



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 44. no. 4 - APRIL 2015
Newsletter of **Kern Audubon Society**
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org



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

"Saving the Tricolored Blackbird: An Update"
Samantha Arthur, Audubon California



In 2014, 145,000 Tricolored Blackbirds were counted in the Central Valley, down from 2-3 million in the 1930's. Because of its sharp decline in recent years, Tricoloreds have now been emergency listed as an endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act and have been petitioned for federal listing with the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Samantha Arthur, Conservation Project Manager for Audubon California, will present a program on Audubon's multi-pronged approach to saving this endemic California species acutely threatened because of the drought, including working with dairy farmers to delay harvesting agricultural fields, which have become prime nesting habitat for Tricoloreds due to 95% loss of wetlands. Audubon's commitment to this project is another example of how much "birds matter"!

Samantha Arthur (pictured above left) focuses on improving wetlands management for the benefit of bird species in the Central Valley of California through her work with Audubon California, especially as manager of Audubon's campaign to save the Tricolored Blackbird. She has a Masters of Environmental Science & Management from UC Santa Barbara and an extensive background in conservation. Prior to Audubon Samantha worked with the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts and was a Land Protection Specialist for the Big Sur Land Trust.

APRIL FIELD TRIPS

Sun. April 12, 10:00am - Woody

We will visit and observe a colony of Tricolored Blackbirds along the Glenville-Woody Road and visit other birding spots in this foothill area with opportunity to see raptors as well as resident and migratory birds. Bring snacks, water, lunch, binocs, \$5 for drivers. Meet to carpool at the Rosedale Costco near the gas station at 10am. Call Bill or Deb for info: 805-0232.

Sat. April 18, 6:30am - Piute Ponds & California City

This is special chance to visit protected ponds on Edwards AFB near Mojave with leader Kristi Grubb. Birds on the Mojave Desert?! Yes--waterfowl, shorebirds and more! Bakersfield folks will meet **6:15am** at the ParknRide on Stockdale Hiway (between Real Rd & Hiway 99) to **carpool**....stopping in east Bakersfield at Starbucks on Hiway 58 & Weedpatch Hiway to pick up folks who live east of Hiway 99. Call Moffats for info: 805-0232.

Tehachapi birders meet at Burger King in Kmart shopping center at **7:00am**. Call Angela (304-6816) or Greg (818/645-3664) for information.

We must be at the Edwards AFB meeting place at 8am, so be ready to leave on time! Must have photo identification, water, snacks/sack lunch, dress layers, \$5 for drivers. Please plan to carpool and drivers need registration & insurance for entrance to Edwards AFB.

After Piute Ponds we will go to California City for lunch and birding at Central Park, a birding hotspot! Returning around 3:30pm.



Tues. April 21, 8:00am - "Look & Lounge"

Park Ranger Bill Moffat will lead this laid-back birding adventure starting at the Manor Drive (& Denise St) parking lot for the Kern River Parkway. Bring a light lounge chair--there's lots of birds near the parking lot and in the trees before & after the tunnel to the canal. Bring your binocs & water. We'll end at 11am. Call Bill for info: 201-9279

Looking ahead to May 2-3...The field trip committee is planning an overnite on Saturday May 2nd at Butterbredt Springs so that we will be able to bird Butterbredt at its best time: dawn! Plans are still in the works and might include Friday night and all day Saturday at a yet to be determined location. Call Deb for info: 805-0232. More details in May *Warbler* & website.

PRESIDENT'S NEST



The members of your Executive Board have 'gone to school'. As to school, I mean we have gone to conferences and meetings to learn more about how Kern Audubon can influence local decision makers and how to make our chapter stronger. Vice-president Kevin Fahey, outings chairs Bill Moffat and Deb See, and I recently attended a workshop to learn strategies about how to make our Chapter more influential in the community. In March, Bill and Deb also went to Sacramento on 'Advocacy Day', a day when chapter leaders from across California met with state senators and assembly members to lobby (a.k.a. teach) for legislation that supports Audubon's goal to reduce the effects of climate change on birds. Bill and Deb were excellent spokespeople for your chapter. They also became 'teachers' when they met with the California OHV Parks Commission at Butterbredt Springs, explaining the importance of protecting this bird sanctuary in Jawbone Canyon, sight of the newest state park. Finally, in July, Kevin & Laura Fahey, and Kathy Love & I will be representing Kern Audubon at Audubon's national convention in Virginia. Two years ago, Madi Elsea & Rod Lee participated in the last national convention which was held in Washington. Your volunteer board members understand that getting the word out about Kern Audubon and learning how to improve our chapter requires both a time commitment and willingness to be both 'a student' and 'a teacher'. Education is a lifelong task.

Harry Love, President

PANORAMA VISTA PRESERVE

The next workday at the Preserve will be **Saturday, April 11, 8-10 AM**. The task will be to continue removing the young tumble weeds. Bring hat, gloves, water, and shovel/hoe. Meet at the gate (east end of Roberts Lane) by 8 AM. If you have questions, contact Andy Honig (619-4456) or andym5@bak.rr.com. Volunteers are needed -- hope you can make it.



Owens Lake BIRD FESTIVAL

OWENS LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL

SAT. APRIL 25

Join Friends of the Inyo for the first annual Owens Lake Bird Festival to be held in Lone Pine the evening of April 24 and Sat. April 25, 2015. The festival will celebrate migrating shorebirds as they move between hemispheres at Owens Lake Important Bird Area. The festival will highlight through field trips and presentations the significance of the Owens Lake story and the return of its threatened habitat. Go to **www.FriendsoftheInyo.org** for information about this evening and day long event and to register.

Looking ahead to Tues. May 5...Kern Audubon's program will be on OWLS, presented by John & Jenna Stanek. Join us at 7pm for a fun & informative evening!

RENEWING YOUR AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewal notices are sent to Audubon members by the National Audubon Society. You can also find the expiration of your membership on the address label of this newsletter or *Audubon* magazine. You can also check your membership status and renew membership online at www.audubon.org and click on "Member Center" at the **very top of the homepage**. Or send your renewal check in the amount of \$15 (one year), \$25 (two years), \$35 (three years) to: National Audubon Member Center, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast Fl. 32142

If you have questions about membership, contact Pat Turner, Kern Audubon's membership coordinator: 717-4174 or patriciajt@att.net.

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/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

GET THE E-WARBLER

We are asking everyone with email to receive the *Warbler* electronically to save money as well as trees! You can read it online or print your own copy and it's in color! PLEASE take a few moments to send your email address to rodmlee@aol.com....thank you!!

UPDATE ON TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS IN KERN CO

Last year, Kern Audubon and Kerncrest Audubon (covers Lake Isabella & Ridgecrest areas) joined together with Audubon California to partially fund an \$18,000 grant to improve the nesting facilities for Tricolored Blackbirds in the Kern River Valley. Two sites were identified: the Bob Powers Gateway Preserve (near the intersection of Hiway 178 & Lake Isabella) and the Sprague Ranch of the Kern River Preserve, an Audubon property near Weldon. Fortunately, the local water company next to the Bob Powers area offered to provide water from its well. Thus a new well was not needed. This allowed another area on the Fay Ranch to be selected as a site. Two ponds were dug on the Sprague and Fay properties, solar powered wells were connected to drip lines, and nettle and willow cuttings were planted. The money provided by both chapters and Audubon California has gone a long way in providing three sites for the birds. The goal is to reduce the dependency that Tricoloreds have on diaries and silage fields in the Central Valley as nesting sites. *Come Tues. April 7th to hear the presentation on Tricoloreds at the April meeting by Samantha Arthur, Audubon California Project Coordinator.*



L-R: Planting nettle, Tricoloreds preferred nesting habitat, at new Sprague Ranch ponds and flooded pond at Bob Powers (above)

eBird--GLOBAL TOOL FOR BIRDERS, CRITICAL DATA FOR SCIENCE: 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 that 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 and begin recording your bird sightings---it's fun and it's free!

BIRDING FESTIVALS

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
www.birdwatchersdigest.com

KERN AUDUBON ON FACEBOOK

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



Watering in the Drought 60-65% of home water usage is from irrigation...check your emitters, make repairs and consider switching to low volume sprinkler heads/emitters. And only water twice a week for a total of 20-40 minutes. Your lawn will survive! And do provide fresh water & clean bird baths for your birds!!

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD

2014 - 2015

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AUDUBON'S WARBLER

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www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. April 7, 7:00pm - Meeting & Program
- Sat. April 11 - PVP Workparty
- Sun. April 12 - Woody field trip
- Sat. April 18 - Piute Ponds/Calif City field trip
- Tues. April 21 - Kern River Parkway field trip

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 # _____

KAS-TEHACHAPI BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROJECT

Friday February 27th marked the 16th annual maintenance day for the Bluebird Recovery Trails in Tehachapi. Each year with project leader Karen Pestana, volunteers armed with power tools and the desire to get busy, check and rehab more than 60 boxes for the upcoming nesting season. There are a total of three different trails in the area: 44 boxes at Indian Hill Campground, three boxes along Antelope Run (near Highline and Tucker) and 16 boxes at Brite Lake where Sandy Murray has diligently been monitoring and maintaining these nestboxes for many years with great success.

This year 7 boxes were replaced and 12 extenders were installed, under the supervision of some incoming residence bluebirds. All is ready for the 2015 nesting season, during which Karen and her band of volunteers will visit the boxes about every two weeks to collect data on nest building, number of eggs laid and number of birds fledged. This data in turn will be submitted to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Nest Watch Project, where it will be added to those of thousands of other NestWatchers in a continually growing database used by researchers to understand and study birds.

Karen Pestana will also be the guest speaker at the Kern Audubon-Tehachapi chapter meeting on April 28, 2015, 7:00pm at Golden Hills School (see box below). She'll discuss the nest box project, answer questions and welcome you to participate in this informative citizen science program.



Jennifer & Mark checking a bluebird box
(Photos by Mary Dufrein)



Team Bluebird: (L-R) Mark Pestana, Cathy Burris, Carol Gates, Jean Moore, Karen Pestana, Jennifer, Cook, Mark Dufrein, Jerri Bartow, Suzie Martin, Linda M.

Tehachapi Birding



KERN AUDUBON-TEHACHAPI

Tuesday April 28, 2015

7:00 p.m.

**Golden Hills Elementary School
20215 Park Road**

"On the Bluebird Recovery Trail"
Karen Pestana, Project Leader



Join us for an informative evening plus
refreshments & raffle!
(972-4355 or 823-4305 for info)

BIRD-LANGUAGE

*Trying to understand the words
Uttered on all sides by birds,
I recognize in what I hear
Noises that betoken fear.*

*Though some of them, I'm certain, must
Stand for rage, bravado, lust,
All other notes that birds employ
Sound like synonyms for joy.*

W.H. Auden

Great Backyard Bird Count Sets New Species Record

Nearly half the world's species identified in four days

Participants from more than 100 countries submitted a record 147,265 bird checklists for the 2015 Great Backyard Bird Count and broke the previous count record for the number of species identified. The 5,090 species reported represents nearly half the possible bird species in the world. The four-day count was held February 13-16, the 18th year for the event, a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society with partner Bird Studies Canada. The information gathered by tens of thousands of volunteers helps track the health of bird populations on a scale made possible by using the eBird online checklist program.

The bitter cold, snowy weather in much of the northeastern United States and Canada was a major factor in this year's count. Across the Northeast, Sunday was particularly frigid and windy, and the number of reports showed an obvious dip as some counters were forced indoors. As one participant in Québec noted, watching birds came with a price as wind chill temperatures rarely topped -20 degrees Celsius (zero degrees Fahrenheit). For those who did brave the cold, the GBBC data will help scientists better understand the impact of the cold on bird populations. For example, scientists will be able to compare the abundance of some so-called "half-hardy" species, such as Carolina Wren and Yellow-rumped Warbler, to see if this cold winter has affected their populations.

Last year's cold drove many waterfowl inland (particularly White-winged Scoters and Red-necked Grebes) in the United States, but that has not been happening much this year. Comparing the ice cover in different regions of Canada and the northern United States between last winter and this will give insight on the origins of these species and the potential impact to populations with last year's freezeout.

| Country | Number of Species | Number of Checklists |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| United States | 671 | 108,396 |
| Canada | 241 | 10,491 |
| India | 717 | 6,810 |
| Australia | 524 | 812 |
| Mexico | 653 | 425 |
| Costa Rica | 559 | 303 |
| Portugal | 197 | 193 |
| New Zealand | 126 | 161 |
| Ecuador | 784 | 138 |
| Honduras | 353 | 133 |
| in | | |



Flicker with ice on its head in cold Arkansas!

Total checklists: 147,265 (up 3,156 1890)

Total species: 5,090 (up 794)

Estimated participants: 143,941 (up



Birds & Biking at Tule Elk Reserve, March 17, 2015 - L-R (above): Jim Burrow, Bill Moffat (leader), Al Caetano, Kevin Fahey, Cindy Caetano, Susan Castle (Pictures by Harry Love)