



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 40 no. 2 - February 2011
Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org

KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY
Tues. FEBRUARY 1, 2011
7:00pm - Kern Supt of Schools
17th & L Sts. (parking garage 18th & K)

"Birds, Wildlife & Scenery of the Southern Ocean"

Bob Steele, Bird Photographer

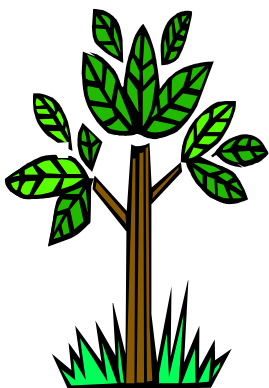


Join nationally known professional bird photographer Bob Steele for a blockbuster program of extremely high-quality photos and Bob's entertaining stories about touring and cruising the southern reaches of the Southern Hemisphere. The theme will be birds, wildlife, and scenery of the Southern Ocean. The Steeles' (Susan & Bob) recent 24 day expedition cruise included visits to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island and the Antarctic Peninsula. Seven species of penguin, four species of seal, many species of seagoing birds and incredible mountains, glaciers, and sea ice are among the sights that will be shown. Of special interest will be 100-mile-long South Georgia Island, a land of extremes, with towering mountains, huge glaciers and a large percent of the world's breeding King Penguins - mostly contained in two huge colonies.

Bob makes his home in Ridgecrest and bird-rich Kern County. His photos have graced the cover of *Birding* magazine, many Cornell Lab of Ornithology publications, *Audubon* magazine and *Birder's World* as well as being a major contributor to *The Stokes Field Guide to Birds of North America*.

Many of you will remember Bob's incredible program for Kern Audubon on "The Birds of Australia". How did he get those photos?!

For more information on about Bob Steele, and to preview some of his technically stunning work, check out www.bobsteelephoto.com.



Panorama Vista Preserve Workparty

The new year started for volunteers at the Preserve on January 8 with a cold morning. But spirits were high and everyone was willing to work hard. The job was to take cuttings from the established wild blackberry plants and place them in spaces where they had not previously taken. In teams of two, one with a shovel and one with cuttings, a section was planted in less than two hours. A special thanks to Jan Graves and the members of Foothill High School's Interact Club who came to work.

Next workday is Saturday, **February 5 at 9 AM**. Interested in joining in the fun? If so, email Harry Love at love3@bak.rr.com or call 805-1420. The preserve is located at the end Roberts Lane off Manor Drive. Meet at the locked gate at 9am.

FOR THE BIRDS...

Kern Audubon is about to begin its sixth year of re-activation and lots of great things continue to happen, thanks in no small measure to the efforts of many people who plan, coordinate, dream, recruit, serve and show-up....whether it's for monthly meetings, Panorama Vista workparties, field trips, board & committee meetings, providing refreshments, updating the website, writing checks, mailing the newsletter, leading Christmas Bird Counts, attending public hearings, etc. We have an excellent Executive Board who help make things happen and I want to thank them as well as all of you who take an active interest in the mission of Kern Audubon. If I begin to name individuals I'll undoubtedly forget someone, so on behalf of your board, a big thank you to all of you!

That said, there is one person I would like to thank and that is Ted Murphy, past President of Kern Audubon, who started the KAS Speakers Bureau several years ago. While a number of speakers are involved, Ted does many of the programs and has spoken recently about Audubon to the 60Plus Club, the Red Hat Society and has guest appeared on Kern At Large (Channel 45). See the article on p. 8 and if your group needs a program, see the list of topics and call Ted. Thanks, Ted, for representing Kern Audubon!

In the Executive Board's end-of-the-year request for your financial support, it was suggested that we may need to hire someone to handle the membership data duties for the chapter. At its January meeting, the board voted to do so and is seeking an interested individual skilled in Excel to take on this responsibility involving 6-8 hours a month with a stipend of \$100/month. If you know someone who may be interested (student? retiree?) please contact me or a member of the board.

As you can see from this edition of the *Warbler*, we have lots of field trips planned, including a week long excursion to Arizona! These are wonderful opportunities to see birds as well as birding hotspots. Best of all? Being out in nature and reminding ourselves that "birds matter!"

Madi Elsea, President

Looking ahead to Tues. March 1st, 7pm...
Paul Gipe on Alternative Energy (solar &
wind, etc.)

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD 2010 - 2011

Madi Elsea, President

madielsea@aol.com; 322-7470

Debra See, Executive Secretary

seemoffats@aol.com; 805-0232

Bill McDonald, Treasurer

WJLJMCD@aol.com; 665-2111

Harry Love, Conservation

love3@bak.rr.com; 589-6245

Ginny Dallas-Dull, Programs

vdallas@bak.rr.com; 587-6323

Lisa Twiford, Program Secretary

letwiford@aol.com

Tim Lynch, Publicity

Lynchtim1968@yahoo.com; 428-4455

Kathy Love, Hospitality

kathylove64@gmail.com; 589-6245

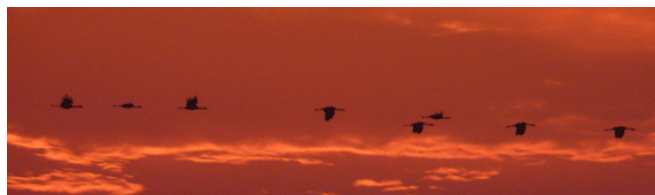
Madi Elsea, Warbler Editor

madielsea@aol.com; 322-7470

Ted Murphy, Past President

tmurphy@bak.rr.com; 325-0307

The Kern Audubon Executive Board will meet on Wed. Feb 9, 7pm. Meetings are open to interested members; contact a board member for meeting locations



SANDHILL CRANES - A RETURN FIELD TRIP

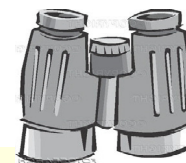
Sunday January 30th - 3pm

Over 6,000 Sandhill Cranes winter in the southern San Joaquin Valley, feeding and foraging here from late October to early March. One of the areas they have chosen is Pixley National Wildlife Refuge where hunting is not allowed. In late winter, the Cranes can be spotted doing their courtship dances preparatory to their northern migration and breeding. If you haven't had the opportunity to see the cranes, join Kern Audubon for a field trip on Sun. January 30, 3:00pm. The best time to see them is at sunset when they fly onto the refuge from nearby fields to spend the night in safety from predators.

We will meet to carpool at the Rosedale Costco near the gas station, returning after sunset. Look for folks with binoculars! Contact Madi for info: 322-7470. (There will be about 2 miles of walking, possibly on uneven ground so good walking shoes/boots needed!)

February 2011 Field Trips

For information on February field trips, call Roger Coley (832-1820)



Sat. Feb 12, 9am - Panorama Vista Preserve

See the project that Kern Audubon has “adopted” – restored riparian habitat, many birds, and a pleasant morning’s walk through this important area led by Andy Honig and Bill Cooper, who have been involved with the creation of this preserve along the Kern River below the Panorama Bluffs. Take Roberts Lane exit off Manor Drive and go east on Roberts to the parking lot at the locked gate, **9:00am**. Bring binoculars, water and walking shoes.

Sat. Feb 19, 7:00am - Paiute Ponds

Paiute Ponds is a complex of water treatment ponds south of Rosamond in LA County where waterfowl and shorebirds are found in winter. Kern Audubon toured the ponds in 2007 with Kristi Grubb, an elementary teacher at Edwards AFB who involves students in wildlife activities at the ponds, and who will lead this trip again. Recently Hudsonian Godwits were spotted there, a rarity, and there is a colony of African Clawed frogs that provide food for the herons & egrets. We will meet at 7:00 am at the Chevron Station at the corner of Union Ave & Brundage (Union exit north off Hiway 58) and return by 2pm. Bring water, snacks/lunch, binoculars, etc. Contact Ted Murphy for information: 325-0307.

Wednesday Walk, Feb 16, 8:00am - Tule Elk Reserve

Ranger Bill Moffat will lead the group through the Tule Elk Reserve to see what late winter changes have occurred. We will go far beyond the (new!) visitors’ center, to the back of the Reserve, spotting birds, elk, and perhaps some early wildflowers. The great horned owls are nesting, and we may see horned larks, some early migrants, even snow geese (spotted in January). There will be very little walking involved – this is a driving expedition.

Carpools will leave at **8:00a.m.** from the parking lot on Stockdale Highway north of CSUB, or meet at the Reserve at 8:30 am (Take Stockdale Hiway past Interstate 5 and watch for sign to the Reserve). There will be a \$2 entrance fee due to state budget cuts.. Bring binoculars, snacks, water, sunscreen, etc. If you wish, bring a picnic lunch to eat at the visitors’ area after our tour.

Sat. Feb. 26, 7:30am - Kern Nat’l Wildlife Refuge

See wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and more with Refuge Biologist Pam Williams, who may be able to take us to areas not normally open to the public. Meet for carpooling at the parking lot on Stockdale Highway north of CSUB for a **7:30 a.m. leave time**, returning by 1:00 or 1:30. Bring binoculars, water, snacks/lunch. sunscreen, etc.

Looking ahead to March 5-6, 2011 ~CARRIZO PLAIN/MORRO BAY Weekend Field Trip

Kern Audubon is planning a weekend field trip exploring interesting birding spots in the CARRIZO PLAIN and MORRO BAY. Expect to see Golden eagles, Great horned owls on nest, barn owl, bluebirds, raptors, a great selection of shorebirds and waterfowl. Last year there were also beautiful displays of wildflowers and we spotted Pronghorn and Tule Elk!

This will be a caravanning field trip with Scott Frazer as field trip leader. Participants will meet on Sat. March 5th, 7:30am at the Loves gas station on Hiway 46 in Lost Hills. From there we will carpool west on Hiway 46, birding on the way to Carrizo Plain and on the Carrizo Plain Nat’l Monument as well. After lunch (bring your own) we will head for Morro Bay for a group dinner and lodging. On Sunday birding begins at 8AM at the Morro Bay Museum and will include stops at the estuary and Morro Bay hotspots, concluding at noon.

Participants need to make own motel reservations. The Blue Sail Inn (888/337-0707) is on Market street in Morro Bay and there is also a Motel 6 (805/772-5641).

If you cannot attend both days of the field trip, you are welcome to participate on one day.

A high clearance type vehicle will be helpful as there will be travel on gravel roads.

If you are interested in participating, please contact SCOTT FRAZER (Scott_Frazer@fws.gov) or call 319-1243. Space is not limited, however he’d like a head count for trip planning and possible carpooling. This is a fun and educational weekend!

BIRDING ARIZONA WITH MICHAEL MCQUERRY

Southeast Arizona is legendary in US birding. The mountains of Mexico extend just into Arizona in the form of the "Sky Islands" of soaring mountains: the Huachuca's, the Chiricahua's, and the Santa Rita's. The birds of Mexico and Central America follow these mountains into the US only in Arizona. There are nearly 100 species possible, which occur nowhere else in the United States. Michael McQuerry, Kern Audubon member and frequent field trip leader, has birded southeastern Arizona each summer for the past 30 years and has volunteered to lead a July birding excursion for Kern Audubon. This is a fantastic opportunity to see these wonderful places/birds with such an experienced and amazing birder as Mac McQuerry! Below is a detailed summary of what Michael is recommending for the trip. The cost is based on lodging (motels or camping) and food, which is arranged by each participant. Persons who are interested should email him, especially if you have questions: macbirder@juno.com

July 23-30: Sierra Vista, AZ

Sat. July 23 - Arrival, set up camp and hotels

There are dozens of hotels in Sierra Vista. We will center our trip departures from Fairfield Inn and Suites
3855 El Mercado Loop
Sierra Vista, AZ
(520) 439-5900

I always car camp in my Toyota Sequoia and will be in the Reef Townsite Campground in Carr Canyon, Sierra Vista. The road to the campground is VERY windy, rocky, and steep, so trailers and larger SUV's are not recommended or allowed. There are bears, but I have never heard of tent-campers having problems.

July 24-25: Hummingbirds and canyon birding at Ramsey, Miller, and Ash Canyons, including grasslands below Ramsey Canyon

13 species of hummingbird, nearly always.

White-eared and Lucifer Hummingbirds are there annually.

July 26: Patagonia loop. South from Sierra Vista to Keno Springs and Patagonia.

Thick-billed Kingbird, Varied Bunting, Gray Hawk, Violet-crowned Hummingbird

July 27: San Pedro River: *Tropical Kingbird and sparrows, Gilded Flicker*

Evening, owling: Elf, Whiskered Screech, Whip-poor-will, Common Poorwill

July 28: Ft. Huachuca: *Sparrows (Botteri's, Cassin's, Rufous-winged), canyon birds, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, and all the myiarchus flycatchers.*

July 29: Clean-up day. Birds we still need from this area.

July 30: Departure. Those going home: "Adios". Those who wish to continue, we'll head to the Chiricahua Mountains. I camp in the Sunny Flat Campground. There is a delightful motel: Portal Peak Lodge - Certainly not luxurious. (520) 558-2223 And the cafe has wonderful, filling food.

If we haven't found it already, the *Elegant Trogon* is common, here. I often awake to its call, in Sunny Flat. One of our days here, we will head to the high country to get *Mexican Chickadee* and the highland warblers: *Olive Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, and Grace's Warbler*. They aren't common, but they're always here somewhere.

After about three days in the Chiricahua's and after our time in the Huachuca's, those of you new to this area should have at least 35 lifers and maybe as many as 45. It's stunning birding. And Cave Creek Canyon, in the Chiricahua's, is breath-taking. Last year, I had a Hepatic Tanager calling right over my car the whole week. And Spotted Owls called along the creek all night.

I love southeast Arizona. I've been back every year except one for the past 30 years. My favorite all time singer of birds was there. And two of my top five birding memories are there. This will be another memorable trip and I hope you can join us

Michael McQuerry ...macbirder@juno.com

YEAR-END APPEAL...The Kern Audubon Executive Board wishes to acknowledge and thank these additional persons for extra gifts toward KAS' plans for continuing to help "create a culture of conservation in Kern County!" The total raised from this year's appeal was **\$1845!**

Douglas Dodd

Carola & John Enriquez

Gary File

Howard & Rebecca Leventhal

Joe Mier

Joanne Newberry

Patricia Pears

Irvin Pike

Scott Rosenlieb

Reed Tollefson

Doug & Elaine White

William Whiteside

J. Rhett Wyatt

BIRDING FESTIVALS

Bird festivals are fun! You meet other birders, visit new places, see lots of birds, hear interesting presentations, admire – possibly buy – beautiful bird paintings and carvings, support other local economies and much more. Here's a listing of upcoming California bird festivals...

February 11 - 13

<http://www.sfbayflywayfestival.com>

Klamath Falls Winter Wings Festival

Feb 18 -20, 2011

<http://www.winterwingsfest.org>

n Diego Bird Festival & Audubon California Assembly 2011

March 3-6, 2011

Keynote: Peter Harrison,
Ornithologist/Seabird authority

www.sandiegoaudubon.org/birdfest.htm

Godwit Days Spring Migration & Bird Festival

April 14-20, 2011 - Arcata CA

Keynote: Scott Weidensaul, Author/naturalist
www.godwitdays.com
1-800-908-WING

Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival Audubon's Kern River Preserve

Sat. April 23, 2011

<http://kern.audubon.org/KRVSNF.htm>

Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival

April 28 – May 2, 2011

Marin & Sonoma Counties
email: aweiss@eacmarin.org

CA Redwoods Bird & Nature Festival

May 6-8, 2011 - Crescent City CA

Keynote: Mark Rauzon, Pacific
Seabird Researcher
www.calredwoodsbirdfest.org
1-800-343-8300

SALAD BOWL...A wooden salad bowl and two wooden spoons were left after the Christmas potluck. If this is yours, please contact the Love's, 589-6245.

NEED INFORMATION ABOUT BIRDS?

A great website for learning about birds and bird behavior is www.cornellbirds@cornell.edu. This is the website of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the world leader in the study and conservation of birds.

WESTERN BURROWING OWL NEEDS OUR HELP

The Western Burrowing Owl has been witnessing steep declines in California and the need for a range-wide conservation strategy was officially recognized by the State in 1995. However, California and the Department of Fish and Game have failed to take any action since release of that Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation fifteen years ago. Unfortunately, during the last 15 years the population has continued to plummet. New surveys have shown a 27% drop in the number of breeding burrowing owls in California's Imperial Valley and a 28% drop in the San Francisco Bay Area. These declines are on the heels of a more than 50-percent Burrowing Owl population decline in the San Francisco Bay Area and parts of Central California between 1983 and 1993.

In an effort to increase the awareness of California's burrowing owls and highlight the need for both a statewide conservation strategy and legal protection under the California Endangered Species, there is a program to ask the people of California to voice their concerns and sign a petition. All signatures will be hand-delivered, along with a detailed letter, to state officials in Sacramento regarding the need for conservation action and legal protections.

The National Audubon Society, Audubon California and local Audubon chapters have been and continue to be a critical driving force for the protection of the world's birds. You may sign a copy of the petition at the February 1st Kern Audubon meeting or go to the website listed below. Please act now to help preserve this fantastic species, the unique



Burrowing Owl

For an electronic version of the petition, go to
<http://burrowingowlconservation.org/SignPetition>

WEBSITES to check out...

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

Kern County Bird Sightings/photos For what's unusual in Kern County, go to
kerncobirding@yahoogroups.com You'll find recent bird sightings, reports by Bob Barnes, Michael McQuerry, Alison Sheehey, 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

The Great Backyard Bird Count - Feb 18-21, 2011

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 **2011 Great Backyard Bird Count**. You can count birds you see in your backyard, in your neighborhood, at your local 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 2008 participants documented the huge southward movement of northern finches from Canada, the expanding range of Eurasian Collared-Dove and the Red-bellied Woodpecker, plus the decline of Northern Bobwhite and Eastern Meadowlark.

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 1st.

This is the 15th annual GBBC which is sponsored by National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The top 10 most commonly reported birds in the 2010 GBBC were:

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



Citizen Science...Why It's Important

Many of you probably participated in an Audubon Christmas Bird Count over the holidays. Perhaps you participated in several. What you may not know is that by getting out and counting birds, you also made a significant contribution to science. The results from each individual count are compiled by volunteers and then submitted to Audubon, and Audubon in turn makes this information available to the public on its website. In its 111th year, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count is the longest-running citizen science survey around.

Bird count information allows researchers, conservation biologists, and others to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America, to identify threats, and to promote broad awareness. In 2009, Audubon California used bird distribution information from Christmas Bird Counts and North America Breeding Bird Surveys to examine bird response to future climate change in California. CBC information has been tapped for multiple publications, including *Common Birds in Decline*, which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years, and *Watchlist 2007*, which identified 178 rarer species in the continental U.S. and 39 in Hawaii that are imperiled.

But the Christmas Bird Count is just the beginning. There are many other opportunities to contribute to science by counting birds. Over the past couple of years, Audubon California relied on citizen science volunteers for surveys of Tricolored Blackbirds, Long-billed Curlews, Yellow-Billed Magpies, Mountain Plovers, Purple Martins, and more. We also work closely with our chapters to monitor sensitive bird species. Your everyday observations can be submitted to Ebird (www.ebird.org/content/ca) to enrich the body of knowledge available to researchers (no observation is too small!). You may also want to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count February 18-21, 2011, which is sponsored by National Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, providing invaluable information for science and conservation.

For more information and to join our citizen science network, visit our website: www.ca.audubon.org/citizen_science

Jordan Wellwood, Conservation Coordinator
Audubon California

KERN AUDUBON SPEAKERS BUREAU

Want to hear about birds in Peru, kit fox in Bakersfield, Tule elk in Tupman? These are the subjects of a few of the talks made available to local groups by the Kern Audubon Society Speakers Bureau.

Organized by Dr. Ted Murphy, Past-president of Kern Audubon, the Bureau can provide a wide range of programs on conservation and wildlife. Speakers come from Kern Audubon, state and federal wildlife agencies, and other outdoor/conservation individuals and organizations in Kern County. The programs are illustrated with color photos and last 30-45 minutes followed by a question/answer period. Most programs can be adapted to a shorter time period of 20-30 minutes, depending on the type of meeting. The only equipment needed is a projection screen. No fees are charged, but honoraria are accepted, usually as donations to Kern Audubon or another conservation organization.

Additional subjects available are:

The Antiquities Act: How the National Parks Were Established
Kern-Pixley National Wildlife Refuges
History of the Audubon Society
Climate Change: Plants and Animals
Wildlife of The Galapagos Islands
Birds of Kern County
African Wildlife
The Early History of FACT, the Facility for Animal Care and Treatment
Land Preserves in Kern County



Ways to Contact Your Representatives

Many times you are asked to contact your city, county, or state representative regarding an important local or statewide conservation issue affecting birds and habitat. Below is a list of mailing addresses, phone numbers and email contact. Keep this list near your computer, phone, or writing table. And keep the pressure on those who represent us.!!

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841 website: <http://gov.ca.gov>

State Senator Michael Rubio (16th District)
State Capitol, Room 313
Sacramento CA 95814
(916)651-4016
Bakersfield office: 1800 - 30th St Suite 350 (93301)
395-2620

State Senator Jean Fuller (18th District)
State Capitol, Room 3063
Sacramento CA 95814
(916)651-4018
Bakersfield office: 323-0443

Bakersfield City Council
1600 Truxtun Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Phone: 326-3761 email: city_council@bakersfieldcity.us

Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Ave. 5th Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Phone: 868-3601
email: district_co.kern.ca.us
Districts: 1: Jon McQuiston 2: Zack Scrivner 3: Mike Maggard 4: Ray Watson 5: Karen Goh

AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Kern Audubon Society
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385



www.kernaudubonsociety.org

Non-Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Bakersfield CA
Permit #93

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. Feb. 1, 7:00PM - Evening program with bird photographer BOB STEELE
- Sat. Feb. 5, 9-11am - Workparty at Panorama Vista Preserve
- Sat. Feb. 12, 9am - Field trip to Panorama Vista Preserve
- Sat. Feb 19, 7:00am - Paiute Ponds Field Trip
- Wed. Feb. 16, 8am - Field trip to Tule Elk Reserve
- Sat. Feb. 26, 7:30am - Field trip to Kern National Wildlife Refuge

Membership Application -- KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY (C30)

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 this form and your check (payable to National Audubon Society) to:

Kern Audubon
PO Box 3581
Bakersfield CA 93385

Name(s) _____ Amount enclosed _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Phone # _____