



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 46 No.7 - SEPTEMBER 2017
Newsletter of **Kern Audubon Society**
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org

KERN AUDUBON

Tues. SEPT 5, 2017 7:00 p.m.
Kern Supt of Schools 1300 17th St, Bakersfield
(Street parking or in lot at 18th & K)

"WIND WOLVES PRESERVE: A Wildlands Story"

Gillian Anteau & Jana Borba, Preserve Naturalists

Join us for an engaging look at the largest privately owned preserve on the West Coast, Wind Wolves Preserve, a property of The Wildlands Conservancy, which acquired it in the mid-1990's. At 97,000 acres, Wind Wolves is a critical landscape linkage and wildlife corridor between the Coast Ranges and Sierra Nevada. Due to this singular geographic location and an elevation range from 640 to 6,000 feet, the preserve has an impressive array of landforms and habitats, from wildflowers to reintroduced Tule elk. The grasslands are home to the endangered San Joaquin kit fox and blunt-nosed lizard and one of the largest stands of endangered Bakersfield cactus. Birds and raptors abound.

Gillian Anteau grew up in Tehachapi exploring and playing in the outdoors. She earned a Bachelors Degree in Biological Anthropology from UC Santa Barbara. In October 2014, she became an intern at Wind Wolves Preserve then a Naturalist in September 2015. She enjoys teaching about plants and animals and having the opportunity to inspire the youth to love and respect nature in the beautiful landscape provided by Wind Wolves Preserve.

Jana Borba is the Wind Wolves Preserve Outdoor Education Naturalist but is affectionally known as "Jana Banana". She's been a naturalist at Wind Wolves for 5 years, but before that worked in the agricultural science industry. She feels her degree from Fresno State in Biology with an emphasis in Botany, helped her find a home at Wind Wolves where she feels she uses her biology degree for what it was intended.

For more information about Wind Wolves Preserve, visit the website: www.wildlandsconservancy.org
A follow-up field trip is planned for Sunday Sept 10th (see below).

SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Sun Sept 10, 7:30am - Wind Wolves Preserve

Meet at 7:30am at the Kern River Parkway parking lot on Stockdale Hiway at Don Hart Drive across from CSUB to carpool or meet at Wind Wolves Headquarters at 8:30am. Bring \$5 for drivers, water, lunch, sunscreen, hat, binocs, etc. Al Caetano is the leader (833-6705) and at the preserve we will travel by the preserve's van.

Tues. Sept 19, 8:30am - Hart Park

A beautiful fall outing at Hart Park to see resident birds and fall migrants! Meet at 8:30am on Mirror Drive at the west end of Hart Park between the two lakes. Bring water, snacks, binocs. Walking involved. Contact Margaret Dolan for more information: dolan.m@sbcglobal.net

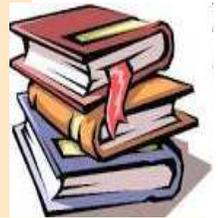
Sat. Sept 30, 8:00am - Horsethief Park in Stallion Springs

Join Kern Audubon-Tehachapi's Greg Hargleroad for this fall outing in the Tehachapi community of Stallion Springs. Meet at the Tehachapi Burger King at 8:00am. Bring water, binocs, etc. Call Greg for information: 818-645-3664. Bakersfield birders who'd like to carpool can meet at the Stockdale ParknRide (Stockdale Hiway between Hiway 99 & Real Rd.) at 7:15am.



Kern Audubon Library has books about birds well as biographies of birders, building bird houses, etc. The library use is free--just return the book when you finished reading it. If you have a bird-related book you'd like to donate for others to enjoy, just bring to a meeting. Thanks, David Schaad (428-2841)

A book to consider: *Kingbird Highway* by Kenn Kaufman, one of America's premier birders. This book tells the amazing story of Kaufmann's "big year" when at age 16 he hitched back and forth across America trying to set a record for most birds seen in a year. Kaufman is a naturalist, author &



BIRDS A BIG SUCCESS IN SHAFTER

On Tuesday, July 25, KAS volunteers **Kathy Love, Kevin Fahey, Harry Love, Karen Pestana, Fran Hersh, Wynona King, Mona Sidhu & Mac McCarthy** traveled to Shafter to give a presentation on birds to a summer day camp group of fifty children. The morning started with a description of Audubon & a five minute video on birds. Then the children met with our volunteers at different stations about owls, Blue birds, bird food and songs, and how to enjoy birds. The morning ended with gifts of bird books (thanks to Fran!) Our volunteers were spectacular! This is the third year that we have provided this service to kids and it was rewarding for both the kids and volunteers!

FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD The Kern Audubon Executive Board is continuing to function as a team despite having vacancies in leadership: president and vice-president. Board members are planning to share the functions of leading the board meetings and the monthly program meetings and to continue seeking enthusiastic and qualified chapter members who can get involved!

Also....Madi Elsea has recently retired from her day job and is seeking someone(s) to take over the editing of the *Audubon's Warbler*. Madi has done this for 11 years along with her husband Rod, who has been the webmaster for 10 years. They would like to travel and are looking for folks who can take over these significant roles. Editing the newsletter requires computer usage and an interest in birds and Audubon's work. It involves approximately 10 hours a month and using a publishing program, such as Home Publisher. Please call Madi if you'd like more information: 549-2391.

Also....Ginny Dallas has been leading the Program Committee for many years, one of the reasons we have such excellent programs. To maintain this we need volunteers to help plan, organize, and implement our programs. Please volunteer to be part of the "Program Team" by calling Ginny Dallas – 661-301-8188.

So.....If you like what Audubon is doing and stands for, please get involved! If you want a monthly newsletter, website, programs, leadership,,,,,GET INVOLVED! Contact any member of the Executive Board (see

UPDATE ON HART PARK

In January, the Kern County Parks Commission proposed to the Board of Supervisors that the county impose a daily \$5 parking fee for use of the park to offset the decline in county revenues to support the park. However, members of Kern Audubon along with many other community members spoke out against this proposal. The key issue raised was that the public had not been part of the process. The supervisors listened and voted to delay the proposal until the public had a chance to express views as to other ways to address the problems. Ryan Alsop, the new administrator for the county, agreed to hold three public meeting at which ideas would be sought related to the park's future. Financing of these ideas was a major component of the meetings, which took place in East Bakersfield, downtown, and in Lamont. By far, the largest attendance was in Lamont. In September, the General Services Department will give a summary report of these meetings to the Board of Supervisors in the form of a master plan for the park. No date has yet been set. Your attendance at this meeting will help to make this process result in a Hart Park that you, your family, and friends will enjoy for many years to come. We'll let you know when the report will be presented to the Board of Supervisors!

Harry Love, KAS Conservation Coordinator (805-1420)

REED TOLLEFSON RECEIVES AUDUBON AWARD

The National Audubon Society has presented Audubon's Kern River Preserve manager, Reed Tollefson, with its most prestigious award, the 2017 Callison Award, for his significant contribution to conservation. Tollefson, a resident of the Kern River Valley, has managed the Kern River Preserve in Weldon for over 25 years. The preserve is a habitat for hundreds of different species of birds. Under Tollefson's care the Kern River Preserve has grown into a 3,000-acre bird sanctuary with 47,000 acres of protected land around it. Its trails are open every day of the week.

The award ceremony took place July 15, 2017, at the National Audubon Convention in Park City, Utah. Reed is pictured at right with Andrea Jones, Director of Conservation for Audubon California, who made the presentation.

Congratulations to Reed on this well-deserved award!



REPORT ON AUDUBON'S NATIONAL CONVENTION JULY 14-17, 2017

Submitted by Mac McCarthy, Kern Audubon Board Member-at-Large

Audubon held its National Convention July 14-17 in Park City, Utah, with the theme, "Elevating Audubon: America's Most Effective Conservation Network." Located at 6900 feet in the scenic Wasatch Mountains 30 miles southeast of Salt Lake City, Park City did its part to "elevate" Audubon. 435 birders from 37 states and 9 countries attended, a 1/3 increase over 2015's convention in Virginia.

For Kern County, the big news to come out of the convention was the National Audubon Society presented our own Reed Tollefson, manager of the Kern River Preserve, with its prestigious Callison Award, which annually recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to conservation.

For me, rubbing shoulders with hundreds of friendly, devoted birder watchers was inspiring. Thank you, Kern Audubon, for such an opportunity. I spoke with people from at least 16 states. I met a woman from San Francisco who has birded all over Kern County, from the Carizzo Plain to the Mojave Desert. She used to install telephones in SF's new, tall buildings. Birds often kill themselves by flying into high rises' glass windows. Now this woman coaches Bay Area architects on how to design bird friendly buildings. New York City Audubon has followed her lead with their own program. I spoke with the executive director of PronaturaNoreste in Mexico. That organization works with ranchers in the State of Chihuahua across the Rio Grande from Texas. Millions of birds winter in that region before flying north. Overgrazing by cattle destroys their grassland habitat. PronaturaNoreste and its partner ranchers have taken steps to protect 600,000 acres of grassland.

Native plants The convention's emphasis on *native plants* was a surprise. Audubon now has many chapters across the country installing native plant gardens in urban and suburban areas. Native plants usually provide better nutrition for native bird species. Better nutrition for birds in urban vegetation becomes more important as available green areas shrink in developing communities. Community parks, schools and churchyards are potential sites for native gardens. To promote the spread of native plants, Audubon has undertaken an ambitious project to develop an interactive website that will show for any region pictures of native plants and the birds that the plants support. The site is now up and running, but Audubon needs local chapters to identify the best native plants. Audubon's long-range goal, is to persuade municipal parks, schools, nurseries, state transportation agencies, and even developers to plant only native plants. A few weeks ago, New Jersey decided to plant only native plants along its highways.

Native plant gardens in urban area are stepping stones for Audubon's ethnic and cultural outreach goals. In New Haven, Conn., Audubon and its partner, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, target the city's poorest neighborhoods for park and school gardens. Fish and Wildlife personnel give talks at inner city gardens. Then they follow up by taking children on field trips to see the plants growing in a wildlife refuge near New Haven. Like Audubon, ethnic and cultural outreach is now a big priority for U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

Birmingham, Alabama, has a strong native plant program with local churches, all over the city. Portland, Oregon, makes use of flood control areas for garden sites. The president of Audubon in Asheville, North Carolina, who received a convention award for his work with native plant gardens in schools, told me 5th and 6th graders show the most enthusiasm for the gardens. Also, the teacher's interest and support is make or break for a school garden's success.

Audubon views native plant gardens in schools as a way to increase a whole community's conservation awareness. A convention speaker from Morro Bay told how school children had been the key to building community support for protecting threatened Snowy Plover nests in the sand dunes along the Morro Bay Sand Spit. When that conservation project began, the city council had already voted to give off-roaders access to the sand dunes. There was little community support for the birds. Birdwatchers went into Morro Bay classrooms to tell kids about the plight of the Snowy Plovers. The kids drew pictures of the birds nesting in dunes and took their drawings home to show to their families. Some of the kids' drawings were turned into posters put up around town and on the dunes. Kids stationed themselves at the dunes on weekends to alert beachgoers about the Snowy Plovers. Beachgoers responded much better to the kids and their homemade posters than to metal "stay out" signs. Morro Bay ended up protecting the Snowy Plover habitat on the Sand Spit....thanks to Audubon!

Western Water Issues Audubon has just released its latest study, *Water and Birds in the Arid West: Habitats in Decline*. The report focuses on two of the West's most important and imperiled ecosystems: 1) the Colorado River Basin; and 2) the West's network of saline lakes—including the Great Salt Lake, the Salton Sea, and Owens Lake (90 miles northeast of Bakersfield). The report is available online and in *Audubon* magazine.

Diversity Audubon's President and CEO, David Yarnold, told the convention that he has significantly increased Audubon staff's cultural and ethnic diversity to 20% of staff. As a Californian and a former editor of the *San Jose Mercury News*, he also wants to maintain Audubon's broad geographical diversity. He announced that there are now two westerners on the Board of Directors. In January, he appointed Maggie Walker, of Seattle,

Political Tone The political tone at the convention was mostly one of moderation. None of the speakers I heard mentioned President Trump by name. There were, however, many references to a “challenging,” “very tough” and “dark” legislative environment in Washington, D.C. Audubon’s immediate federal legislation priority is stopping any plan to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. As a response to the difficult environment in Washington, DC, Yarnold urges increased efforts at state and local levels.

The political breakdown of Audubon’s membership is 52% identifying as “progressive” and 48% as “centrist to conservative.” California membership comes in at 78% progressive-22% center right. Yarnold pointed out that in South Carolina, where members identify the opposite way (7%-93%), local chapters have nevertheless been very effective in advancing conservation thru the SC legislature.

Audubon’s new Director of Legislative Affairs, Justin Stokes, previously worked for a Republican congressman. Stokes says he has recently met with 50 legislators who have not met with Audubon before. Both he and David Yarnold urged members who are refused meetings with lawmakers to be persistent and keep trying.

Strategic Plan, 2016-2020 The topics for the convention’s many small group sessions reflected the priorities that Audubon outlined last year in its *Strategic Plan, 2016-2020*. This report is available online and identifies 5 broad focus areas: *Coasts, Climate, Working Lands* (farms and ranches), *Water*, and *Bird-Friendly Communities* (cities and suburbs).

The *Strategic Plan* envisions Audubon as “... a powerful distributed network with an unparalleled reach. No other conservation organization matches the size, scale, influence, diversity, and creative energy of our chapters, nature centers, volunteer leaders and partners.” The *Plan* calls for finding common ground with diverse partners—farmers, ranchers, corporations or other conservationists—on projects that will protect birds and their habitats.

The name tags we wore at the convention all came with colored ribbons identifying us by *flyway* with orange the color for the Pacific Flyway ribbon. Audubon now looks at itself as a conservation *network* spread over the 4 major, north-south bird flyways in North America: Pacific (West Coast/Nevada), Central (Arizona to Kansas), the Mississippi, and the Atlantic

In the Central Flyway, to spread bird-friendly practices onto *working lands*, Audubon now partners with Great Plains ranchers to reduce grassland overgrazing. The ranchers rotate their herds over grasslands to allow grasses to grow to a variety of heights, as happened naturally when Buffalo herds roamed the plains. Different bird species need different heights of grass for their habitats. The cattle are grass fed; no feed lots. In return, the ranchers get to place an actual Audubon seal of approval on their high-end beef in markets. Audubon and the ranchers now protect 100,000 acres of grassland this way.

Building Membership and Chapter Finances Birdwatching outings remain the usual way chapters attract new members. The chapters promote their events in newspapers, community flyers, social media, and word of mouth. Chapter representatives reported building membership around publicized community conservation projects. One speaker suggested actively recruiting the leaders of high school and college environmental organizations to spark an increase in young people

As for chapter finances, bequests in wills have put many chapters on sound financial footing. Cities like Birmingham, AL and Pittsburgh, PA are now smaller than fast growing Bakersfield. Nevertheless, they can afford to pay staff members to co-ordinate and complete conservation projects. Bequests to Audubon chapters made over many years in these old, established communities have made the paying staff possible.

Convention Contacts Just some of the birders with whom I spoke at the convention were Jack Stewart, Board of Directors, National Audubon Society (NAS); Karyn Stockdale, Director of Western Water Initiative for NAS; Justin Stokes, NAS Legislative Affairs Director; John Rowden, NAS Director of Community Conservation; Garry George, Reed Tollefson, Desiree Loggins, and Ariana Rickard from Audubon California; Mark Larson, President of the Maricopa (Phoenix) Audubon Society, Dan Streiffert, past President of the Rainier (Wash) Audubon Society and Pacific Flyway award winner at the convention; Tom Tribble, President of the Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society (Asheville, NC) and Atlantic Flyway award winner; and Eva Ries, President of the St. Lucie (FLA) Audubon Society.

Editor’s Note: *The Kern Audubon Executive Board was pleased to have Mac McCarthy represent Kern Audubon at Audubon’s national convention. It was obviously an exciting experience for Mac and we know he will bring his new knowledge of the National Audubon Society to our work here in Kern County. Thank you, Mac, for attending and providing this engaging report on the convention. Please feel free to*

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Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. Sept 5, 7pm - Meeting & program
- Sun. Sept 10, 7:30am - Wind Wolves outing
- Tues. Sept 19, 8:30am - Hart Park outing
- Sat. Sept 30, 7:15am - Stallion Springs outing

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
_____ Renewal \$20

Make check payable to **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**

SEND this form and your check made to National Audubon for \$20 to:

Kern Audubon
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385

Name(s) _____ Amount enclosed _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone # _____