

AUDUBON'S WARBLER

Vol. 47 no. 3 – March 2018

Newsletter of **Kern Audubon Society**
A chapter of National Audubon Society

KERN AUDUBON PROGRAM Tues, March 6th 7pm

Kern County Superintendent of Schools
1300 17th St. Bakersfield (17th and L St.)

Playing with Nature in Public

Kern and its neighboring counties are replete with public lands. How do changes to policy affect where, when, and how much it costs to recreate locally? How about the effect on our wildlife and native plants? Or even our tremendous geological landscapes? Just where are the parks and protected spaces? And most important, what and where are the special birds, other animals, and native plants found locally?



Alison Sheehy, aka Nature Ali (<http://www.natureali.org>) is a California Master Naturalist with a degree in Anthropology. She currently is the Programs Director of Sequoia ForestKeeper, a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization based in Kernville, CA. Ali is the past president of Kern Audubon and has been active in protecting and appreciating all that is natural in Kern County and beyond since she migrated here in 1980.

SPECIAL GUEST: **Ariana Rickard**, Audubon California's Chapter Network Associate Director, will be speaking briefly at the meeting about Audubon California's conservation campaigns. She will also be visiting Audubon's Kern River Reserve and Panorama Vista Preserve.

March Field Trips

Tues. Mar. 13th – 9:00am - Bakersfield Sewage Ponds

Join us for a weekday field trip that is guaranteed not to stink! The Bakersfield sewer ponds are a great location to see wintering ducks, shorebirds and raptors as well as learn from some experienced local birders. Meet at the Treatment plant gate on the south end of Mt. Vernon off Highway 58 where the road ends at 9:00 where Gary File will be leading this outing. This is a driving location so we will be touring in as few vehicles as possible, please bring walkie-talkies to communicate between vehicles. Contact Geoff Grisdale (661) 203-3140 for more information.

Sat. Mar. 17th, 7:45am - Bob Powers Gateway Preserve

Join us Saturday morning for a tour of an ongoing Audubon restoration location, important birding resource and gateway to the Kern River valley. The Bob Powers Gateway Preserve is an 18-acre cattail marsh, and includes restored habitat for Kern red-winged and tricolored blackbirds, as well as rare hot springs and the Alkali Mariposa Lily. Expect to see waterfowl as well as shorebirds and spring migrating raptors and passerines.

For carpools meet at 7:45 the Albertson's Parking lot on Mt. Vernon at Hiway 178 near the donut shop (leaving by 8:00). Please bring \$10 for drivers. From there it is an hour drive to Lake Isabella where we will meet Bruce Vegter in the True Value parking lot (6050 Lake Isabella Blvd.) where he will lead us on a 2-3 hour tour of the Preserve and adjoining hot springs. For those driving separately meet the group at the True Value hardware store in Lake Isabella at 9:00. Contact Geoff Grisdale (661) 203-3140 for more information. Hope to see you there!

Sat. Mar. 24th, 8:30am - Central Park, California City

Central Park provides a much needed water source in the Mojave Desert for migrant and resident birds. We saw over 40 bird species including a Bald Eagle last year. For carpools meet at the Burger King in Tehachapi at 8am or Central Park in California City at 9am. Bring water, snacks, binoculars (loaners available). Questions? Contact Greg's email: gregory.hargleroad@hotmail.com.



What a great turnout for the Super Bowl Sunday field trip to Kern & Pixley NWR's. 22 folks attended!



'Employing' Bluebirds in California's Vineyards

Do bluebirds serve as effective insect pest managers? Vineyard owners in California hope they do because pests like the Blue-green Sharpshooter spread bacteria among their vines. Installing nest boxes in vineyards is not new, but quantifying the bird's impact is more complicated. But one fact is true: bluebirds do eat many insects that can damage grapes. One study determined that the mosquito was the most common insect chose by bluebirds. They also found out that midges, stink bugs, along with 66 other arthropod species, made up 50% of their diet. Vineyard bluebirds were very opportunistic, that is, eating insects not normally found in their woodland and savannah locals. Scientists are still wondering if these bluebirds are selecting different prey as they are trying to feed their young or if an abundance of less favorable insects make up for the absence of larger prey. All we know is that bluebirds make it easier for us to have table grapes and wine.

(Source: "Bluebirds Fly" Winter, 2018. Publication of the California Bluebird Recovery Program)

2018: The Year of the Bird

In 1918 Congress passed the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to protect birds from wanton killing. To celebrate the centennial, National Geographic is partnering with the **National Audubon Society**, **BirdLife International**, and the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology** to declare 2018 the Year of the Bird. Watch for more stories, maps, books, events, and social media content throughout the year.



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2017-2018

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Board Meeting Mar. 20, 2018 7PM

KERN AUDUBON ON FACEBOOK



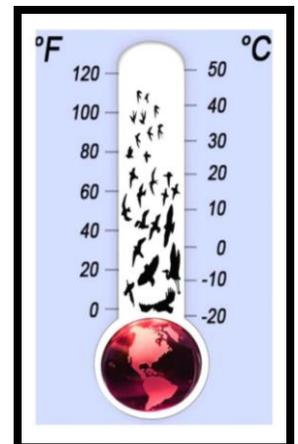
"Like" us and add your comments, photos, bird sightings, and get updates on field trips and programs! Laura Fahey manages our Facebook, email her at: ***ityzmom@sbcglobal.net.***

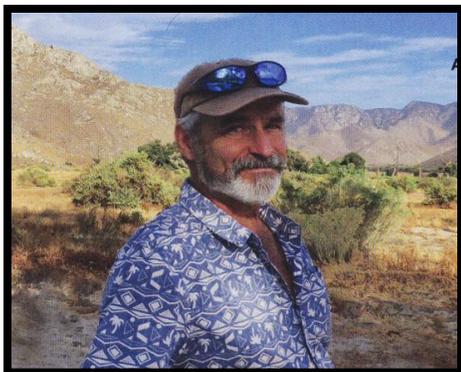
Want to know about upcoming outings for Kern Audubon? Want to find out what similar groups are doing? Sign up for **Meetup!** ***www.meetup.com/Kern-Audubon-Society*** Many thanks to **Carly Summers** for updating events on the site.



CLIMATE CHANGE CORNER: Harvard University

Howard University is showing real climate leadership just miles from Capitol Hill and the White House. Howard is conducting research on an important topic for renewables: integrating clean energy into the modern grid system. Fossil fuel advocates like to claim that renewables and the grid are completely incompatible, but the truth is that scientists and engineers like those at Howard are rapidly improving systems to store and deliver renewable power. Howard is committed to the critical global solutions. But it is also taking steps at its own front door. The university recently completed a retrofit project for outdoor LED lighting. The result? A projected \$10.5 million in lifetime cost savings, 70,000 tons of reduced carbon dioxide emissions, and improved safety and beauty on campus. It goes to show just how impactful small backyard changes become over time.





Safeguarding the Kern River Valley

“When I first came here, the emphasis was on planting trees,” says Reed Tollefson, who has been the manager of the Audubon Kern River Preserve for 30 years, through ownership by The Nature Conservancy and Audubon California. “Now it’s protecting all this land around us.”

Tollefson’s experience at the Preserve is an education on how habitats are interconnected by water, by wildlife corridors, and by human activity. Tollefson and others quickly realized that while land stewardship was vital to protecting the native cottonwood-willow forest habitat along the Kern River, they needed to find ways to keep the river beyond the Preserve flowing at current levels, and make sure that important connections to adjacent habitat were not degraded or lost to development.

The result has been the protection of more than 53,000 acres beyond the original Preserve. Some of this has been purchased and added to the Preserve, but in most cases Audubon California has worked with partners to put the properties in public hands or under conservation easements.

Tollefson has learned some hard lessons along the way. Several years ago Audubon was part of a coalition attempting to purchase and protect the important 64,000-acre Onyx Ranch, but was outbid by a private company. Instead of taking a combative stance,

Tollefson found ways to work with the new owner to protect important parcels, the biggest of which was 25,000 acres of prime habitat in the Southern Sierra Desert Canyons IBA recently acquired by the state.

“This is tough work and you’re going to get beat, and when that happens you need to stay focused on your goal of habitat protection,” said Tollefson. “And you may find yourself striking a new alliance with the people that beat you.”

The Kern River Preserve sits at the heart of a Globally Significant Important Bird Area, a refuge for Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, and a stronghold for numerous other birds that favor river habitats.

“We’re increasingly seeing that this region is a pivotal part of a massive wildland corridor that runs from the Sierra Nevada to the coastal ranges of California,” says Tollefson. “It’s well worth all the effort we’re putting into protecting it.”

ca.audubon.org Audubon California

WORKPARTY AT PANORAMA VISTA PRESERVE

Saturday,

Mar. 10 @ 9am

Come out and enjoy the outdoors and help improve the preserve. East end of Roberts Lane.

Bring water, a hat, gloves and a shovel if you have one. If you have any questions please contact David S. at: davidws@pacbell.net/661-428-2841.



GOING PAPERLESS WITH KERN AUDUBON!

If you have concerns about the transition to receiving the Warbler by e-mail or would like to continue to receive a printed Warbler please contact:

Harry Love - Address - 13500 Powder River Ave. 93314;

harrylove1944@gmail.com;

661-805-1420

Ginny Dallas - Address - 11814

Kettering Dr. 93312;

vdallasdull@gmail.com;

661-301-8188.

Give feedback to any member of the Exec Board!



MEETING ON SWAINSON’S HAWK HABITAT

On Tuesday, March 13, at 2 PM, the Kern County Board of Supervisors has scheduled a public hearing on the placement of conservation easements on dairy land in the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) to mitigate for the loss of foraging land in the Antelope Valley (AV) for Swainson’s hawks (SH). **BACKGROUND:** In 2011, the County permitted a solar farm in the AV with the stipulation that the developer find appropriate land in the area to offset the loss of farm land and habitat for the SH. This bird thrives when it can forage in farm land such as alfalfa fields, the dominant crop in the AV. No land was ever purchased. Instead, the developer gave \$14.3 million to the County for it to find the necessary land. The solar farm was then approved, built and is in operation. SH habitat land and farm land in the affected AV was never purchased. Instead, the County has found dairy farmers in the SJV who are willing to set aside their land to mitigate for loss of farm land and SH habitat in the AV. Price: \$11 million (this allows \$3 million to stay in the County’s general fund). At issue is that the species affected by the construction of the solar farm is found in the AV. And it does not migrate from the area. Without providing land for it in the AV, the SH will soon be eliminated there. The Kern Audubon Society, along with other environmental groups, is asking that the County purchase mitigation easements in the AV. **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Please come to the meeting to show your support. You do not need to speak. Questions: Contact Harry Love, Conservation Chair (harrylove1944@gmail.com)

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Kern Audubon Society

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www.KernAudubonSociety.org



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join KERN AUDUBON for these activities:

- *Tues. Mar. 6, 7pm - KAS Program*
- *Sat. Mar. 10, 9am - PVP Workday*
- *Tues. Mar. 13, 9am - Bakersfield Sewage Ponds field trip*
- *Sat. Mar. 17, 9am - Bob Powers Gateway Preserve field trip*
- *Sat. Mar. 24, 9am - Central Park, California City field trip*

Membership Application – KERN AUDUBON SOCIETY (C4ZC300Z)

If you would like to be apart 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

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

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