



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 36 No. 10 - December 2007
Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org



KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY'S HOLIDAY GATHERING

Tues. December 4, 6:30pm

Kern Supt of Schools - 17th & L Sts.
(Street parking or parking structure 18th & K)



Join us for potluck, auction & program
featuring John Wilson's photographic presentation:
"Wintering Birds of Kern County"

Kern Audubon is planning a wonderful evening of fun, good food, fund-raising, holiday shopping AND a presentation by DR. JOHN WILSON, premier birder, co-editor for California Christmas Bird Counts for National Audubon and Kern County records coordinator for the journal *North American Birds*. John will show slides and speak on "Wintering Birds of Kern County."

Bring a POTLUCK ITEM (main dish, salad or dessert) to share...drinks and table service will be provided. Remember the meeting starts at 6:30PM!

Bring cash or checkbook for the AUCTION (no credit cards, sorry!)
See inside the Warbler for some of the items which will be available...

Sat. December 1st, 7:00am - Techachapi Birding

Join Kern Audubon for a field trip to be led by Richard Sparks of the Tehachapi Mountains Birding Club. Meet at 7:00 a.m. for carpooling at the Shell Station/Jack in the Box on the northeast corner of Brundage and Union (Union exit off Hiway 58), departing at 7:10 and returning by 1:00pm. Richard is webmaster and acting field trip coordinator for the club and an experienced birder. The trip will include several lakes and uplands sites with comfortable walking and relatively short distances. Bring water, snacks, binoculars and warm clothing, including hats and gloves. Thermos' of hot coffee or chocolate will be welcome! Call Roger Coley (832-1829) for further information.

FOR THE BIRDS...

If you missed the recent field trip to the Pixley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge to view the Sandhill cranes which winter there, it is not too late to make the trip and well-worth the adventure! Pixley is home to one of the southern San Joaquin Valley wintering flocks and is the best place to see the cranes.

There are two sub-species of the Sandhill crane: Greater and Lesser. The Lesser is the more abundant of the species and nests predominantly in Alaska, while the Greater nests in northeastern California, eastern Oregon and eastern Washington. Approximately 2,000 of these threatened birds winter in the agricultural fields surrounding Pixley NWR.

The best viewing time is the half-hour before and after sunset when the birds fly onto the refuge to spend the night. It is truly a spectacular sight when the birds fly over your head and you hear their other-worldly sounds!

The drive to Pixley is about 45 minutes from Bakersfield. Take the Alpaugh/Ducor exit at Earimart (8 miles north of Delano) and drive west on Sierra Ave. 5.7 miles until you get to Road 88. It is marked with a Pixley NWR sign. Turn right and go about a mile to a parking lot on the left. The trail is a gravel road and when you come to a fork in the road, bear to the right and go approx. 1/2 mile to the viewing platform.

If you have questions, feel free to contact me or Roger Coley, our field trip coordinator (832-1820).

Madi Elsea, Co-Chair (322-7470)

California eBird... is an online bird observation and data recording program developed for birders by Audubon CA, PRBO and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which will help with personal record keeping of bird sightings and the scientific community with research into what's happening with birds. www.eBird.org/California provides an easy way for birders, citizens and scientists to enter bird observations into a common database accessible to those working to protect and restore habitats for birds in California. All you have to do is register on the website as a new user and follow the instructions. Interactive maps and graphs are provided. Andrea Jones, IBA Coordinator for Audubon CA strongly recommends that Kern Auduboners get involved by visiting the website and recording our bird sightings!

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

Websites to check out...

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@yahogroups.com for recent bird sightings, reports by Bob Barnes, Mike McQuerry, Alison Sheehy, pictures by Ken Kyle and others.

www.Audubon-ca.org is a great website all about the activities and organization of Audubon California "**Audubon in the News**" - To find out more about Audubon happenings around the country, you can receive an informative electronic newsletter. Just write: chapterleaders@audubon.org

E-WARBLER If you would like to receive the *Audubon Warbler* by email instead of hardcopy, send an e-mail to tmurphy@bak.rr.com. Let's save some trees!

Sign up today to receive **Audubon ACTION ALERT** online! Using Audubon's simple, online action tools, you can contact and influence decision makers on important Audubon conservation priorities.

Audubon California:

<http://audubonaction.org/California/join.html>

National Audubon Society:

<http://audubonaction.org/audubon/join.html>

WHAT TO DO WITH A DEAD BIRD

If you find a dead bird in your backyard, contact the "Dead Bird Hotline" (1-877-968-2473). Do not touch the bird but use a plastic bag to pick it up and then double bag it. If the bird has been dead less than 12 hours, the hotline folks will arrange for it to be picked up and tested for West Nile virus. If not, dispose of the bird in the trash.

SEWER POND BIRDING

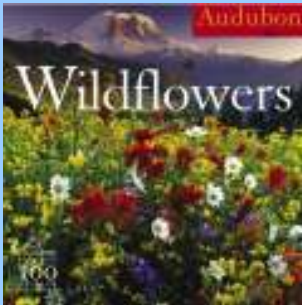
Two good sights for viewing waterfowl and shorebirds are the City & County waste water ponds, located south of Hiway 58 between Mt. Vernon and Oswell at two different locations. Permission to bird is needed, so call or sign-in.

Bakersfield City ponds: 832-2851 and ask for the supervisor. Ponds are located on Mt. Vernon south of Hiway 58 past the recycling /green waste area.

Kern County ponds: 837-0827 and ask for Pat. Take Oswell off Hiway 58 and turn right one block south of freeway onto Kimber. Follow Kimber until it ends at the waste water treatment plant. Go into office to check-in.

2008 AUDUBON CALENDARS

Beautiful Audubon calendars for 2008 will be available at the December Kern Audubon meeting as a chapter fund-raiser. Cost is \$12 each with six different nature calendars available:



Engagement Calendar
Birds Page-A-Day Calendar
Audubon Birding Trails
Songbirds Calendar
Raptors
North American Wildflowers

These will make great holiday & birthday GIFTS!! (if you will miss the meeting and are interested in the calendars, contact Madi: 322-7470)

TUESDAY BIRDERS MEET 3RD TUES.

December 18th will be the next outing of the *Tuesday Birders*. Beginners as well as the experienced are welcome! Contact Brenda Kyle (871-4867) for information about meeting time and place.



Window Bird Alert

Thousands of birds are killed each year from flying into home windows. Window Alert is a low-tack decal that reflects ultraviolet sunlight invisible to humans but not to birds. The decals help them "see" windows and thus avoid striking the glass. Cost is \$4 for set of 4 decals: www.windowalert.com to order decals.....

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Bakersfield area CBC will be held Sunday December 16th. Persons interested in participating must contact JOHN WILSON (jcwilson@lightspeed.net) to confirm participation. He will place you in parties and tell you when and where to meet. The CBC circle is centered about 1.2 miles south of the west entrance to Hart Park.

If you can't participate in the field survey, you are encouraged to be FEEDER WATCHERS! You are welcome to keep track of the birds in your backyard during the count period on Sun. Dec. 16th.

There will be a wrap up meeting and dinner for all participants (no host) at Cindy's on Auburn at Oswell following the count at 5PM. Contact Joh for more information!

If You Find a Bird Band

Call 1-800-327-BAND (2263) - Bird Banding Lab
You keep the band and will be sent a certificate of appreciation with information about the bird. By reporting band numbers you will be helping to manage our continental waterfowl resource. When you call the Bird Banding Lab, they will ask when and where you encountered the bird and then can tell you when and where the bird was banded .

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Looking ahead to 2008...The January meeting of Kern Audubon will be postponed one week to TUESDAY JANUARY 8TH, 7:00PM. The program will focus on one of Kern County's birding treasures, the KERN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

Kern Audubon Re-Certified for 2008

As a result of Madi Elsea's submission of our Annual Chapter Report for 2007, National Audubon has re-certified our Chapter for this year. This means, among other things, that the Chapter will receive baseline funding in the amount of \$962 for 2008. The notification letter from Lynn Tennefoss, Audubon Vice-president, State Programs and Chapter Services, also informed us that the Membership Incentive Program will continue, which means Kern Audubon will receive 100% (\$20) of the first year's membership paid by each **new** National Audubon Society member who joins our chapter.

You can help Kern Audubon prosper by inviting friends to come to our functions, and hopefully, join Audubon. In the past year we have welcomed many great new members and we look forward to more this year. More active members means more participants and more financial support that will allow us to increase our activities in support of Kern Audubon's mission: *to create a culture of conservation in Kern County.*

Ted Murphy, Co-Chair

Don't Toss that Fluorescent Lamp!



There is a growing use of compact fluorescent lamps as replacement for incandescent bulbs. Pacific Gas and Electric has subsidized the products so you can buy them for less than 50 cents each and even get them free at PG&E giveaways, such as at CSUB this week.

Advantages of CFLs are: they last longer, use far less energy, produce less heat. Now, they also come in different colors and some are dimmable, unlike most older fluorescents.

However, all fluorescent lamps contain a small amount of mercury and if they are tossed in the trash and carried to the landfill, the poisonous metal will eventually wind up in water sources and be a potential killer.

So, it is important to recycle as hazardous waste our burned-out fluorescent bulbs/lamps. Take them to the Kern County Special Waste Facility at 4951 Standard St., Thursday-Friday, 10AM-4PM or Saturday 8AM-4PM (info: 862-8900). While there, check out the paint and finishing materials (some in unopened cans) that have been brought in: paints, sealers, wood stains and varnishes - AND THEY ARE FREE!

Kern Legislators Turn in Mixed Performance on the Environment

In November the California League of Conservation Voters (CLCV) released their annual California Environmental Scorecard, based on the voting records of the 2007 legislature.

Senator Dean Florez (D-Shafter) emerged as the clear environmental leader among the Kern County delegation, with a rating of 77%. Although far better than any of his Kern colleagues, Florez's record was weaker than the average Senate Democrat's 89% rating.

At 35%, **Assemblymember Nicole Parra** (D-Hanford) was tied for the lowest score among all Assembly Democrats—far below their average rating of 94%.

Kern's Republicans lagged far in the rear. **Senator Roy Ashburn** (R-Bakersfield) voted in favor of the environment only 5% of the time, managing to put him below the already poor 9% average of Senate Republicans. At 5%, **Assemblymember Jean Fuller's** voting record matched the dismal average performance of Assembly Republicans on environmental issues.

Meanwhile, **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger** (R) earned a 63% rating, his highest since taking office.

Bills on the CLCV scorecard addressed such issues as condor protection, reform of the San Joaquin Valley air board, "green" buildings, flood protection, dredge mining, and alternative fuels.

For complete details, got to: <http://www.ecovote.org/scorecards/2007/>

Submitted by Doug Dodd, Chair, KAS Conservation

AUCTION ITEMS

These are just SOME of the fabulous items to be auctioned on **DECEMBER 4TH** at KERN AUDUBON'S CHRISTMAS GATHERING. These will make great gifts, so bring your checkbooks!

Equal Exchange coffee/chocolate gift basket
First Edition Autographed copy: Just Call Me Mike:
A Journey to Actor and Activist by Mike Farrell
Autographed copy: The Verb to Bird by Peter Cashwell
Deluxe Dessert Fondue Set
Disney Ice Cream Maker
Josh Bradley Photography- 2 photos
Paragon Spa Certificate
Mirage Salon & Spa Certificate (Haircut with Erica Hansen)
Metal Sculpture by Willie Stubblefield
Bird Houses
FACT Shirts
Bird Feeders
Bird Book with Bird calls/song
colorful AUDUBON umbrella
National Geographic Magazine (1915 edition) featuring
20 pages of American Game Birds

Upcoming Bird Festivals...The annual **MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL** sponsored by the Morro Coast Audubon Society will be Jan. 18-21, 2008--www.morrobaybirdfestival.org or call (805)772-4677.

SNOW GOOSE FESTIVAL...Kenn Kaurmann, world authority on birds and field editor for *Audubon Magazine*, is the featured speaker at this Jan. 25-27 festival in Chico. Go to www.snowgoosefestival.org for more information

For more informatin about bird festivals nationwide, try these websites:

Birdwatchersdigest.com

Americanbirding.org/festivals

Kern Bird Species Featured in Audubon WatchList

On November 28, the National Audubon Society issued its 2007 WatchList, a joint effort of Audubon and the American Bird Conservancy, and it includes those species in the United States that are in the greatest need of immediate conservation help. The list divides birds into two color categories: RED for those of the greatest concern, and YELLOW for seriously declining or rare species. The lists are based on data obtained through Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count and the Breeding Bird Survey.

Unfortunately, many Kern birds made the list this year:

RED (Greatest Concern):

California Condor
Mountain Plover
Spotted Owl
Lewis's Woodpecker
Black-chinned Sparrow
Tricolored Blackbird
Sooty Grouse

YELLOW (Declining):

Mountain Quail
Western Sandpiper
Williamson's Sapsucker
Varied Thrush
Hermit Warbler
Lawrence's Goldfinch
Swainson's Hawk
Short-eared Owl
Olive-sided Flycatcher
California Thrasher
Brewer's Sparrow
Oak Titmouse
Long-billed Curlew
Costa's Hummingbird
Pinyon Jay
LeConte's Thrasher
Clark's Grebe
Willow Flycatcher

AUDUBON'S WARBLER

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www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Sat. Dec. 1, 7:00am - Tehachapi Birding Field Trip
- Tues. Dec. 4th, 6:30pm - Kern Audubon Holiday auction, potluck and program on "Wintering Birds of Kern County"

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 # _____