

# The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

June, 2017

## Summer Calendar

No official Kerncrest events for the next 2 months, but see below for things to do and places to go.

### **AUDUBON AWARD-WINNING NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS ON DISPLAY AT MATURANGO MUSEUM**

Visit the Maturango Museum between July 13, 2017 and August 7, 2017 to walk among the winning bird photographs from this year's Audubon Photography Awards.

A panel of five judges had the daunting task of sifting through over 7,000 submissions to select the winners of the 2016-2017 Audubon Nature Photography Contest. The images were graded based on technical quality, originality, and artistic merit. The judges selected nine photographs to be winners and runners-up. These nine photos plus three others selected from the top 100 submissions are going to be on display at the Maturango Museum.

The National Audubon Society is circulating the photos to local chapters. Kerncrest Audubon and the Maturango Museum were lucky enough to be able to schedule a showing of these stunning photographs.

The museum is open daily from 10 AM to 5 PM during the time the photos will be on exhibit.

### **CANEBRAKE RESERVE OPEN**

The Canebrake Ecological Reserve Public Access Trail is open again after being closed for two or more years. It is a lovely place for a morning stroll. The paved, handicapped-accessible trail is not in the greatest of shape, so a wheelchair, while it probably could get through, might require an occasional push from a friend.

The entrance to the Public Access Trail trailhead parking area is located on the north (forest) side of highway 178, 4-5 miles east of the community of Onyx and a mile or so west of the community of Canebrake. An easy landmark is the large greenhouse visible about 1/4 mile back from the road, on the south side, across from the preserve parking entrance on the north.

### **SONORAN INSTITUTE OPEN HOUSE MEETING**

An amazing report entitled *Evaluating Encroachment Pressures on the Military Mission in the California Desert* has been released discussing encroachment issues caused by urban development; renewable energy; electrical transmission lines; extractive industries like mining; recreation; and natural resource management.

Interestingly, the report identifies the preservation of wilderness and other natural areas around military bases as a force for their future success in that urban development is excluded.

NAWS China Lake is one of the bases studied, and groundwater depletion is discussed as a local encroachment problem. Water as a resource needed for urban development is also mentioned as a source of conflict with military bases in other areas of water scarcity.

The study was done with the full cooperation of the military, and reported results have their approval.

The full report may be downloaded at [www.tiny.cc/camilitary](http://www.tiny.cc/camilitary). Tellingly, the title of the download is ProtectingCalDesertMilitary.

It is lengthy, but readable if you do not attempt to decipher the detailed maps. And it is very informative! (I would hope that presentations at the open houses to be held will have maps that are big enough to see.)

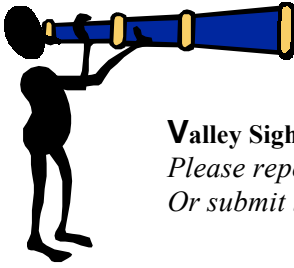
An open house meeting will be held in Ridgecrest from 3:00 to 4:30 PM on Thursday, June 29 in the Fossil Falls Room of the Kerr McGee Center, 100 W California Ave.

Another will be held the same day in Victorville, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Hilton Garden Inn, 12603 Mariposa Road.

### **HELP!!**

A Volunteer is needed to compile the Valley Sightings. Bob Barnes volunteered to do it for 1 year, in Susan Steele's absence. Susan is still retired and traveling. It would be a shame to see this 40 plus year column go defunct!

Email Brenda at [chatbird1@gmail.com](mailto:chatbird1@gmail.com) to discuss.



### Valley Sightings – April/May 2017

*Please report unusual sightings to ???*

*Or submit to ebird for ??? to glean.*

#### KEY:

FOS=First of Spring

CLP=China Lake wastewater treatment plant

GC=golf course

TWWP=Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park or old wastewater treatment plant

A **Canada Goose** at RWWP May 11 was the last report this spring (SSt, LSu, SSu).

A **Common Loon** at RWWP Apr 21 (RW), Apr 23 (AS), May 11 (SSt, then LSu, SSu).

An **Osprey** at an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 11 (LSu, SSu).

Two **Great Egrets** at a yard N of Inyokern Apr 13 (LB).

A **Snowy Egret** over an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 10 (LSu, SSu).

45 **White-faced Ibis** over an E Ridgecrest yard the last week in Apr (LSu, SSu).

A **Marbled Godwit** at CLP May 12 (TE, HE, MS).

Two **Short-billed Dowitchers** at CLP Apr 13 (BSt, SSt).

A **Willet** at CLP May 20 (AS).

Two **Franklin's Gulls** at CLP May 20 (BB).

A **White-winged Dove** returned to a NW Ridgecrest neighborhood Apr 11 (EC) with a high of 3 Jun 5 (BB).

A **White-winged Dove** at an E Ridgecrest yard May 27, 28, 30 & 31. (LSu, SSu).

A **Long-eared Owl** pair fledged three young at a yard NW of Inyokern (TM).

**Long-eared Owl, Cassin's Vireo, European Starling, & Lawrence's Goldfinch** at Cow Heaven Canyon May 9 brings the total there to 103 species (BSt, SSt).

A **Calliope Hummingbird** south of Inyokern May 9 (BSt, SSt).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Townsend's Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, & Scott's Oriole** at Short Canyon May brings the total there to 105 species (BSt, SSt).

A **Western Kingbird** pair returned to a yard NW of Inyokern Apr 17 (TM).

**Plumbeous Vireo & Warbling Vireo** at Freeman Canyon May 8 brings the total there to 121 species (BSt, SSt).

A **Swainson's Thrush** at Nine Mile Canyon May 7 brings the total there to 132 species (BSt, SSt).

**Le Conte's Thrashers** continue to nest and produce young at a yard NW of Inyokern with ultimate success unknown due to heavy predator pressure from Cooper's Hawk, Greater Roadrunner and Common Raven (LK).

An FOS **Orange-crowned Warbler** at a E Ridgecrest yard Apr 3 (LSu, SSu).

**Black-chinned Sparrow** at Grapevine Canyon May 11 brings the total there to 122 species (BSt, SSt).

**Yellow Warblers, Wilson's Warblers, Western Tanager, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed Grosbeaks,**

**Bullock's Oriole** migrated through a NW Ridgecrest yard during the period (BBu, DBu).

A **Hermit Warbler** at Freeman Canyon May 8 (BSt, SSt).

A wintering **Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco** at a NW Ridgecrest yard was last seen Apr 3 (BBu, DBu).

A **Fox Sparrow** at an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 16 (LSu, SSu).

**Yellow-headed Blackbirds** at a yard below the college Apr 17 (DW).

IWV FOS (aside from the May 6 Birdathon) - **Great Egret** at CLP Apr 6 (SSt), 20 **White-faced Ibis** at IWTP Apr 8 (SSt), 3 **Semiplumbed Plovers** at CLP Apr 8 (SSt), 5 **Western Sandpipers** at CLP Apr 6 (SSt), **Spotted Sandpiper** at IWTP on Apr 6 (SSt), **Solitary Sandpiper** at CLPO May 5 (BSt, SSt), 20 **Caspian Terns** at CLP Apr 23 (AS), 6 **Forster's Terns** at CLP Apr 23 (AS), **Black-chinned Hummingbird** at the GC Apr 6 (SSt), **Willow Flycatcher** at an E Ridgecrest yard May 7,8 (LSu, SSu), **Dusky Flycatcher** at an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 24 (LSu, SSu), **Cassin's Vireo** in a NW Ridgecrest neighborhood Apr 11 (BB), **Nashville Warbler** at an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 5 (LSu, SSu), **Wilson's Warbler** at RWWP Apr 11 (BB), **Green-tailed Towhee** at an E Ridgecrest yard May 19 (LSu, SSu), **Western Tanager** at an E Ridgecrest yard Apr 23 (LSu, SSu), 3 **Brown-headed Cowbirds** at a NW Ridgecrest yard Apr 10 (BB).

*Thanks to the following for reporting: Bob Barnes (BB), Linda Bates (LB), Brenda Burnett (BBu), Dan Burnett (DBu), Encar Card (EC), Tom Edell (TE), Herb Elliot (HE), Louise Knecht (LK), Terri Middlemiss (TM), Alison Sheehey (AS), Maggie Smith (MS), Bob Steele (BSt), Susan Steele (SSt), Lee Sutton (LSu), Shirley Sutton (SSu), Rose Whipple (RW), Donnie Woods (DW).*