



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 44. no10 - DECEMBER 2015
Newsletter of **Kern Audubon Society**
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org

TUES. DECEMBER 8, 2015

ANNUAL HOLIDAY GATHERING & POTLUCK

6:30PM

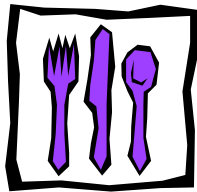
University Square (Reider Center)
20th & K Sts

(Please note the date, time & location change for this meeting!!)

Featuring... *A Christmas Puppet Show*

Susan & Barbara Castle, Puppeteers

Susan Castle joined Kern Audubon in 2013 and has become a regular supporter of our student outreach program. She and sister Barbara have a longtime love of puppets and Susan created a reader's theater program using puppets for our school programs. Barbara is a kindergarten teacher in the Arvin School District and Susan is a retired teacher and helps out in her sister's classroom. They will share a special holiday puppet show with us!



Bring a POTLUCK ITEM to share.....
main dish (for 8-10 people)
salad or side dish
dessert
(Drinks & table service provided)

PLUS...

Live & Silent AUCTION

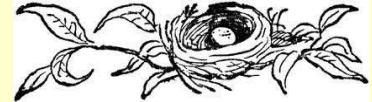
This is one of our fun & important fund-raisers for the year! Items already promised for the auction are Joe Bugni's honey jars, glass art hummingbird feeder, handmade fleece owl blanket, a quilt, restaurant gift certificates, artworks!! More is certainly needed, so please contact Harry (805-1420) with a brief description of what you plan to bring. Perhaps you have homemade jams, a "re-gift item, etc. to donate--call or email Harry Love (love3@bak.rr.com) with your contribution!



PRESIDENT'S NEST

Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the newly formed Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition, a "Christmas Bird Census", that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them. So began the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). From **December 14 through January 5** each year tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas gather together to count birds. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this long-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation action. The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years. What have we learned through CBC data? *Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report*, a comprehensive, first-of-its kind study used CBC data in predicting how climate change could affect the ranges of 588 North American birds species. Now it is your turn to help! You can be a part of this 115 year old volunteer effort by participating in one of several bird count events locally. Your information will help Audubon get a more accurate picture of the state of birds and the environment. (See elsewhere in this issue of the *Warbler* for a list of Kern County CBC's and contact information.)

Harry Love, President



WORKPARTY AT PANORAMA VISTA PRESERVE

Saturday, December 12, 9-11 AM will be the monthly work day for KAS at the Panorama Vista Preserve. We plan to give a 'Christmas present' to the plants by preparing them for the winter. Pruning, weeding, and mulching will be our tasks. Bring gloves, shovel, rake, hoe, water, and a Santa smile. Note the later start gives you more time for your cup of coffee. Want to join in our last work day for the year? Contact Harry Love (805-1420 love3@bak.rr.com) for more information. Meet at the east end of Robert Lane off Manor Drive in east Bakersfield at the gate. Hope you can make it!



FREE BIRD APPS

Two free bird "apps" are available for use on your phones, so feel free to go online to check them out.

- Audubon has recently published a free bird guide app that provides easy to use information about 771 species of North America birds. Go to www.Audubonguides.com/birdapp to preview and download
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology makes it's "Merlin" app available also for free. Like Audubon, Merlin is designed to help beginning as well as intermediate birders identify the most common birds in your particular area. Go to www.merlin.allaboutbirds.org to preview the app and download.

Do you shop on the internet? Do you use Amazon? If so, you can help Kern Audubon through **Amazon Smile**, a site that allows you to shop for the same items as Amazon but with the added feature that .5% of what you pay to Amazon will go to KAS. You have the same choices and pay no more. Go to smile.amazon.com to register and select your charity of choice, Kern Audubon Society.

When you buy something, just go to the Smile site. It's easy and Kern Audubon will benefit!

BIRD FESTIVALS are fun! You meet other birders, visit new places, see lots of birds, hear interesting presentations, support local economies and much more. For information about festivals around the country, go to...

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

March 3-6, 2016 SAN DIEGO BIRD FEST
www.sandiegoaudubon.org
March 11-13 TEXAS BIRD'em TOUR
Lower Rio Grande Valley -

If you'd like to find out what similar groups to Audubon are doing, consider a social media web site called **Meetup**. You get email reminders of events and it's free! To become a member go to www.meetup.com/Kern-Audubon-Society and follow the instructions.



WEBSITES to check out...

Info about birds? Go to www.birds.cornell.edu, the website of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, world leader in the study and conservation of birds

Kern Birding For a great website about Kern County birding spots: www.natureali.org/birding.htm.

Audubon California has an excellent website: www.Audubon-ca.org

Audubon in the news - To learn about National Audubon go to: www.audubon.org



KERN AUDUBON ON FACEBOOK

"Like" us and add your comments, photos, bird sightings and get updates on field trips and programs!

Looking ahead....

KERN AUDUBON-TEHACHAPI
Tuesday, January 26, 2016 - 7 p.m.
Golden Hills Elementary School Cafeteria
20215 Park Road, Tehachapi

“Backyard Ecology & Gardening”
Liz Block - Tehachapi-Cummings
Water District

Ms. Block will cover ecological concepts from natural soil processes to landscape techniques that will make your yard a bird magnet. A list of Tehachapi native plants will be available.

Join us for a great program, light refreshments and a raffle. For more information contact Dixie Coutant 661/599-1889.



IN MEMORIAM

This year we lost a valued individual in ED STERLING who passed away last spring. We will remember him for his wood working craftsmanship which he put to work for birds. In 1998 he and his wife Fran joined the newly formed Tehachapi Mountains Birding Club and began their involvement as Bluebird nest box monitors. He soon graduated to building Bluebird nest boxes and was a craftsman who took pride in building boxes to the correct specifications, including a scratched surface on the interior for the fledglings to grip for reaching the nest box opening. His boxes were finely crafted of cedar or redwood, pieced together with precision, and smoothly sanded creating a beautiful looking box. He built approximately 35 nest boxes in all. Ed and Fran greatly contributed to the Tehachapi Bluebird nest box program. Ed is surely missed, leaving a legacy of exceptional nest boxes that contribute to the continued recovery of Western Bluebirds. Future generations of Tehachapi Bluebirds will benefit from his dedication!

Harry Love, President

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD
2015-2016

- Harry Love, President/Conservation
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- Carol Gates, Tehachapi Rep.
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- Mary Durfrain, Tehachapi Rep.
marysalternative@yahoo.com; 972-4355
- Madi Elsea, Past President/Warbler Editor
madielsea@aol.com; 322-7470



Looking ahead to 2016....Join us Tuesday January 5th 7:00pm for our first meeting of the year at Kern Supt of Schools, 17th & L Sts. Bakersfield. Meet GEOFF GRISDALE, new staff biologist at the Kern National Wildlife Refuge who will take us on a “tour” of the refuge and talk about the importance of the federal wildlife refuge system. In the meantime, December is a good month to visit Kern NWR as water is flowing and the ducks are here for the winter. The refuge is open to visitors/birders Sun-Tues and Thurs-Friday. During December it is closed on Wed. & Saturday for hunting. Go to www.fws.gov/refuge/kern for more information.

Getting There . . .

From Interstate 5: At Lost Hills and Interstate 5, take Highway 46 east 5 miles to Corcoran Road and turn north. Drive 10.6 miles to the refuge at the intersection of Corcoran Road and Garces Highway.

From Highway 99: At Delano, exit Highway 99 at the Highway 155 exit. Turn south on Highway 155, which is Garces Highway. Travel 19 miles west on Garces Highway to the refuge entrance at the intersection of Corcoran Road and Garces Highway.

Note: KNWR is approximately 45 miles north of Bakersfield.



Curious look from a BURROWING OWL...
photo by Harry Love

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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...

- Tues. Dec. 8, 6:30pm - Holiday Potluck/Auction
- Sat. Dec. 12, 9-11am - PVP Workparty
- Sun. Dec. 13, 9:00am - PVPreserve field trip
- Wed. Dec. 16 - Heritage & Beale Parks field trip

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

Make check payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

Kern Audubon
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385

Name(s) _____ Amount enclosed _____

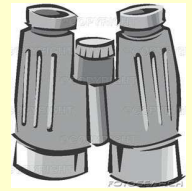
Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone # _____

DECEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, December 13, 9:00 am - Panorama Vista Preserve

Meet leader Andy Honig at the gate to PVP at the east end of Roberts Lane (off Manor Drive) to enjoy the birds of the preserve in both riparian and grassland/scrub environments. Progress of the vegetative restoration work done our monthly Audubon workdays, can be viewed as well. Walking shoes, binocs, etc. Call Andy for info: 325-0026



Wednesday Walk, December 16 - Heritage Park & Beale Parks, Bakersfield

Bill Moffat will lead a morning of birding as part of the Bakersfield Christmas Bird Count. We will meet first at Heritage Park, a noted birding hot spot at Mt. Vernon & Bernard St., just south of Hwy 178, from **8:30 - 10:30am**. For those who want to continue on or join us then, the birding will continue at Beale Park and the Oleander area from **11:00 - 1:00pm**. We will be contributing our sightings to the Bakersfield Christmas Bird Count. For Heritage Park meet at the parking lot at the end of Heritage Road, off Mount Vernon, at 8:30am. For Beale Park meet on Oleander near amphitheater at 11am. Call Bill , 661-201-9279, for more information.

The official Bakersfield Christmas Bird Count starts that morning at 7:00 am at Mirror Dr. in Hart Park. Contact John Wilson, 661-747-4628 if you are interested in participating in this aspect of the CBC started in 1949-1950 and held continuously since 1973.

Upcoming in January: Mark your calendars for a January 2016 birding trip, **January 30-31**. On Saturday we'll be visiting Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (Huntington Beach) around noon and San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary (Irvine) in mid-afternoon. On Sunday there's an Upper Newport Bay bird walk by Sea and Sage Audubon Society 8:00-10:30am.

(www.seaandsageaudubon.org) Details to follow in next month's Warbler.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS - KERN COUNTY

WEDNESDAY, December 16, 2015 - Bakersfield CBC

Compiler: John Wilson (661) 366-0283 - began 1949 -1950 and resumed in 1973

SATURDAY, December 19, 2015

- Butterbredt CBC

Compiler: Charles Bragg, Phone: (310) 454-9662 - year began

- Lancaster CBC, Los Angeles/Kern Counties

Compiler: Mary & Nick Freeman, Phone: (818) 247-6172 - began 1980

SUNDAY, December 20, 2015 - China Lake CBC, Kern County

Compiler: Pete Woodman, Phone: (760) 377-3466 - year began 1957

MONDAY, December 21, 2015 - Tehachapi CB

Compiler: Larry Parmeter, Phone: (559) 276-8753 - year began 1992

TUESDAY, December 29, 2015 - Bear Valley Springs CBC

Compiler: Ron Melin, Phone: (310) 540-2775 - year began 1995

SATURDAY, January 2, 2016 - South Fork Valley CBC

Compiler Denise LaBerteaux, Phone: (760) 378-4278 - year began 1992

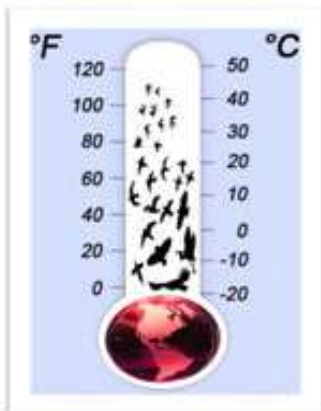
SUNDAY, January 3, 2016 - Kern River Valley CBC

Compilers: Alison Sheehey & Bob Barnes, Phone:(760) 382-1260 - began 1979



Rose-ringed parakeet - Bakersfield CBC;
Photo by Alison Sheehey

Participants are typically assigned to teams based on their bird identification skill level and endurance. The count results are tabulated by National Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Help is needed on many of these counts, so find one that interests you and contact the compiler for more information. (New birders are paired with veterans, so you don't have to be an expert.) Too cold to come out on a December or January day? How about keeping a list of birds that you see in your yard on that day (be a "feeder watcher"), or you can join a team to cover a territory near your home. Beginners to experts are welcome, maybe you know the area that a visiting birder doesn't. If you've ever heard yourself say, "Maybe it'd be fun to learn birds," here's a great opportunity! Call the contacts listed above to participate at any level.



FIVE FACTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE **Fact 1:** Around 15% of the carbon released in the environment is due to deforestation and change in use of land. **Fact 2:** The Golden Toad is the first species to go extinct due to climate change. **Fact 3:** Cars and trucks contribute to 20% of carbon emissions in the United States. **Fact 4:** Air conditioners and heating elements consume 50% of electricity in America. **Fact 5:** Hurricanes, droughts and coral deaths are a few of the natural disasters caused due to climate change.

.NOTE: CLIMATE CHANGE CORNER will be a monthly feature of the Warbler, giving you facts for your dialogue with others.

Wind Farms v. Golden Eagles

Altamont Winds, Inc. (AWI) is a wind energy company that received a controversial extension in March to continue operating hundreds of old wind turbines in the Altamont Pass (east of Livermore) area. It is now planning to shut them down. The company might also be replacing them with fewer new turbines, a move that would make its operation safer for birds. The company operates 828 turbines in the Altamont. The sudden move is important, environmentalists say, because hundreds of birds die at the Altamont each year after getting hit by wind turbine blades, colliding with windmills, or becoming trapped inside them. "It's a good outcome for birds in the Altamont," says Michael Lynes, director of public policy for Audubon California, in Sacramento.

Two other wind companies that own turbines in the Altamont, NextEra and EDF Renewable Energy, are replacing hundreds of old turbines with fewer, more powerful and more carefully sited turbines, a measure referred to as "repowering" that biologists say can reduce bird deaths. By keeping turbines out of low-lying areas of the Altamont, for example, companies could help golden eagles. Golden eagles can hit a turbine as they fly low in the terrain in search of prey. "They're using that hill as a camouflage to slip around the corner and maybe grab an unsuspecting squirrel," said Joe DiDonato, field biologist, on a recent visit to the Altamont Pass area. He noted: "If they're coming around the low end of a ridge and the wind picks them up, it could push them towards a wind turbine blade as well."

"The Altamont was sort of seen as a black eye for renewable energy," says the Audubon's Lynes, "because anytime someone was proposing a new wind farm, it would raise the specter of the Altamont Pass." In 2005, several local chapters of the Audubon Society, as well as other environmental groups, sued to force wind companies to protect birds in the Altamont. Companies agreed to remove turbines that biologists deemed to be most dangerous to birds. They also began to shut down their turbines during the winter months, when electricity demand is lowest and bird activity highest.

The new 33 turbines would together produce as much energy as the 511 old turbines, a total of 54 MW. This is equivalent to one sixth of the Altamont's total current capacity. Upon hearing that AWI has told the USFWS it will shut down all its turbines, a golden eagle researcher says he is "relieved". And concluded, "It's the right thing to do".

NOTE: Collisions with wind turbines by golden eagles is an issue of importance in the Tehachapi wind farm area.

2015-16 MIGRATORY BIRD STAMP

A brand-new piece of fine art went on sale last summer and at just \$25 it's a bargain. Its official name is the 2015–2016 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, but many people know it as the Federal Duck Stamp. At the Cornell Lab, it is called the Migratory Bird Stamp because it benefits many kinds of birds and is a great idea for any bird watcher or conservationist. Buying a Migratory Bird Stamp is a simple and direct way for people to contribute to grassland and wetland conservation. Here's Cornell Lab of Ornithology's own list of eight reasons to love the stamp:

1. Over \$900 million for conservation and counting. The first stamp was issued in 1934. It cost \$1 (about \$18 in today's dollars) and sold 635,001 copies. By law, the funds raised go directly to habitat acquisition in the lower 48 states. By now, stamp sales have surpassed \$900 million and helped to protect 6.5 million acres of wetland and grassland habitat.

2. A 79-year tradition of beautiful wildlife art. The Migratory Bird Stamp is a beautiful collectible and a great artistic tradition. Since 1949, the design of each year's duck stamp has been chosen in an open art contest. The 2015 stamp, showing a pair of Ruddy Ducks, is by Jennifer Miller, who is only the third woman to win the contest.

3. A bargain at \$25. Ninety-eight cents of each dollar spent on a stamp goes directly to land acquisition (and immediate related expenses) for the National Wildlife Refuge System. This \$25 purchase is perhaps the single simplest thing you can do to support a legacy of wetland and grassland conservation for birds.

4. It's much more than ducks. Waterfowl hunters have long been the main supporters for the program—the stamps are a requirement for anyone over 16 who wants to hunt. But the funds benefit scores of other bird species, including shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds, not to mention reptiles, amphibians, fish, butterflies, native plants, and more.

5. Save wetlands; save grasslands. Since 1958, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has used stamp revenues to protect "waterfowl production areas"—over 3 million acres—within the critical Prairie Pothole Region. The same program also protects declining prairie-nesting birds in the face of increasing loss of grasslands.

6. The benefits are gorgeous. Some of the most diverse and wildlife-rich refuges across the Lower 48 have been acquired with stamp funds.

7. It's your free pass to refuges. A migratory bird stamp is a free pass for an entire year to all refuges that charge for admission—so your \$25 could even save you money.

8. As bird watchers, let's get in on the secret. Though it's long been a fixture in hunting circles, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp is one of the best-kept secrets in all of bird conservation. **It's time to buy and show your stamp!**

The Cornell Lab is a strong supporter of the Migratory Bird Stamp, and has often written about its value as a direct aid to conservation. You can buy the stamp at many **U.S. Post Offices**, National Wildlife Refuges, and sporting goods stores. You can also **order the stamp online** at the USPS store and from the stamp's printer, Amplex (www.duckstamp.com).

