

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

September, 2016

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Wed Sep 14 Board Meeting at Suttons'
Sat Sep 17 Kern Valley Pride Day
Cleanup
Sat Sep 24 Field Trip: Turkey Vulture
Festival

KERN VALLEY PRIDE DAY

Those of you in the Kern River Valley have likely already received this message from Reed Tollefson. But just in case you haven't, here's a reminder.

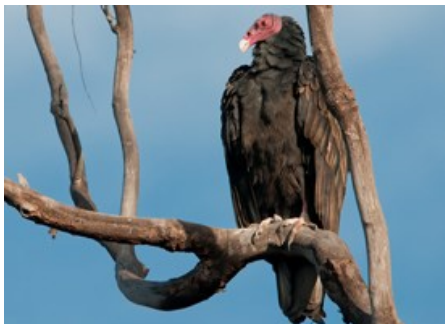
Kern Valley Pride Day is when people get together and help clean up the Kern Valley. Sandra Wieser will be leading a group for Kern River Preserve this year.

We pick up litter along Sierra Way and in the South Fork Wildlife Area.

So please contact her to let her know if you can help asap. She will let the organizer know how many people are in our group so that we can get t-shirts and attend the BBQ.

Sandra will meet volunteers at Kern River Preserve HQ at 8:00 AM on Saturday September 17.

Contact Sandra at swieser@audubon.org or on her cell phone – 760.223.5002.



FIELD TRIP

Autumn Nature and Turkey Vulture Festival

Fall is here and the birds are moving from their summer breeding grounds in North America to the wintering grounds in Central and South America. As birds fly south they need places like the Kern River Preserve to rest and replenish on their way. One of the largest concentrations of migrating turkey vultures in North America comes down the Sierra Nevada and through the Kern Valley. If we are lucky we may see “kettles” of hundreds of vultures swirling up into the morning sky. This is a great time of year to get out and enjoy the Kern River Preserve.

This year's festival schedule has not yet been posted, but events will surely include the usual:

6 AM-Early Birding Walk at Migrant Corner Trail-7:30 AM-and 10:00 AM Bird Walk at Kern River Preserve headquarters-

There will also throughout the day be children's activities, information booths by such organizations as Friends of the California Condor, the US Forest Service, California State Parks Elk Reserve, local Audubon Societies and others.

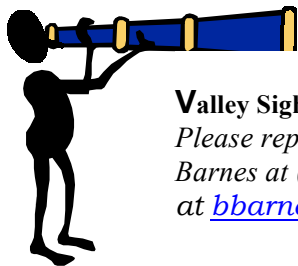
Around lunch time there is always great music to listen to, performed by local musicians. Bring a picnic and enjoy sitting under the trees

All events are at Kern River Preserve-18747 Hwy 178, Weldon, California 93283.

Meet at the 76 Station in Inyokern at 8:00 am on Saturday, September 24, to car pool. Bring a picnic, or plan to pick up lunch at a local store.

NO PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER

Due to scheduling problems, our first general meeting of the season will be on October 20th. See you then!



Valley Sightings – June-August 2016
Please report unusual sightings to Bob Barnes at (760)382-1260, or by email at bbarnes@lightspeed.net.

KEY: FOF = First of Fall; CC = Cerro Coso Community College, CLP = City of Ridgecrest water treatment plant ponds at China Lake NAWS, GC = China Lake Golf Course, IWV = Indian Wells Valley watershed; SSDC IBA = Southern Sierra Desert Canyons Important Bird Area

REPORTS:

- CLP last reports were **Brant** Jun 9 (AH, VH), **Red-breasted Merganser** Jun 1 (SK), and **Brown Pelican** Jun 1 (SK).
- IWV FOF southbound migrant **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Least Sandpiper**, **Western Sandpiper**, **Long-billed Dowitcher**, and **Wilson's Phalarope** at CLP Jul 4 (CM).
- IWV FOF southbound migrant **Semipalmated Plover** (Aug 13), **Spotted Sandpipers** (Jul 23), **Solitary Sandpiper** (Aug 13), **Willet** (Jul 29), **Red-necked Phalaropes** (Jul 23) at CLP (BB).
- Four **Willet**s at CLP Aug 13 (BB).
- An **Upland Sandpiper** photographed at CC on Jun 9 was Kern County's 2nd, the IWV's 1st, and CC's 200th bird species all time (AH, VH).
- A **Band-tailed Pigeon** at SSDC IBA's Indian Wells Canyon on Jun 8 (LSu, RW).
- Up to three **White-winged Doves** at a NW Ridgecrest neighborhood throughout June, July, and August (BB, EC).
- Both **Barn Owl** and **Long-eared Owl** nested at a private yard north of Inyokern this nesting season (TM).
- A **Long-eared Owl** at a yard Southwest of Inyokern Jun 27 and a **Burrowing Owl** Jun 28 (LK).
- IWV FOF southbound migrant **Calliope Hummingbird** near an east side Ridgecrest yard Aug 12 (LSu, SSu).
- IWV FOF southbound migrant **Rufous Hummingbird** (Jul 4), **Willow Flycatcher** and **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** (Jul 31), **Warbling Vireo** (Jul 18), **Orange-crowned Warbler** (Jul 25), **Nashville Warbler** (Aug 7), **Yellow-breasted Chat** (Aug 27), **Black-headed Grosbeak** (Jul 22), two **Bullock's Orioles** (Jun 12) at an east side Ridgecrest yard (LSu, SSu).
- An **Acorn Woodpecker** at an east side Ridgecrest

- yard Jun 3 (LSu, SSu).
- An immature male **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** southwest of Inyokern Jul 14-Aug 6 was unexpected for that location (LK).
- Last of spring northbound migrant **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** at a yard southwest of Inyokern Jun 16 (LK).
- A **Black Phoebe** at a yard southwest of Inyokern Aug 4 was unusual for that location (LK).
- A nesting season high count of 12 **Loggerhead Shrikes** and 9 **Le Conte's Thrasher** at a yard southwest of Inyokern on Jul 13 (LK).
- An IWV FOF southbound migrant **Bank Swallow** (Jul 23), two **Yellow Warblers** (Aug 13) at CLP (BB).
- A southbound migrant **Orange-crowned Warbler** showed up in a northwest Ridgecrest yard Aug 20 (BBu).
- IWV FOF southbound migrant **Townsend's Warbler** (Aug 25) and **Wilson's Warbler** (Aug 14) at a yard southwest of Inyokern (LK).
- An IWV FOF southbound migrant **Western Tanager** at a NW Ridgecrest neighborhood Jul 7 (BB).
- A male (Aug 6) and female (Aug 15 & 16) **Scott's Oriole** at a yard southwest of Inyokern (LK).

Thanks to the following for reporting: Bob Barnes (BB), Brenda Burnett (BBu), Encar Card (EC), Andrew Howe (AH), Vernon Howe (VH), Louise Knecht (LK), Curtis Marantz (CM), Terri Middlemiss (TM), Lee Sutton (LSu), Shirley Sutton (SSu), Rose Whipple (RW).

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER BIRDING: Southbound fall migrants and vagrants pass through the IWV. Fall migration! Yippee!

Happy, productive, and rewarding September and October birding! Enjoy fall migration!

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 20th annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Nov. 17-20, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton, CA. Thursday night's keynote speaker will be professional bird photographer, Bob Steele. Bob will also lead workshops, as will Jon Dunn. Friday's keynote speaker will be Kimball Garrett.

To look over the complete line-up of speakers, workshops, and fieldtrips, check out the website at: <http://www.cvbsreg.org> <<http://www.cvbsreg.org/>> *Registration begins September 7, 2016.*

\$790,000+ for Hot Springs Valley Acquisition

The Kern River Valley Heritage Foundation (KRVHF) fundraising has now reached over \$790,000 for the purpose of fee title acquisition of the 189 acre Hot Springs Valley Wetlands Project property (HSVW) bordering the edge of community of Lake Isabella between CA Hwy 178 and Lake Isabella Blvd across from Kern Valley Plaza shopping center. The project is being implemented in partnership with The Trust for Public Land.

\$650,000 has been committed by the California Department of Natural Resources plus \$100,000 from the National Audubon Society's Wimberly Wildlife Fund for Land Acquisition. With the over \$40,000 in grassroots donations representing 543 private individuals and organizations to date, over \$790,000 has been raised since October 2015.

Kerncrest Audubon, Kern Audubon, and numerous other Audubon chapters around California have provided significant donations in support of this acquisition. Anticipated benefits include habitat conservation & enhancement for the 2nd largest known population anywhere of the rare alkali mariposa lily (in the tens of thousands) plus the "Kern" Red-winged Blackbird and Tricolored Blackbird, both California Species of Special Concern. (See note below)

The initial fundraising goal is \$900,000 for acquisition and the start of getting the property ready for compatible public visitation. KRVHF encourages further help to raise the last \$110,000 and to add to on site signage recognition. Readers may join the hundreds of grassroots donors to date by sending a \$10 or more tax-deductible donation per name recognition (including on behalf of and in memory of) to KRVHF, PO Box 1249, Lake Isabella, CA 93240 or use the Donate page on the KRVHF website (www.krvhf.org). Larger donations are welcome, as are up-to-\$X pledges (about \$10,000 in pledges are in hand already). Those requiring more clarification to help in decision making, email bbarnes@lightspeed.net and ask to communicate with your choice of either Tom Anderson or Bob Barnes (760-382-1260).

The Kern River Valley Heritage Foundation passes along thanks to the broad base of grassroots donors to date, plus donors and supporters including National Audubon Society, Audubon California, Audubon Kern River Preserve, Kerncrest Audubon Society, Bakersfield-based Kern Audubon Society, plus Los Angeles, Morro Coast, Napa-Solano, Palomar Audubon (San Diego Co.) Sea & Sage Audubon (Orange Co.), Stanislaus, Tulare County Audubon Societies. See the KRVHF website (www.krvhf.org) Hot Springs Valley Wetlands page to reach a link to the complete list of donors to date organized by geographic origin including Inyokern, Kern River Valley, and Ridgecrest.

Note: The tricolored blackbird received emergency Endangered Species status for the 2016 breeding season. It is not known whether this status will continue.

THANK YOU

To all who participated in and contributed to the Birdathon. In spite of our not seeing as many species as in some years past, folks made up for it by making generous contributions. We will be in a good position to fund our Junior Audubon clubs, and to share with the Audubon California Kern River Preserve.
Thanks, again!