



AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 40 no. 1 - January 2011
Newsletter of Kern Audubon Society
A chapter of National Audubon Society
www.kernaudubonsociety.org

KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY
Tues. January 4, 2011
7:00pm - Kern Supt of Schools
17th & L Sts. (parking garage 18th & K)

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER"

Featuring JOHN SCHMITT, Internationally Known
Bird Artist & Ornithological Illustrator



Our January speaker is John Schmitt, whose work has formed the major artistic contribution to over a dozen books, including the *National Geographic Field Guide to Birds* (4th edition) and the *Field Guide to Raptors of Europe, Middle East and North Africa*. John lives in the Kern River Valley and his artwork has graced publicity flyers and t-shirts for Audubon's Kern River Preserve Spring Festival for many years. Over two hundred of his illustrations have appeared in various ornithological journals, magazines, and environmental newsletters including *American Birds*, *Continental Birdlife*, and *Western Birds*. His "A Naturalist's Notebook" is a regular feature in *Living Bird*, the magazine of Cornell University Lab of

John will be speaking about **FEATHERS** - - their structure and artistic beauty, how they are constructed and how birds use them. John has a spectacular collection of feathers from all over the world, which he will share with us. This promises to be a fantastic program, so start 2011 with Kern Audubon!!

January Field Trips

Sun Jan 9, 3:00pm - Sandhill Cranes/Pixley Wildlife Refuge

Late afternoon and sunset are the best times to view the wintering Sandhill Cranes at Pixley Wildlife Refuge west of Earlimart. We will meet at the Rosedale Costco in the parking area near the gas station to carpool. (This trip will be postponed in the event of rain and rescheduled to Sun. Jan. 30th, 3pm.) Contact field trip leader Madi Elsea (322-7470) for further information. If you haven't seen the cranes at sunset, it is a remarkable experience!

Sat. Jan. 22, 8:00am - Water Treatment Ponds (aka "stink ponds")

Join Michael McQuerry, one of Kern Audubon's great birders, for a morning watching & identifying waterfowl and shorebirds that frequent the City's water treatment plant at the end of Mt. Vernon south of Hiway 58. Meet at 8:00am at the gates to the facility. Follow Mt. Vernon Avenue south off Hiway 58 approximately 3 miles to the end. For more information call Roger Coley, 832-1820.

SANDHILL CRANES - A RETURN FIELD TRIP

Over 4,000 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 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, you can travel to Pixley NWR on your own or join Kern Audubon for a return trip on Sun. January 9th, 3:00pm, meeting at the Rosedale Costco near the gas station, returning after sunset. Look for folks with binoculars!



The refuge is located west of the community of Earlimart. Take Hiway 99 north to Earlimart and take Ave 56 exit and go west on Sierra Avenue, 5.7 miles. You can see the cranes until early March when they migrate north. For more information check the website: www.fws.gov/kern/refuges/pixley

DECEMBER AUCTION A SUCCESS

Record attendance of 60 made for a successful & fun holiday potluck and program highlighted by *Bakersfield Californian's* Casey Christie's presentation of photos and stories. Two of his marvelous bird photos were auctioned at the end of the meeting along with lots of other great auction items. A total of \$850 was raised, thanks to your generosity!

The Executive Board wishes to thank ANKE HODENPIJL & JUDY LONG for organizing the auction and for all those who contributed items and participated in the bidding. It was great fun!

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS...It's not too late to participate in one of the Kern County Christmas Bird Counts:

Tues. 12/28 - Bear Valley Springs:
(natureali@lightspeed.net)

Sat. Jan 1st - Carrizo Plains (805)466-6222/Roger
-South Fork Valley (natureali@lightspeed.net)

Sun. Jan 2 - Kern River Valley (natureali@lightspeed.net)

Looking ahead to Tues. February 1st,
7pm...**BOB STEELE**, nationally known bird
photographer

KERN AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD 2010 - 2011

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The Kern Audubon Executive Board meets in January on Tuesday Jan. 11, 7pm. Meetings are open to interested members; contact a board member for meeting locations.

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.

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 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

Panorama Vista Preserve in January

On Saturday, January 8, from 9-11 AM, Kern Audubon will be celebrating the New Year by working at the Preserve. Come and help Andy and the others with weeding, adding mulch, and getting new cuttings for the coming planting season. And if you are lucky, you can do some bird watching after work! If you need more information, contact Harry Love (love3@bak.rr.com) at 805-1420. To get there, take Roberts Lane off Manor Drive in east Bakersfield. Follow Roberts east to the locked gate to meet the group. Bring your work gloves and water!



MOUNTAIN PLOVER SURVEY

Audubon California is organizing a California-wide **Mountain Plover survey** this January 2011. This survey will help provide updated information on Mountain Plover winter abundance, geographic distribution and habitat associations in California. Volunteers are needed to help cover survey routes throughout Mountain Plover wintering areas in California.

The survey will take place over a five days, **January 20-24, 2011**. Participants will select predefined areas designed to be surveyed in half a day to a full day, and will conduct the survey on any day of their choosing during the five day survey period. Surveys will be largely vehicle based, where all accessible public roads are driven and suitable habitat is scanned for Mountain Plovers.

Qualifications: Ability and willingness to use your own vehicle and optics and enthusiasm for citizen-science projects. For more information or to sign up to participate, please contact Audubon California's

Alex Hartman chartman@audubon.org (916-649-7600)

BRIEF RECAP OF NATIONAL AUDUBON'S YEAR IN REVIEW: 2010

For further information about each item below, go to www.Audubonaction.org

Audubon Responds to the BP Oil Spill

Audubon was the first national group to respond with volunteers on the ground. Our response to the oil spill disaster focused on volunteer work, gathering bird data, informing the public on our view from the field, and coordinating with federal agencies.

Climate Change: Disappointing with a Side of Good News

The Senate failed to pass comprehensive climate change legislation, but, with help from your many letters, we were able to fend off repeated attempts to weaken the Clean Air Act.

Protecting the Arctic Ocean from Careless Drilling

Earlier this year, we celebrated when imminent offshore drilling was delayed in this sensitive ecosystem. With the moratorium in the Arctic Ocean lifted, Shell Oil is now poised to start drilling next summer.

Audubon Conservation Priorities Come Down to the Wire

The Senate is still considering some of Audubon's legislative priorities as the clock ticks down towards the end of the year.

A Look Ahead at a Hostile Environment for the Environment

In 2011, we will have to fight once again to protect the Arctic Refuge and other critically important habitats across our country, and to ensure that climate change pollution can be reduced for the health of our children, our families, and our planet

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www.kernaudubonsociety.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities...

- Tues. JAN. 4, 7:00PM - Evening program with bird artist JOHN SCHMITT
- Sun. Jan. 9, 3:00pm - Sandhill Crane/Pixley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge field trip
- Sat. Jan 22, 8:00am - Birding the Bakersfield "stink ponds"

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 # _____