



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 39 No. 2 - FEBRUARY 2010
Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org



Kern Audubon Society
Tuesday February 2, 2010 - 7:00pm

Location: Kern Sup't of Schools
17th & L Sts., Bakersfield
(Street parking or the KSS lot at 18th & K)

The Tejon Ranch Conservancy
Tom Maloney, Executive Director



In May 2009 Tejon Ranch announced the Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement to permanently protect 240,000 acres of this historic property. Part of that agreement included the creation of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy with its vision "to protect, explore, understand, enhance and restore the incredible biodiversity found on the Ranch." Tom Maloney, Executive Director of the conservancy, will make a powerpoint presentation and discuss "*discoveries we have made in the first year of operation, the status of conservation plans concerning the Ranch and plans that are moving forward.*"

Tom has more than 15 years of experience as a conservationist, environmental advocate, natural resource planner and ecologist. Most recently he served as the North and Central Coast Ecoregional Director for The Nature Conservancy. He started his career on the Connecticut River as the first River Steward for the Connecticut River Watershed Council. Tom holds a BA in economics from Boston University and an MS in natural resources management from Antioch New England. He is also a birder and has been a natural history tour guide on three continents.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Sat. January 30, 8 - 11:00am - Kern Water Bank

Opportunity to see a Vermillion Flycatcher, Road Runner, Common Yellowthroat, ducks and many more birds on this morning bird walk at the Kern Water Bank, led by Bill Lydecker and Cheryl Harding, KWB staff. We will meet at the Kern River Bike Path parking lot, east side of Enos Lane, 3 miles south of Stockdale Hiway. Bring water, snacks, walking shoes, binoculars. Call Bill for info: 900-8595.

Mon. Feb. 15th (Presidents' Day) - 3:00pm.....Sandhill Cranes

If you missed the last field trip to view the wintering Sandhill Cranes, join us for this opportunity to see these marvelous birds before they depart. The cranes fly onto the Pixley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge at sunset from the nearby fields where they have been foraging. It is a beautiful sight to see them fly overhead and hear their incredible sounds ...it's almost a primordial experience!

Meet at the Costco parking lot (Rosedale & 99 behind the Hungry Hunter). We will gather near the gas station. Bring flashlight, binoculars, dress in layers. There is about a half mile walk to the viewing platform. Contact Becky Rule for more information: 972-4052.

Check the website for updates & additions: www.kernaudubonsociety.org

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD

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The Kern Audubon Executive Board meets monthly on the third Wednesday, 7pm. Meetings are open to interested members, so contact Ted or Madi for information about meeting locations.

UPCOMING BIRD FESTIVALS

40th Annual Rivders & Wildlife Celebration
Sandhill Crane Migration
March 18-21, 2010
Kearney Nebraska
www.nebraska.audubon.org

San Diego Bird Festival
March 4-7, 2010
www.sandiegoaudubon.org

If you like travel, birding, fun and education, consider a birding festival. For more information:

www.birdwatchersdigest.com
www.Americanbirding.org/festivals



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

WORK PARTIES AT PANORAMA PRESERVE

On a foggy Saturday morning, many people decided it was time to get outside, do some work, and get some exercise. A large number of people, from many groups, showed up to help at Panorama Vista. Andy Honig gave us directions to get cuttings from trees and shrubs for future propagation. Goal is to have the cuttings develop roots, transfer them to pots, and in the spring plant them at the Preserve. The goal is 6,000 native trees, so our work is cut out for us this year!

Madi Elsea, Lucy Clark, Clyde Goldner, Rich O'Neil, Bill Cooper, Jan Graves, and I represented Kern Audubon. Jan also brought a hard working group of students from Foothill High School's Interact Club. We hope they can return in February. The pruners, loppers, and shears were working at a lightening pace! Hundreds of cuttings were placed into water buckets.

I hope you can join us for next month's work party on **Saturday, February 6 at 9 AM**. If interested, please email me at love#@bak.rr.com or call 805-1420.

Harry Love, KAS Conservation Chr.

WEBSITES to check out...

Kern Birding For a comprehensive website about numerous Kern County birding locations go to www.natureali.org/birding.htm.

Kern County Bird Sightings/photos Go to this website for what's unusual in Kern County: kerncobirding@yahoogroups.com You'll find recent bird sightings, reports by Bob Barnes, Michael McQuerry, Alison Sheehy, pictures by Ken Kyle and others.

Audubon California has a great website about its activities and organization: www.Audubon-ca.org

Audubon in the news - To find out more about national Audubon happenings through an informative electronic newsletter, email chapterleaders@audubon.org

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT - FEB. 12-15, 2010

Looking for a free, educational activity that makes a difference? This month, join tens of thousands of people throughout the US and Canada in the **2010 Great Backyard Bird Count**. You can count birds you see in your backyard, in your neighborhood, at the park...or from anywhere you can spot birds!

Whether you are new to watching birds or an expert birder, your counts count! Your checklist will contribute valuable information for science and conservation when you enter your tally online at www.birdcount.org. Your list will help scientists understand more about how the distribution and abundance of birds are changing through time. In 2009 participants documented a huge invasion of Pine Siskins across the eastern United States. More than 94,000 checklists were completed, compared to 85,700 in 2008, and a new record for the 12 year old count

It's easy to participate...

- 1) visit www.birdcount.org for easy-to-follow instructions, including tips for identifying bird species. Download a checklist for our area
- 2) Count the birds you see, wherever you choose to count. Write down the highest number of individuals you see at one time--that way you will avoid counting any bird twice.
- 3) After at least 15 minutes of watching in one place, report your results online
- 4) You can repeat your count at the same place on each day of the GBBC. You can also visit other locations and submit separate tallies for those areas as well.

If you don't have computer access, contact Madi Elsea (322-7470), who can provide a data form for you or pick up copies at the Kern Audubon meeting on February 2nd.

This is the 12th annual GBBC and is sponsored by National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The top 10 most commonly reported birds in the 2009 GBBC were:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 - Northern Cardinal | 6 - Blue Jay |
| 2 - Mourning Dove | 7 - House Finch |
| 3 - Dark-Eyed Junco | 8 - Tufted Titmouse |
| 4 - American Goldfinch | 9 - American Crow |
| 5 - Downey Woodpecker | 10 - Black-capped Chickadee |



FOR THE BIRDS...

The KAS Executive Board will soon be appointing a Nominating Committee to consider nominations for officers for 2010-2011. It is hoped that the committee members will be announced at the February 2nd meeting and then posted on the website. Be thinking about how you might like to serve!

The By-Laws require not only a Nominating Comm. but an annual audit as well. If you would be interested in auditing KAS' financial records or know someone who could, call Treas. Bill McDonald (665-2111).

Many thanks to the new Field Trip Committee (Ginny Dallas, Becky Rule & Scott Frazer) for putting together some great field trips for this spring and summer. A chairperson is needed, so if you'd be interested in helping out, contact me for more information.

Madi Elsea, Co-Chair (322-7470)

Picture (right): Recent field trip to Kern Nat'l Wildlife Refuge - L-R: Don & Yvonne Turkal, Barbara & Roger Coley (leader), Rod Lee, Madi Elsea, Deb See & Narley, Lynn McDonald (photographer)

UPCOMING AT THE KERN RIVER PRESERVE

www.kern.audubon.org

Sat. Feb. 6, 9-11AM

Beginning Bird Identification Workshop covering binoculars, field guides, observing field marks and a bird walk...led by Alison Sheehey.

Sat. March 6th, 9-11AM

*Wildflower Wander...*wildflower season will be beginning, so head up to the preserve and enjoy a wildflower walk led by Alison Sheehey.

Thurs. April 29 - Tues. May 4 - Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival



AUDUBON CA SUPPORTS BALLOT MEASURE TO PROTECT STATE PARKS

Continuing its long support for California State Parks, Audubon California has endorsed the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010, a proposed statewide initiative slated for the November 2010 ballot that, if approved by voters, would provide a stable source of funding that would keep state parks open.

The State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010 would ensure a dedicated and reliable funding stream for state parks through an **\$18 annual surcharge on most California vehicles**. By law, the trust fund could only be spent on state parks, urban river parkways, wildlife, natural lands and ocean conservation programs. Vehicles subject to the surcharge would receive **free, year-round admission** to all state parks. Californians will no longer pay day-use fees at any state parks.

California's 278 state parks, which include state beaches and state historic parks, are priceless public assets and a vital legacy for our children and future generations. Twice in the past two years, state parks were on the brink of being shut down. Only last-minute budget reprieves kept them open. But nearly 60 state parks will be shut down part-time or their hours of operation reduced because of this year's budget cuts, and more park closure proposals and budget cuts are expected next year.

With this announcement, Audubon California joins a coalition of supporters including the California State Parks Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, Sierra Club California, Save the Redwoods League, Defenders of Wildlife, Surfrider Foundation, California State Park Rangers Association, California State Lifeguard Association and Ocean Conservancy.

We need your support to ensure that this initiative is included on the November 2010 ballot. Contact your chapter board or Audubon California to add your signature to the list or to volunteer to gather signatures.

Jordan Wellwood, Conservation Coordinator
Audubon California
916.649.7600 ext. 106 - jwellwood@audubon.org

Note: Harry Love, KAS Conservation Chr. will have copies of the petition at the Feb. 2nd Kern Audubon meeting or contact him directly to sign the petition: love3@bak.rr.com.

NEW BOOK IN KERN AUDUBON'S LIBRARY

"John Xantus: The Fort Tejon Letters 1857-1859"

Reviewed by Scott Frazer

...g conditions and hardship on the western frontier are just as interesting as the specific references to natural history of the landscape around Fort Tejon in 1858. John Xantus developed an association with Spencer Fullerton Baird, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, who was just beginning to build a network of scientific collectors.

John Xantus is a colorful character in his own right. Born in Hungarian Austria, he claimed to be a graduate of the Polytechnical school in Vienna. Expelled from Austria during the war with Hungary in 1848, Xantus enlisted in the US Army in 1855 due to a lack of any other job prospects. When Xantus died in 1894 at the age of 69 he had never accomplished anything so noteworthy as being a collector for Spencer Baird and the Smithsonian.

Functioning in a undeveloped landscape means that travel which we take for granted today was difficult and slow. Obtaining supplies for scientific specimen preparation was only possible with substantial effort and shipping materials in either direction to reach Fort Tejon meant travel through rugged country and occasional losses due to theft.

With the recent conservation agreements for protection of the Tejon Ranch (and the subject of Kern Audubon's February 2, 2010 program), we may have a renewed appreciation for how special this landscape was prior to extensive settlement. Consider this description of wildlife from the summer of 1857: "*We have here grizlys in great abundance, they are really a nuisance, you cannot walk out half a mile, without meeting some...*" Also "*Not very far on the plains, there are large herds of Antelopes, we have some deers, Elks, Wolves, Foxes, the Panther, wild cat, immense quantity of Badgers, & others, Porcupine, Skunk, flying squirrel, Gopher, Mole, Bats and ground squirrel really in countless numbers...*".

This book is available for check-out from the KAS library at the February 2nd meeting!

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Kern Audubon Society
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Bakersfield CA 93385



www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities..

- Sat. Jan 30, 8am - field trip to Kern Water Bank
- Tues. Feb. 2, 7:00pm - Meeting/program featuring the Tejon Ranch Conservancy
- Sat. Feb. 6, 8:00am - Panorama Vista Preserve Work Party
- Mon. Feb. 15 - Field trip to Pixley Wildlife Refuge to see wintering Sandhill Cranes

Membership Application -- KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY (C9ZC300Z)

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 (not Kern Audubon)

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 # _____