

## **AUDUBON'S WARBLER**

Vol. 36 No. 4 - APRIL 2007 Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society A chapter of National Audubon Society www.kernaudubonsociety.org

## KERN AUDUBON GATHERING

WED. APRIL 11, 2007 - 7:00pm

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



# CALIFORNIA CONDOR RECOVERY "WHAT I LEARNED FROM 12 YEARS WITH THE BIG BIRDS" Sandy Wilbur, author & biologist

Join us for an exciting program featuring Sandy Wilbur, retired biologist with the US Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, and one of the principal leaders in the Condor recovery project from 1969-1981. Only 22 California Condors remained in the wild in the 1980's and following a controversial decision, the last wild condor was captured in 1987. Today, as a result of captive breeding programs and intensive work on behalf of condors, there are 278 condors, including wild populations in California (63) and Arizona (57). Sandy Wilbur wrote of his experience with condors and the recovery program in a 2004 book, Condor Tales: What I learned from Twelve Years with the Big Birds and will be our featured speaker on Wed. April 11, 7:00pm (please note the change of date to the second Wednesday instead of the first Tuesday). Wilburn's book will be available for purchase and signing both before and after the meeting.

## Sat. April 14 - Field Trip Butterbredt Springs

5:30am - Bob Barnes, Leader

Bob Barnes, Kern County birding expert, will lead us on a trip to Butterbredt Spring, a Nationally Important Bird Area west of Red Rock Canyon State Park in eastern Kern Co. This is one of the best places to witness the spectacle of spring migration! Expect to see Warblers (Wilson's, Black-throated Gray, Orange-crowned, Audubon's) as well as Western Tanager, Black-Headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting and local species such as Mountain Quail, Pinyon Jay, LeConte's Thrasher, Black-throated sparrow, etc.

Meet at the Shell Station/Jack-in-the Box one block northeast of Hiway 58 at the UNION St. exit at 5:30am. (There's a donut shop across the street for breakfast goodies!) Bring lunch, water, binoculars. We will return by mid-afternoon. Call Ted (325-0307) or Madi (322-7470) for information.

### Sat. April 21 - Field Trip

Bitter Creek Nat'l Wildlife Refuge 7:00am

As a follow-up to the April 11th program on the California condor, Mike Stockton, Refuge manager, will lead us on a field trip to Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge which was established in 1985 to protect roosting and foraging habitat for endangered California condors. Expect to see condors as well as kit fox, golden eagles, spring wildflowers, etc!

Meet at the Kern River Parkway parking lot on Stockdale Hiway across from (north of) CSUB at 7:00am. Bring snacks & lunch, water, binocs, etc. Return after lunch. contact Ted Murphy (325-0307) for more information!

#### FOR THE BIRDS...

The April meeting of Kern Audubon Society will mark the FIRST anniversary of the "reconstituted" Kern Audubon chapter after a four year hiatus. In January 2006, Ted Murphy and I agreed to co-chair the re-organization because this is too important an organization to let it die. We didn't know each but decided that if we had birds in common, we couldn't go wrong! It's been an amazing year and we've had a wonderful time, thanks to the enthusiasm of so many of YOU! During this last year the chapter has accomplished quite alot...

- v 10 monthly meetings & programs
- v 18 field trips
- v 50 new members generated by the chapter
- v Year-end appeal that raised \$1500
- v Auction that raised \$1300
- v Average meeting attendance: 35
- v New website (thanks to Ted!)
- v Purchase of video projector/laptop
- v Received Audubon media grant-\$500
- v Received North High Wildlife Club Grant - \$500
- v Monthly issues (12) of the *Audubon Warbler*, also available online
- v 6 new officers: secretary, treasurer, Audubon Adventures, publicity, hospitality, membership

These are some of the highlights of the year, but what is most significant is the enthusiasm of so many people, those new to Audubon and longtime members as well. We have made a lot of progress and in the coming year, I know we will make even more. One of my goals is that we will increase our awareness of and involvement in local conservation issues and continue to become a recognized and respected conservation organization in the greater community. We've learned so much about Kern County and its diverse habitats in this past year through informative programs and field trips and I hope we will continue to be involved in education as well as advocating on behalf of natural habitats, which are increasingly stressed and disappearing.

Birding is the fastest growing recreational activity in the United States! So if you are new to Audubon, welcome! If you are a longtime member and haven't yet participated in monthly meetings or field trips, come on out and acquainted with some great folks!

Want to get more involved? Have questions and ideas for programs, field trips, conservation activities, fun and fellowship opportunities, political advocacy, etc.??!! Ted & I would love to hear from you: tmurphy@bak.rr.com or madielsea@aol.com.

The April 11th (7pm) meeting will be very exciting with Sandy Wilburn, principal leader of the Condor recovery program from 1969-1981 and author of Condor Tales: What I Learned from 12 Years with the Big Birds as program guest. Hope to see you!

Madi Elsea, Co-Chair

#### **TUESDAY BIRDERS**

The Tuesday Birders will meet Tues. mornings April 3 & 17th. Beginning birders as well as the experienced are welcome! Contact Brenda Kyle (871-4867) for meeting time and place!

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**Kern Birding Website** For a comprehensive web site covering numerous Kern County birding locations go to <a href="https://www.natureali.org/birding.htm">www.natureali.org/birding.htm</a>.

#### **Kern County Bird Sightings/photos**

What¹s unusual in Kern County birding? Go to <u>kerncobirding@yahoogroups.com</u> 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.

**Environmental News...**for updates on environmental matters, check out these excellent sources: **Grist Magazine** (Gloom and doom with a sense of humor) www.grist.org/cgi-bin/signmeup.pl?

ENS WORLD NEWS www.topica.com/f/v. html

#### BLUFFS WALK - Sat. April 14 9-10 AM

Bill Cooper, Kern Audubon member and cofounder of the Kern River Parkway Foundation, invites Auduboners to "Walk the Bluffs" on Sat. April 14th, 9am. Meet members of the Kern Bluffs Open Sapce Committee and learn what's happening with the Hillside Ordinance and the Bluffs protected by the ordinance. This is an opportunity to show support for committee members Michelle Beck & Craig Smith, who spearheaded the Hillside Ordinance. Call Bill for information: 393-0763

#### EARTH DAY "BIRD & BOTANY WALK" Sun. April 22 - 9:00am

Join Kern Audubon and the Calif. Native Plant Society on a morning walk in honor of Earth Day! Linda Cooley and Steve Hampson, members of KAS and CNPS, will lead a plant identification tour along the Kern River floodplain, north of Lake Truxtun, 9AM-11AM, on Sunday, April 22. We will have the opportunity learn about common trees, shrubs, flowers, birds and animals of the area. While there we will pick up trash in the area and we'll provide the trash bags!

Meet at the parking lot on the north side of Truxtun Avenue just west of the water tank. The walk will be leisurely; bring sunscreen/water. Contact Ted (325-0307) or check <a href="https://www.kernaudubonsociety.org">www.kernaudubonsociety.org</a> for more information.

#### 2007 KERN RIVER VALLEY SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL



April 27-30, 2007, is 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.

The four day festival has many field trips, workshops and activities (for adults & children!) of great interest, so visit the website soon and get registered: <a href="http://kern.audubon.org/bioregionactivities.htm">http://kern.audubon.org/bioregionactivities.htm</a>. Check out the web site to see what is scheduled and visit it periodically through to the April 27th start of the festival to see what new has been added.

Contact Mary Griffin (maryjo111@yahoo.com or 871-7304) if you can help at the Kern Audubon Society booth which will be in Kernville at Circle park on Saturday April 28th.

#### **BURROWING OWL SURVEY...**

Kern County has 93 Burrowing for The Institute for Bird Populaof this threatened California species, surrounding Bakersfield. Volunteers which help inform a perspective on sensitive species. Volunteering is fun! mi.) and is to be visited once during Maps are provided of the survey area, if you have questions. Censusing a and 20 hours, depending on the locaplace between dawn--10am or Survey work needs to be completed



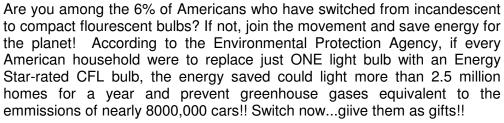
Owl "blocks" that need to be surveyed tions (IBP) survey of the breeding range with 20 blocks in the area immediately are needed to conduct the surveys the status and distribution of this Each block is 5kmX5km (approx. 3 X 3 the May 15 - July 15th survey period. instructions, data forms, and assistance survey block usually takes between 5 tion of the block, and typically takes 4pm--dusk, when owl activity is greatest. between May 15 and July 15 of 2007.

To volunteer for the survey, go to owl@birdpop.org. This is a great opportunity to be involved in a vital project that needs our assistance! Contact Madi Elsea (322-7470) for info! A Volunteer Coordinator is needed for our area and will not be a job that requires lots of time or birding expertise! If you are

interested, contact Bob Wilkerson (415/663-2051) or owl@birdpop.org



#### Switch to Swirl CFLs!







Looking ahead to MAY 1st (7pm)...The meeting of Kern Audubon will be highlighted by JOHN LINDSAY'S presentation on "San Joaquin Valley: The Way it Was." Lindsay, Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Kern County, is an accomplished biologist, birder, teacher/administrator, and photographer and will bring a wealth of information and great pictures about what the San Joaquin Valley was like in pioneer days. We look forward to the program by this longtime member of Kern Audubon Society!

### **Reconstructive Rhinoplasty** at FACT on a Peregrine Falcon?!

By Dawn Bradley

A raptor rehabber meets many challenges. Birds come in with injuries (a broken wing or leg): they come in emaciated; and occasionally an electrical burn shows up.

But what if a Peregrine Falcon comes in with a wing injury AND half of its upper beak broken off? You immobilize the wing and allow the bones to mend. Then you get creative, which the FACT crew did. Marlene Benton, Coordinator of FACT (Facility

for Animal Care & Treatment at Cal State), and Erica Hansen, a volunteer and recent graduate of cosmetology school decided to make a prosthetic beak for the bird. Erica shaped a new beak from the acrylic material she uses for nails and put it on the bird. It wasn't the most glamorous looking Peregrine, but at least it could serve a purpose.

Due to its injuries, the Peregrine cannot be released and will be a permanent member of FACT and, with some work, an educational bird. When that was decided, the prosthetic beak became ever more important for the health and well being of the bird. A raptor's beak is made out of keratin, the same material found in hair and fingernails, it grows continually. As raptors gnaw on bones and other materials, the beak is worn down so it doesn't grow too long.

Knowing this, Marlene and Erica concluded that the prosthetic beak would enable the bird to eat on its own until its own beak would grow out to a comfortable length. The new beak gave the bird a better profile, but it still had to be hand fed a few times with small chopped pieces due to the bulkiness of the beak and the bird adjusting to it. After a week with the prosthesis, the Peregrine started to eat on its own. A good sign that the falcon was receiving enough nutrition came in the form of new beak growth which pushed off the acrylic beak. The experiment was a success! Now the beak has grown to the point where the falcon can feed on its own and not look like such an odd bird. Once the wing has healed, we're hoping to begin working with it as an educational bird.

For more about this story or FACT, contact Dawn Bradley (661-805-2126) or Marlene Benton (661-654-3167). Ed. Note: Dawn is a new Kern Audubon member, a "graduate" of FACT, and a continuing FACT volunteer. Her husband, Josh, supplied the photograph.

#### **Upcoming Bird Festivals**

April 20-22, 2007 - GODWIT SPRING MIGRATION FESTIVAL in Arcata, CA...www.godwitdays.com

#### APRIL 27-30, 2007 - KERN RIVER VALLEY SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL

http://kernaudubon.org/bioregionactivities.htm

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 ... 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:Info@birdingdrives.com or www.birdingdrives.com.

#### **ON THE INTERNET - CHECK THESE URLS**

Several sites useful to birders:

- -List of birds sighted at Silver Saddle Resort at Galileo Hill in 2006 http://www.geocities.com/howe395/BirdsofGalileoHill.html
- -Listings of birding activities in Kern County. http://birdingonthe.net/mailinglists/KERN.html

Two sites to visit if you are interested in urban bees, especially native species: -San Francisco Chronicle article on urban bees. http://sfgate.com/cgibin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/03/03/HOGIROCUE71.D TL

-Urban bee Information from an expert: http://www.nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens.

#### e-Warbler

If you would rather receive the Kern Audubon Warbler as a pdf file

We thank Joseph V. Higbee for the Audubon's Warbler photo used as the logo for the newsletter. Used by permission.

(www.pbase.com/jvhigbee)

#### WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

We welcome these newest members who have joined in recent months through this

Lynn Ayers
Laurie Blumenthal
Barbara Doria
Susan Durkan
Willem Korving
Patricia Linnell
Carole Matlen
Joseph Miers
Rich O'Neill
Lynne Pitchford
Shirley Rupert
Carolyn Smith
Monte Valpredo

Rod Wiens

Sharon Conley Lawrence Espinosa Fredette Kenyon Anne Lee Tim Lynch Bob Martin Suzanne Miller Carole Ann Peck Jane Randolph Ferrel Roundy Cliff Tucker Douglas White

Vera Battista

#### Keep These Emails & #'s Handy!

There are many times that a quick e-mail or phone call to our City Council members will make a difference in how they see an issue and vote. We thank Al Unger (alunger@juno.com) for providing us with these email address/phone #'s of our current City Council representatives:

Irma Carson 325 4327 councilmem1@aol.com Sue Benham 325 8273 sbenham@sbcglobal.net Ken Weir 619 2472 ken@weircpa.com David Couch 663 4620 david.r.couch@smithbarney.com Harold Hansen 663 8663 hwhanson@cbbank.com Jacquie Sullivan 834 4943 jacquiesullivan@sbcglobal.net Zach Scrivner 304 4065 zscrivner@libertystar.net

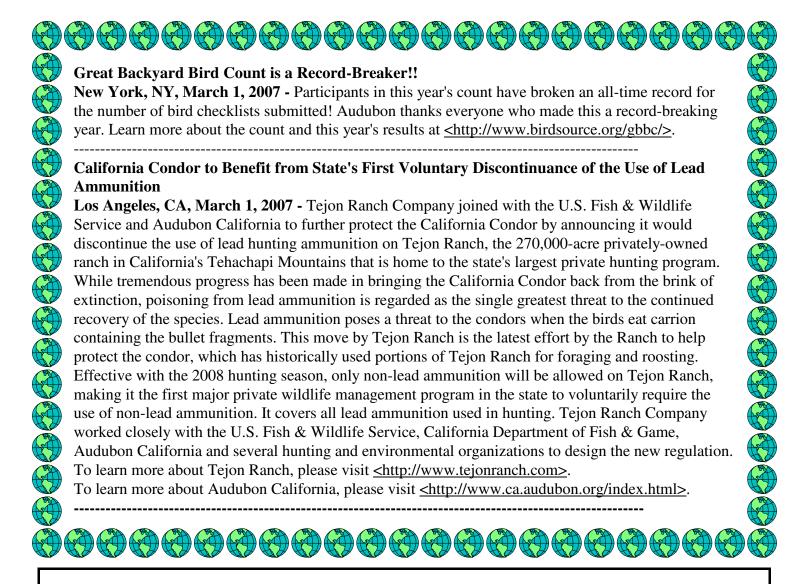
If you wish to e-mail ALL the City Council persons, use: city council@ci.bakersfield.ca.us

**KERN AUDUBON LIBRARY** has about 20 titles in our new collection under the care of Don & Yvonne Turkal (tloveanimals@aol.com). Check out a book at the next meeting! For example, read this fascinating account by one of the "Big Listers":

Birding on Borrowed Time – Phoebe Snetsinger This story in the author's own words tells how Phoebe saw more birds in her life than any other human being in the history of the world. She began at 34, when she first laid eyes on a resplendent Blackburnian Warbler. She began traveling across the globe, to all seven continents, observing and learning about the world's thousands of bird species. Her intensity and urgency quickened when a cancer diagnosis gave her one-year to live. This is a lively chronicle of birding adventures and a profoundly moving human document of a truly extraordinary woman.



Sand Ridge Nature Preserve Field Trip February 2007



#### KERN VALLEY FEATURED IN "BETTER HOMES & GARDENS"

\_\_ed in the April 2007 issue of *Better Homes and Gardens*. In the article *Flights of Fancy* in the "living LONG WEEKEND" section of the magazine, the Kern River Valley is one of six areas in the United States and Canada highlighted as a recommended destination for a spring bird-watching weekend. Although birding is stated as being excellent throughout the valley, Audubon-California's Kern River Preserve in Weldon, the **KERN RIVER VALLEY NATURE FESTIVAL, APRIL 27-30**, and the view from the top of Breckenridge Mountain are specifically mentioned.

The Kern River Valley is increasingly becoming a destination for bird and nature lovers from around North America and the globe who come to experience the valley's world class nature and outdoor recreation offerings. This April's Spring Nature Festival has registrants from all over California, many other states and Ontario, Canada.

## KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY 2007 Executive Board

Co-Chairs: Madi Elsea & Ted Murphy

SECRETARY: LISA TWIFORD **ANN ETUE** TREASURER: MEMBERSHIP: **ANNETTE WELLS** CONSERVATION: MARY GRIFFIN **AUDUBON ADVENTURES:** VIRGINIA DALLAS CBC COMPILER: JOHN WILSON **WARBLER** EDITOR: MADI ELSEA **KATHY LOVE** HOSPITALITY: **PUBLICITY** LINDA GREENE

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SCOPING MEETING PROPOSED WETLAND AND RIPARIAN AREA PROTECTION POLICY

Thursday, April 19, 2007- 10:30 a.m. Junipero Serra Building 320 W. 4th Street, Los Angeles, CA

PROJECT TITLE: Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy (Proposed Policy)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this project is to protect California's wetlands and riparian areas, which play critical roles in protecting water quality. The ecological values of wetlands and riparian areas have not always been understood, and insufficient protections in the past led to significant historic losses of these waters in California. As a result, the remaining wetlands and riparian areas in the state are considered to be extremely valuable resources. This is reflected, for example, in the state's Wetlands Conservation Policy, which requires state agencies to "ensure no overall net loss and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California in a manner that fosters creativity, stewardship and respect for private property." In order to protect the quality of California waters and the beneficial uses for the people of the state, the State Water Board proposes to develop a "Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy." Four alternative approaches to this proposed Policy have been identified, including no action. The alternatives address the need to improve the state's current level of protection of wetland and riparian areas.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: An informational scoping document for the proposed Policy may be obtained via the internet on the State Water Board Web site at: <a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cwa401/index.html#new">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cwa401/index.html#new</a>. You may also receive a paper copy by writing or calling: Glenda Marsh, Division of Water Quality, State Water Resources Control Board, 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, or by contacting Ms. Marsh at (916) 341-5558, email: <a href="mailto:gmarsh@waterboards.ca.gov">gmarsh@waterboards.ca.gov</a>.

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS: The State Water Board will accept both written and oral suggestions on the scope and content of the information included in the scoping documents. All submissions must be received by 12 p.m. on April 9, 2007. Written comments should be submitted to: Song Her, Clerk to the Board, Executive Office, State Water Resources Control Board, P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100. (Fax: 916-341-5620 or email: <a href="mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov">commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov</a>). Please indicate the project you are commenting upon in the subject line, "Comment Letter – Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy." Email is preferred.

Note: Letters from Audubon Society members in support of increased protection of California's wetland and riparian areas is encouraged!

## Should Kern Audubon Petition Bakersfield Mayor Harvey Hall to Sign the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement?

What is the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement? An agreement adopted at the 73rd Annual U.S. Conference of mayors meeting in Seattle in 2005 and signed (as of 1/31/07) by over 376 of the nation's mayors (67 in California), representing 50 states and over 56 million people. The agreement is a resolution that urges federal and state action to reduce pollution levels; urges Congress to pass legislation that has clear timetables and emissions limits, including flexible, market-based system of trading allowances; and, strives to meet targets for reducing global warming pollution in city and community operations. For the full text of the Agreement go to the Audubon website (<a href="www.kernaudubonsociety.org/MayorsAgreement.pdf">www.kernaudubonsociety.org/MayorsAgreement.pdf</a>). A petition will be a available to sign at the April 11 meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, submit your wish to Ted Murphy (tmurphy@bak.rr.com) or Madi Elsea (madielsea@aol.com).

#### Atwell Island? Let's go again! By Ginny Dallas

Island? Restoration Ecologist? What do these three things have in common? The PLACE, the PROJECT and the PERSON, Steve Laymon, add up to a great birding/environmental experience. As we headed north on Highway 43 our eyes feasted on row after row of almond and plum blossoms. When we arrived, our Atwell Island host, Steve Laymon, PhD now heading the restoration and farming cooperative for the betterment of our environment, shared his home and "pet" Acorn woodpecker with the group before we set out to explore the hidden treasures of this overlooked area. Balmy weather, birds (over 50 species), walking trail (an Americorps/BLM project), mega canal (a cormorant magnet), participants (super fun birders of all "ability" levels) and the leader (an ecologist full of knowledge and kindness) combined to create a truly memorable birding experience. Our adventure, including an afternoon trip to a BLM created marsh, was awesome. In addition to birds, we saw horned lizards! In these sparsely populated areas, the birds allowed us to linger so we could enjoy their behavior and beauty. The "Noisy Award" goes to the Sandhill Cranes that flew overhead; however throughout our day the variety of songs and calls spoke volumes.

#### **AUDUBON'S WARBLER**

Kern Audubon Society PO Box 3581 Bakersfield CA 93385



www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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#### RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- <u>Wed. April 11</u> Kern Audubon meeting/program: Condor Recovery Program with Sandy Wilbur, author & retired US Fish & Wildlife biologist
- Sat. April 14 Field trip to Butterbredt Springs with Bob Barnes
- <u>Sat. April 21</u> Field trip to BitterCreek National Wildlife Refuge
- Sun. April 22 Earth Day Field trip on Kern River Parkway with Native Plant Society All meetings & activities are open to the public - - bring your friends and family!

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#### 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

•	an additional tax-deductible donation for the work of Kern Audubon in the amount (Check payable to Kern Audubon)
Name(s)	Amount enclosed
Address	E-mail
City	Zip CodePhone #