



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 36 No. 3 - March 2007
Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society

KERN AUDUBON GATHERING

TUES. MARCH 6, 2007 - 7:00pm

Location: KERN SUPT' OF SCHOOLS
17TH & L Sts. (downtown Bakersfield)
Street parking or parking structure on 18TH & k sTS.

ATWELL ISLAND--Restoring a Piece of the Past

Steve Laymon, PhD. - Restoration Ecologist/Ornithologist

Atwell Island is in the southeastern portion of Tulare Lake, which as recently as 100 years ago was the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi. The lake has been dry for many years, with its water now stored behind dams and used for agriculture. The Bureau of Land Management owns and manages Atwell Island which consists of 7,000 acres just south of Alpaugh, near the Pixley and Kern National Wildlife Refuge and Allensworth State Historic Park. BLM is restoring native valley grassland and alkali sink habitats previously covered by fields of cotton, oats, and alfalfa. Atwell Island is currently home to federally listed and sensitive animal species including mountain plover, Tipton's kangaroo rat, the San Joaquin kit fox, tricolored blackbird, burrowing owls, horned lizards, and the blunt-nosed leopard lizard. (see p. 5 for more information about Steve Laymon!)

Join us for a fun evening, interesting program & people, refreshments and *RAFFLE PRIZES!*

Sat. March 10th Field Trip

ATWELL ISLAND

7:00am - Steve Laymon, Leader

Steve Laymon, Atwell Island Project manager, will lead a field trip to Atwell Island (see above for description). We hope to bird some of the wetlands acreage as well as a recently built 1/2 mile nature trail. Join us for a FIRST-time field trip to this exciting new location!

Meet at Kern River Parkway parking area across from CSUB on Stockdale Hiway, 7:00am. Bring lunch, water, binoculars. Expect some walking. We will return by mid-afternoon. Call Ted Murphy (325-0307) or Madi Elsea (322-7470) for information.

Sat. March 31st Field Trip

Galileo Hill

5:00am - John Wilson, Leader

The best birding at the famous Galileo Hills migrant trap east of California City is at sunrise, so plan for an early rising! We will meet at 5:00am (location to be determined) to carpool, so you must register with Madi (322-7470 or email: madielsea@aol.com). Wilson, one of Kern County's master birders, says to expect LOTS of yellow-rumped warblers in various plumage (thousands?!) and lingering winter birds. We may also bird at Central Park in California City. Bring warm clothes, snacks & lunch, water, binocs, etc. Return after lunch.

Try e-bird! Free on-line bird guide & on-line birding software

If you haven't visited the Cornell Ornithology Lab web site, it's a great resource! Available on-line for free is a bird identification guide complete with bird songs and also a database to enter and keep up with your bird sightings. The bird guide is at

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/>

To listen to the sounds of birds, you will have to have the Real player software which can be downloaded for free if you don't already have it.

On-line bird record keeping is: <http://e-bird.org/content/>

After registering, you can keep track of bird sightings easily. Any level of observations can be entered from casual observations to detailed birdcounts. Using the mapping tool, you can locate your observations using satellite photos and even zoom in on your own home! Once you create your location, enter bird species on a checklist. If the most-likely checklist doesn't contain the bird you saw, then you can easily switch to the detailed bird list. E-bird will keep your data as life-list, monthly counts, etc.

When you go birding at a new place, log on and create a new location. The data you enter actually goes into the Cornell Ornithology Lab database. The upshot of this is you actually feel like what you are doing is contributing to science. Congratulations!

Submitted by Bill Lydecker, member, Kern Audubon

Recent Donors

We continue to receive support for the work of Kern Audubon Society and wish to thank the following folks for their generous donations:

Jay Bancroft	Irvin Pike
Ted Murphy	Gary Valdez
Betty J. Kyker	Joseph Mier
Jerry Ludeke	Gene Tackett
Barbara Mansfield	Ann Williams
Michael & Nancy Clark	

SAND RIDGE IN THE SPRING

Sat. March 24

Great views of the nearby Techachapi Mountains and lots of endangered Bakersfield Cactus highlighted our recent field trip to Sand Ridge Preserve off Hiway 58 and Tower Line Rd. We are invited to visit again when the **California Native Plant Society** leads a field trip to see the cactus in BLOOM, hopefully, and other wildflowers. The last part of the field trip will be devoted to pulling non-native Sahara Mustard! Meet at **8:30am** at the Taco Bell on the southeast corner of Hiway 58 & 184 (Weedpatch Hwy) or at the Tower Line Road exit off Hiway 58 (8:45am).

We thank Joseph V. Higbee for the Audubon's Warbler photo used as the logo for the newsletter. Used by permission. (www.pbbase.com/jvhigbee)

T-SHIRT CONTEST

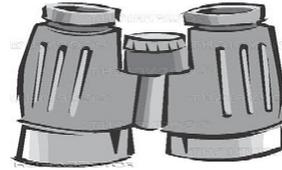
Help design a logo and win special prize yet-to-be-determined!

Submit a 4 1/2" X 5" design or idea (front of t-shirt, not the back)

Email the Steve & Kristi Clark (skclark1981@aol.com) or call (588-2175) with your ideas/questions

TUESDAY BIRDERS

The Tuesday Birders will meet Tues. mornings March 6 & 20th. Beginning birders as well as the experienced are welcome! Contact Brenda Kyle (871-4867) for meeting time and place!



Kern Birding Website For a comprehensive web site covering numerous Kern County birding locations go to www.natureali.org/birding.htm.

Kern County Bird Sightings/photos

What's unusual in Kern County birding? Go to kerncobirding@yahoogroups.com for recent bird sightings, reports by Bob Barnes, Mike McQuerry, Alison Sheehy, pictures by Ken Kyle and others.

ASK AUDUBON...The newest addition to Audubon's Newswire: submit questions re:consumer choices and the effect on the environment: cblayer@audubon.org.

www.Kernaudubonsociety.org is our new website...check it out!!

Audubon Adventures

Ginny Dallas, newly-retired elementary teacher/principal, is preparing learning packages for National Audubon's conservation education program for 3-6th graders. The materials cover a wide range of topics in biology, ecology, and conservation and are written to fit state guidelines. If you are an elementary teacher, home schooler, or charter school teacher, give Ginny a call (587-6323) or email vdallas@bak.rr.com for more information. It would be great to get this wonderful program re-started in our local schools!

Activists 'Step Up' Challenge to Climate Change. *By Shreema Mehta, The New Standard, February 5, 2007.* "With public awareness about climate change approaching a tipping point, environmentalists are elevating their push for immediate steps to curb global warming. On April 14, as part of a new campaign called Step it Up, activists in at least 47 states plan to rally simultaneously at different locations to demand that US carbon emissions be reduced by 80 percent over the next 40 years. Actions will be held in hundreds of locations, including at landmarks such as the Hollywood sign and the Grand Canyon. Activists in Jacksonville, Florida, plan to hold "ask a scientist" sessions and are trying to partner with hardware stores to pass out compact fluorescent bulbs. Protesters in Evansville, Indiana will march to the headquarters of utility company Vectren, to protest its plans to build a new coal power plant in the region. According to the campaign's website [www.stepitup07.org], there are already 542 actions being planned, and they expect hundreds more... [Elsewhere] 393 cities have signed on to the **Mayors Climate Protection Agreement** -- a pledge for individual municipalities to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. And seven states in the Northeast formed the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in 2003 to bring down carbon dioxide emissions. But now activists are putting renewed pressure on the federal government, which they say has ignored the issue for too long. Last week, the **Campus Climate Challenge**, which mobilizes college students to call for green initiatives on their campuses, held a nationwide "week of action," during which students from schools such as the University of New Mexico or Miami Dade College held screenings of *An Inconvenient Truth*... In addition, various local activist groups plan to hold vigils, marches and other actions throughout the year to raise awareness on global warming, according to the Massachusetts-based Climate Crisis Coalition, which will publish a calendar of these events [see www.ClimateUSA.org]... Raya Ariella of the Climate Crisis Coalition stressed the importance of not only lobbying government officials and corporations, but also getting more of the public involved in fighting global warming. 'Climate change is probably the overarching number-one issue,' she said. 'It affects food supply, water supply, health, illness, the spread of disease, extreme weather events. It's... pay now or pay later. If we decide to pay later, it might not even be possible.'

Submitted by Barbara Coley, member, Kern Audubon

Earth Day is April 22...if you are interested in pursuing a local expression of concern about global warming and how Bakersfield/Kern County can make a difference, contact Barbara (bgcoley@bak.rr.com) or Ted Murphy (tmurphy@bak.rr.com). Perhaps Kern Audubon could consider doing something as a chapter, such as something mentioned in the above article, or?!!

KERN AUDUBON LIBRARY

These are a list of book titles that presently make up Kern Audubon's "collection", which we thank DON & YVONNE TURKAL for organizing! Check the "library" out and a book at the next meeting!

Audubon Animals (The imperial Collection) Text by John James Audubon, F.R.S.
and The Rev. John Bachman, D.D.

Birding on Borrowed Time by Phoebe Snetsinger

California Native Plants for the Garden by Carol Bornstein, David Fross, and Bart O'Brien

Feeding the Birds by Jan Mahnken

Important Bird Areas of California by Daniel S. Cooper

John James Audubon (The making of an American) by Richard Rhodes

Master Guide to Birding #1 (Loons to Sandpipers) by The Audubon Society

Master Guide to Birding #2 (Gulls to Dippers) by The Audubon Society

Master Guide to Birding #3 (Old World Warblers to Sparrows) by The Audubon Society

100 Birds and How They Got Their Names by Diana Wells

The Backyard Birdhouse Book by Rená and Christyna M. Laubach

The Birds Around Us Created and designed by the editorial staff of Ortho books

Red-Tails in Love by Marie Winn

To See Every Bird on Earth by Dan Koeppel

Looking ahead to APRIL.....**Join Kern Audubon on Wednesday (Yes, Wednesday!), April 11th, 7:00pm** for a program on the California Condor with featured speaker, **Sandy Wilburn**, main architect of the California Condor Recovery Program, author, and retired biologist of 34 years with the US Fish & Wildlife Service. From 1969-1981 Wilburn led efforts to save the endangered Condor and was the last biologist to work with significant numbers of wild Condors. His 2004 book, *Condor Tales: What I Learned in 12 Years with the Big Birds* (will be available to buy and for signing at the meeting.

**KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY
2007 EXECUTIVE BOARD**

CO-CHAIRS:	MADI ELSEA & TED MURPHY
SECRETARY:	LISA TWIFORD
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Upcoming Bird Festivals

March 30-April 1, 2007 - OLYMPIC BIRD FEST. Visit the rain shadow of the Olympic Peninsula, Washington, to discover birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest--Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Ducks, etc. Take guided field trips and a cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, etc. Go to www.olympicbirdfest.org.

April 26-29, 2007 - VERDE VALLEY BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL...great birding in Central Arizona's diverse habitats: field trips, workshops, special events. For information go to: www.birdyverde.org or call 928-282-2202

May 4-6, 2007 - YOSEMITE BIRDING FESTIVAL in the incomparable Yosemite Valley with birdsong expert Don Kroodsmas and photographer John Hendrickson...see diverse habitats and great birds! Go to www.yosemite.org/seminars

June 7-10, 2007 - POTHOLES & PRAIRIE BIRDING FESTIVAL, Carrington, No. Dakota. Join birding experts from the *Bird Watcher's Digest* to explore the praries pothole region of central ND for Baird's Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Spragues' Pipit, Piping Plover, Red-necked Grebe and more! Info@birdingdrives.com or www.birdingdrives.com.

Kern Water Bank Swarming with Birds

Cheryl Harding, manager of the Kern Water Bank Authority, led 14 of us to the good spots of the Water Bank east of Enos Lane on January 27 and Dr. John Wilson helped us identify scores of birds. Of special interest were White Pelicans, dozens of Black-crowned Night Herons, a Virginia Rail, and a female Great-Tailed Grackle who perched on pondside vegetation 8 feet from us, waiting for us to toss another chocolate chip cookie crumb! Also seen were tracks of Kangaroo Rats, Kit Fox, Coyote, Skunk, and Cottontail, as well as lots of scat. The group included birders from 5 years to 80+ and we all had fun. Thanks to Cheryl and John for making it such a productive day. Cheryl has invited us to make a trip at dusk in the spring when all sorts of nocturnal animals are abroad. We are planning to do just that!

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

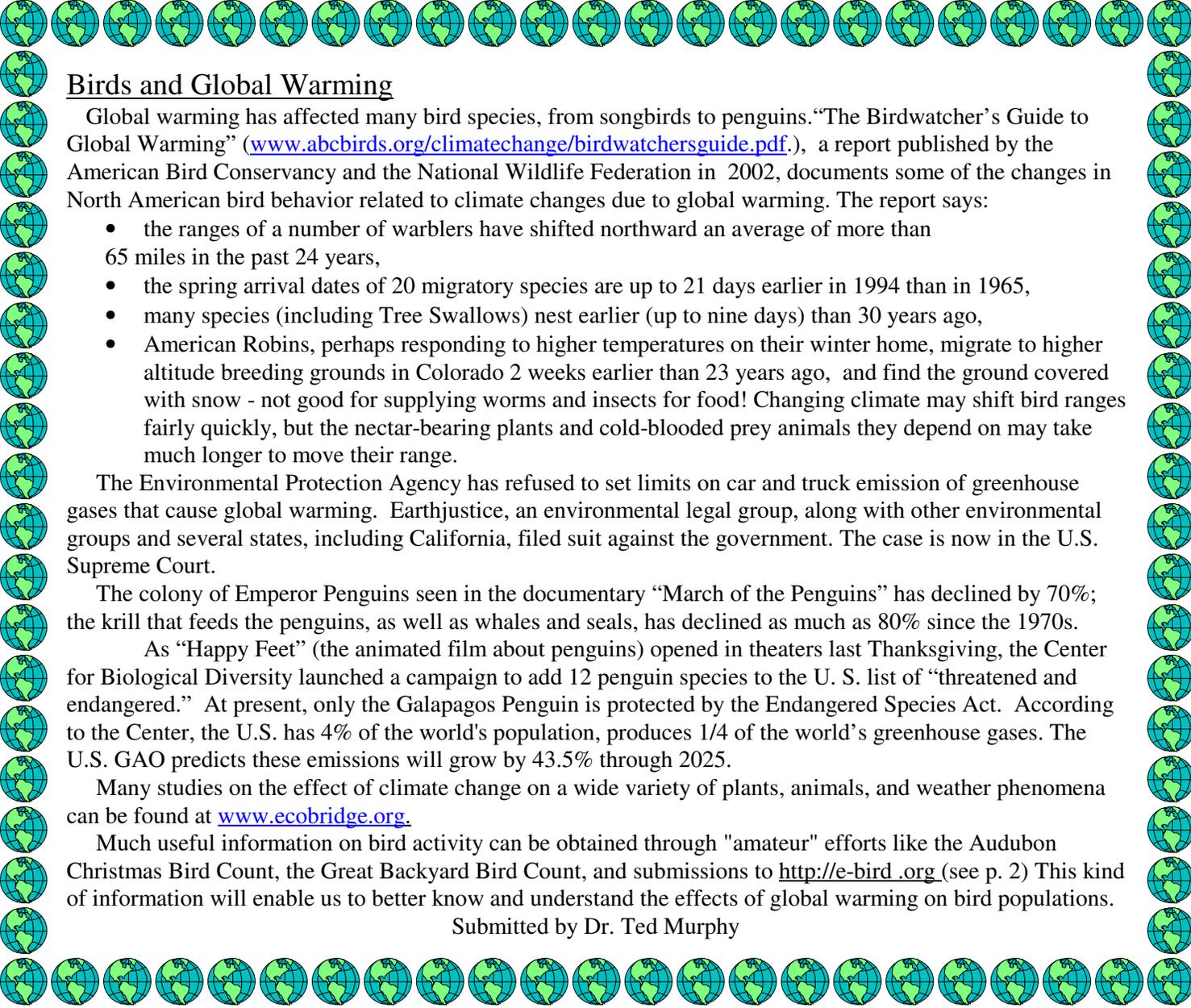
... FEBRUARY "GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT", BRING YOUR SPECIES TOTAL AND HIGHEST COUNT FOR EACH SPECIES TO THE MARCH 6TH MEETING...THERE WILL BE A PRIZE FOR THE MOST SPECIES REPORTED AND THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF BIRDS COUNTED FOR EACH SPECIES!

FOR EXAMPLE: JOHN DOE HAD A TOTAL OF 14 SPECIES OVER THE 4 DAY COUNTING PERIOD, AND JANE DOE HAD THE MOST BIRDS FOR, SAY,..HOUSE FINCHES: 25 ON ONE DAY! MAYBE THEY WILL BE OUR WINNERS!

Atwell Island Project Manager

Steve Laymon is a Restoration Ecologist and Ornithologist with a Ph. D in Wildland Resource Science from University of California, Berkeley and a MS in Biogeography from California State University, Chico. He has conducted research on a number of endangered species of wildlife including the Spotted Owl, Willow Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. For the past five years he has been the Atwell Island Project manager for Bureau of Land Management in southwestern Tulare Co. He will tell us about this project to restore 8,000 acres of retired farm land to valley grassland and alkali sink habitats.

Join Kern Audubon on Tues. March 6th, 7:00pm for this very interesting program on the restoration of this piece of San Joaquin Valley geography and history!



Birds and Global Warming

Global warming has affected many bird species, from songbirds to penguins. “The Birdwatcher’s Guide to Global Warming” (www.abcbirds.org/climatechange/birdwatchersguide.pdf), a report published by the American Bird Conservancy and the National Wildlife Federation in 2002, documents some of the changes in North American bird behavior related to climate changes due to global warming. The report says:

- the ranges of a number of warblers have shifted northward an average of more than 65 miles in the past 24 years,
- the spring arrival dates of 20 migratory species are up to 21 days earlier in 1994 than in 1965,
- many species (including Tree Swallows) nest earlier (up to nine days) than 30 years ago,
- American Robins, perhaps responding to higher temperatures on their winter home, migrate to higher altitude breeding grounds in Colorado 2 weeks earlier than 23 years ago, and find the ground covered with snow - not good for supplying worms and insects for food! Changing climate may shift bird ranges fairly quickly, but the nectar-bearing plants and cold-blooded prey animals they depend on may take much longer to move their range.

The Environmental Protection Agency has refused to set limits on car and truck emission of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Earthjustice, an environmental legal group, along with other environmental groups and several states, including California, filed suit against the government. The case is now in the U.S. Supreme Court.

The colony of Emperor Penguins seen in the documentary “March of the Penguins” has declined by 70%; the krill that feeds the penguins, as well as whales and seals, has declined as much as 80% since the 1970s.

As “Happy Feet” (the animated film about penguins) opened in theaters last Thanksgiving, the Center for Biological Diversity launched a campaign to add 12 penguin species to the U. S. list of “threatened and endangered.” At present, only the Galapagos Penguin is protected by the Endangered Species Act. According to the Center, the U.S. has 4% of the world’s population, produces 1/4 of the world’s greenhouse gases. The U.S. GAO predicts these emissions will grow by 43.5% through 2025.

Many studies on the effect of climate change on a wide variety of plants, animals, and weather phenomena can be found at www.ecobridge.org.

Much useful information on bird activity can be obtained through “amateur” efforts like the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, the Great Backyard Bird Count, and submissions to <http://e-bird.org> (see p. 2) This kind of information will enable us to better know and understand the effects of global warming on bird populations.

Submitted by Dr. Ted Murphy

2007 KERN RIVER VALLEY SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL

April 27-30, 2007, is set for the 13th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival, centered on Audubon-California’s 3200+ acre Kern River Preserve along the South Fork Kern River. Formerly known as the BioFest, this festival celebrates a Globally Important Bird Area that has garnered international recognition for its natural diversity, one that Miyoko Chu, cites in her book *Songbird Journeys: Fours Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds*. It is one of two in the Western Hemisphere she recommends visiting to observe songbirds during spring and summer nesting season. 237 bird species were tallied during last year’s four day festival, a remarkable number for an inland location.

Besides the Kern River Preserve, field trip destinations include Audubon-California’s 156-acre Kelso Creek Sanctuary, Butterbredt Spring, Canebrake Ecological Reserve, Chimney Peak National Backcountry Byway, Kern National Wildlife Refuge, and Sequoia National Forest. Habitats to be visited and birds on hand are representative of the California Chaparral, Central Valley, Great Basin, Mojave Desert, and Sierra Nevada. All are within a few miles of each other from a center in the South Fork Valley.

The 2007 KRV Nature Fest’s web pages may be found by going to: <http://kern.audubon.org/bioregionactivities.htm>. A full slate of field trips is scheduled for all four days of the festival including five owling trips. Check out the web site to see what is already scheduled and visit it periodically through to the April 27th start of the festival to see what new has been added.

AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Kern Audubon Society
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385



www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. March 6th, 7pm - Kern Audubon meeting/program: Atwell Island Restoration Project with Steve Layman, speaker
- Sat. March 10th - Field Trip to Atwell Island led by Steve Layman, BLM biologist
- Sat. March 31st - Galileo Hill Field Trip
Led by Dr. John Wilson

All meetings & activities are open to the public --- bring your friends and family!

Membership Application -- KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY (7XCHC30)

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*. (11 issues)

____ New Member \$20 ____ Renewal \$35

Make check payable to **National Audubon Society**

Send check & form to ...Kern Audubon
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385

I am enclosing an additional tax-deductible donation for the work of Kern Audubon in the amount of _____. (Check payable to Kern Audubon)

Name(s) _____ Amount enclosed _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Phone # _____