000 and 500,000 today.

The Greater Sage-Grouse is an indicator species of the health of this entire ecosystem. The desire to keep the bird off the list—and stave off the many restrictions that come with a



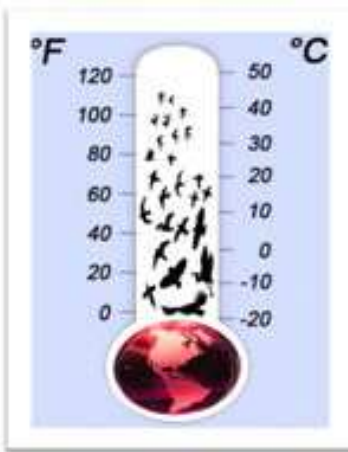
threatened or endangered status—has generated a rare show of cooperation from those interested in using the habitat for drilling, ranching, or other economic endeavors. In consultation with conservation groups and government agencies, they have made ambitious commitments to protect enough space for the bird while still permitting some development. Today's announcement is a ratification that the approach is working. "We're seeing landscape-scale conservation like we've never seen

before," says Audubon's Rutledge

Protecting the Greater Sage-Grouse—this odd bird that demands attention with weird pops and whistles during mating season, and then melts into the sagebrush for the rest of the year—ultimately means protecting the some 350 species that call this vast swath of the American West home.

*NOTE: The greater sage-grouse can be seen in California.*

*Best location: along highway 395, Crowley Lake near Mammoth Lakes*



## **5 THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE**

- \*In 2013, the world built more capacity for renewables than fossil fuels.
- \*More than 300,000 people, representing diverse organizations, marched during the People's Climate March in New York City.
- \*Started in New York, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative shows that emissions can be lowered while wealth indicators rise – proving that a healthy economy and healthy environment are inextricably linked.
- \*Audubon is working with historically black colleges and universities in North Carolina using climate change as way to jumpstart college chapters.
- \*For the first time in four decades, in 2014, the world economy grew without an associated increase in the rate of global carbon emissions.

**NOTE: CLIMATE CHANGE CORNER will be a monthly feature of the Warbler, giving you facts**

## **“DITCH YOUR LAWN” WORKSHOP**

On Saturday, November 7, from 9am to 12 pm, the Kern Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will offer a workshop on lawn removal techniques and how to plan a garden. It is an opportunity for residents to learn how to modify their landscapes in addressing the drought and increasing cost of water. The “Ditch Your Lawn” workshop will be held at the Kern County Superintendent of Schools building at 1300 17th Street, between K and L Streets. The parking structure is accessible from 18th.

“Participants will receive step by step instructions on how to kill traditional turf lawns, plan and design native gardens, and install and maintain their new landscapes. Each converted lawn helps save precious water, as much as 60%, and also helps restore our ecosystems for a healthier and more beautiful California”, says Becky Reilly of CNPS State Office. Members of the Kern Chapter of the California Native Plant Society who have removed their own lawns and who have native plant gardens will be the presenters.



## **NEWSLETTER MAILING TEAM**

Many thanks to MONICA PRICE for serving the past three years as our newsletter mailing committee of one! She has now trained three others who will take over the mailing of the monthly *Audubon's Warbler*: Cindy Caetano, Donna Adams & Barbara Love, who will take turns with this important task for the chapter. Many thanks also to BARB COLEY who has substituted for Monica on many occasions. Thank you, all!!

Looking ahead to the annual HOLIDAY POTLUCK & AUCTION...Tues. **DECEMBER 1ST, 6:30PM**. Items will be needed for the auction, so remember Kern Audubon as you consider what you might like to donate!

## **MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR**

The position of membership coordinator for Kern Audubon involves reporting membership changes to National Audubon, sending welcome letters to new members and preparing labels for the monthly newsletter. We're looking for someone to fill this important position! Time involved is approximately 6 hours a month. If you might be interested in learning more about what's involved, contact Madi Elsea (322-7470).

## **eBird--GLOBAL TOOL FOR BIRDERS, CRITICAL DATA FOR SCIENCE: [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)**

- Record the birds you see
- Keep track of your bird lists
- Explore dynamic maps and graphs
- Share your sightings and join the eBird community
- Contribute to science and conservation

eBird is a real-time, online checklist program which has revolutionized the way the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution at a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

Go to [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) and begin recording your bird sightings---it's fun and it's free!

## **KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**2015-2016**

- Harry Love, President/Conservation  
[love3@bak.rr.com](mailto:love3@bak.rr.com); 805-1420
- Kevin Fahey, Vice-President  
[kjfahey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kjfahey@sbcglobal.net); 706-7459 (cell)
- Sasha Honig, Secretary  
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## AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Kern Audubon Society  
PO Box 3581  
Bakersfield CA 93385



www.kernaudubonsociety.org

### RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. Nov. 3, 7:00pm - Meeting & Program
- Tues. Nov. 10, 8:00am - Buena Vista field trip
- Sat. Nov. 14 - Atwell/Pixley NWR field trip
- Sat. Nov. 21 - Tehachapi Paradise Rd. field trip
- Sat. Nov. 21, 8am - PVP Workparty

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_