

# The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

April/May, 2017

## **SPRING CALENDAR**

Wed	Apr 19	Board Meeting: Hector's
Sat	Apr 22	Kern River Valley Bioregions Festival
Sun	Apr 23	Shelley Ellis Memorial
Sat	May 6	BIRDATION
Wed	May 17	Board Meeting: Place TBD
Thu	Apr 18	Annual Meeting: Bob Steele

### **THIS NEWSLETTER IS LATE ...**

Because there is nothing scheduled until late in the month, and there is something scheduled very early in May, so it makes sense to combine the two newsletters.

Note the omission of any word of the Owens Lake Bird Festival. It is sold out. If you aren't signed up and really want to go, there is a waiting list available via [www.friendsoftheinyo.org](http://www.friendsoftheinyo.org). Or, you might just go and hope someone is a no-show.

### **KERN RIVER VALLEY BIOREGIONS FESTIVAL**

The big April event is the resurrected Kern River Valley Bioregions Festival on Earth Day, May 22nd. The festival returns this year to the Circle Park in Kernville, as well as the Audubon California Kern River Preserve (provided the road isn't flooded and we can get in.) The flyer on page 3 of this newsletter has all the details.

### **MEMORIAL FOR SHELLEY ELLIS**

A dedication of an interpretive panel and sharing of stories about Shelley will be held in Sand Canyon at 2 pm on Sunday, April 23rd.

Later, from 3:30 to 5:00 pm there will be refreshments, more tributes to Shelley and sharing of her photographs at the Maturango Museum.

A color flyer is enclosed for email recipients.

### **BIRDATHON 2017**

It's not until May 6, but it's time to plan, form teams, get pledges and get ready!

It is Kerncrest Audubon Society's one and only annual fundraiser, so plan to contribute, if you can't or don't want to get out and bird. Proceeds go to support our education programs and the

Audubon California Kern River Preserve.

### **Everyone is invited to participate.**

Lee Sutton is again coordinating, with the help of Nancy Robinson. Lee may be out of town on the date of the Birdathon, so call Nancy at 760-382-4895 to register as a team or if you would like to be put on a team.

The compilation of all birds seen will be at the Pizza Factory. We will start ordering, chatting, and eating pizza at 5 pm. The actual compilation will begin at 6 pm. If you are unable to participate in the count but want to hear the results and eat pizza, come on in!

A pledge form is enclosed, or found on a later page of the email newsletter.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

*Program: Bob Steele*

### ***Chasing Spring on the Pacific Crest Trail***

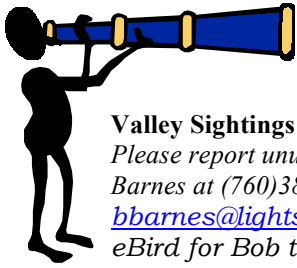
In 2016 Bob and his wife Susan thru-hiked the 2650 mile-long Pacific Crest Trail with one different goal for the trail than anyone else – counting all the birds. Their trek passed through magnificent scenery, diverse habitats, and afforded the chance to see birds moving northbound, from spring migration to summer breeding.

With technically stunning photography and storytelling, this evening presentation will take you along the mountainous spine of the west coast, winding from Mexico to Canada with a keen eye toward natural history and birds. Share in the joy and challenge of backpacking 140 days on one of the most famous trails in the Western Hemisphere, and glimpse some of the 200 species of birds found along the way.

Join us at the Maturango Museum at 7pm on May 18th. It's our annual meeting, so there will be cookies.

### **QUICK REMINDER**

For email recipients who don't get this too late, Janet Westbrook is sharing her trip to Namibia at the Maturango Museum Wednesday at 7:30 pm.



### Valley Sightings – April 2017

Please report unusual sightings to Bob Barnes at (760)382-1260, or by email at [bbarnes@lightspeed.net](mailto:bbarnes@lightspeed.net) (or submit to eBird for Bob to glean.)

800 **Snow Geese** on desert habitat west of Upjohn Park in Ridgecrest Mar 1 (LSu, SSu).

1200 wintering **Snow Geese** still present in Ridgecrest - at RWWP - Mar 11 (LSu, SSu).

2 **Snow Geese** remained at RWWP Mar 23 (BB, EH, FO, LP, DT, LW).

15 **Mountain Quail** at Freeman Canyon Mar 13 (BSt, SSt).

An **Osprey** at Indian Wells Canyon Mar 27 (BSt, SSt).

An **Osprey** at Freeman Canyon Mar 28 was species #119 for that location (BSt, SSt).

18 breeding plumage **American Avocets** in ponds just west of Gateway School in Ridgecrest Mar 1 (LSu, SSu).

**Loggerhead Shrikes** nesting SW of Inyokern again this year w. young produced (LK).

20 **Pinyon Jays** at Freeman Canyon Mar 12 (BSt, SSt) with an occupied nest.

A **Steller's Jay** at a yard NW of Inyokern Mar 4 was a second time ever for that location (LB).

**Steller's Jay** at Noname Canyon Mar 6 was species #111 for that location (BSt, SSt).

2 **California Scrub-Jays** continued at a yard NW of Inyokern at least through Mar 4 (LB).

9 **American Robins** at a yard in NW Ridgecrest Mar 1 was the highest total ever for that location (BBu, DBu).

4 **Le Conte's Thrashers** (adult feeding 3 fledgelings on the ground) NW of Inyokern Mar 23 (BB, EH, LK, FO, LP, DT, LW).

A **Phainopepla** at a yard one mile below the college on Mar 15 (DW).

IWV FOS - **Bonaparte's Gull** at CLP Mar 14 (BSt, SSt); **Lesser Nighthawk** at an E Ridgecrest yard Mar 29 (LSu, SSu), **Western Kingbird** at RWWP Mar 18 (LSu, SSu), **Warbling Vireo** at Noname Canyon Mar 20 (NO, RO, BSt, SSt), **Brewer's Sparrow** at Cow Heaven Canyon Mar 10 (TiM), **Black-headed Grosbeak** S of Inyokern Mar 27 (BSt, SSt), **Hooded Oriole** NW of Inyokern Mar 8 (TM), **Bullock's Oriole**

NW of Inyokern (TM) & NW Ridgecrest (BB) Mar 20, **Scott's Oriole** at Grapevine Canyon Mar 12 (BSt, SSt), 4 **Lawrence's Goldfinches** at DMP Mar 23 (EH, FO, LP, DT, LW).

Thanks to the following for reporting: Bob Barnes (BB), Linda Bates (LB), Brenda Burnett (BBu), Dan Burnett (DBu), Ed Harper (EH), Louise Knecht (LK), Terri Middlemiss (TM), Tim Miller (TiM), Frances Oliver (FO), Nancy Overholtz (NO), Ron Overholtz (RO), Linda Pittman (LP), Bob Steele (BSt), Susan Steele (SSt), Lee Sutton (LSu), Shirley Sutton (SSu), Dan Tankersley (DT), Liz West (LW), Donnie Woods (DW).

KEY: FOS = First of Spring; CC = Cerro Coso Community College; CLP = City of Ridgecrest water treatment plant ponds at China Lake NAWS; DMP = Desert Memorial Park (cemetery); GC = China Lake Golf Course; IWV = Indian Wells Valley watershed; RWWP = Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park.

## BIRD KILLERS

### PIPES AND WINDOWS

We have run a couple of articles with horrible pictures of dead birds in open pipes. I won't do that again unless there's tons of space to fill in a newsletter; however, it is definitely time to re-raise the issue. I noticed on the way to WalMart the other day that at least half the caps on the posts of the chain-link fence along Bowman Road have blown off or been pilfered. I plan to measure those for size, then buy caps to cover them. (I will hope to be reimbursed by Kerncrest, and to establish a fund for that purpose.)

Please try to notice open pipes as you drive around your neighborhoods and report them to Brenda at 760-382-4935. Also call me if you would like to help. Flycatcher migration is almost upon us, and those birds are the most likely to be trapped in open pipes!

Windows are another killer of birds, especially for those of us who feed them in our yards. Many of us have tried several supposed solutions to the problem of bird strikes, to no avail. Bob Steele has finally found for us a solution that works. They're made of parachute cord, and you can buy them or make your own. See <https://www.birdsavers.com/factsheet.html> for options and links to instructions.

Here are some forms for you to use to contribute to the Kerncrest Audubon Society Birdathon, or to collect pledges from friends.

Collect pledges from friends wishing to sponsor by number of species seen, or contributions from those making lump sum donations, and bring them to the Birdathon. E-mail Nancy Robinson at [nepr918@gmail.com](mailto:nepr918@gmail.com) or call 760-382-4895 for extra pledge sheets, to sign up, or for information.

If you can't participate, MAKE A CONTRIBUTION and mail it to Kerncrest Audubon Society, PO Box 984, Ridgecrest CA 93556. If you wish to contribute by species, please note the pledge by species and include your telephone number, so someone can call you after the event and let you know how many species were sighted.

**KERNCREST AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRDATHON Pledge/Contribution**

1. Birder's (or Team's) Name: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Choose Your Per Species Pledge:  
\_\_\_10 cents \_\_\_25 cents \_\_\_50 cents \_\_\_1 dollar \_\_\_Other amount
- OR: Choose a Lump Sum Payment: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How can we contact you?

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send completed form to Kerncrest Audubon Society, P.O. Box 984, Ridgecrest, CA 93556.

**KERNCREST AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRDATHON Pledge/Contribution**

1. Birder's (or Team's) Name: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Choose Your Per Species Pledge:  
\_\_\_25 cents \_\_\_50 cents \_\_\_1 dollar \_\_\_Other amount
- OR: Choose a Lump Sum Payment: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How can we contact you?

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send completed form to Kerncrest Audubon Society, P.O. Box 984, Ridgecrest, CA 93556.