

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

April 2014

April CALENDAR

Wed	Apr 16	6:00 pm	Board Meeting: Villalobos'
Tue	Apr 22	10:00 am	Earth Day at Solar Park
Sat	Apr 26	all day	Spring Festival
Sat	May 3	all day	BIRDATHON

AUDUBON CALIFORNIA KERN RIVER PRESERVE SPRING FESTIVAL

Spring is here and the birds are moving from their wintering grounds in Central and South America to the breeding grounds North America. This festival is held around the peak of spring bird migration as birds fly north looking for places like the Kern River Preserve to rest and replenish on their way or to stay and raise their young. This is a great time of year to get out and enjoy the Kern River Preserve.

Here's the schedule"

6 AM-Early Birding Walk at Migrant Corner Trail-Many bird species can be found during the spring migration moving through the forest canopy from this spectacular overlook.

8:00 AM to 10:00 AM - Bird and Nature Walk with Alison Sheehey-The nature trails at the Kern River Preserve are beautiful in the spring. Take this walk with Alison who will lead you to the river forest and to see a wide variety of birds and wildlife.

8 AM to 3 PM- Information and Education Booths and Displays -U.S. Forest Service, Friends of the Condor Wild & Free, Sequoia Forest Keepers, Kerncrest Audubon Society, Kern River Valley Environmental Magnet School Bake Sale.

10 AM to Noon-Children's Activities: There will be Junior Biologist activities for children. Volunteers will bring nature art items for each individual child to do at his or her own pace.

10:30 AM- Bird Walk. For those who slept in or just arrived.

12:00 PM to 2 PM - Picnic lunch and live music. Bring your lunch and enjoy the shade.

April 26th, at the Audubon California Kern River Preserve, Weldon, beginning with an early bird walk at 6 AM to "migrant corner."

All events start at Kern River Preserve HQ/Visitor Center-18747 Hwy 178, Weldon, California 93283. For directions and general information on Audubon's Kern River Preserve please visit our webpage at - <http://kern.audubon.org>, e-mail swieser@audubon.org or call 760-378-2531

NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

The Naval Air Weapons Station will be hosting an Earth Day 2014 celebration from 10 AM to 3 PM on Tuesday, April 22nd. It will be at Solar Park on Blandly, across from the Branch Medical Clinic.

There will be information booths provided by the NAWS Environmental office, the Indian Wells Valley Water District (who often have freebies like water-saving hose nozzles), Southern California Edison, the Bureau of Land Management, Kerncrest Audubon Society, and maybe the local garden clubs and several others.

This will be a great opportunity for those of us who retired from NAWS or just don't work for the Navy to learn about their nation-wide and local energy conservation and water conservation programs, and their other environmental programs.

If you have no badge and need a base pass, contact Peggy Shoaf at 760-939-1683.

EARLY MAY EVENTS

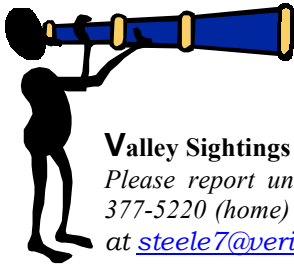
May 3 is the Kerncrest Audubon Society BIRDATHON. See the information article and pledge form inside.

May 7 will be our annual trip to monitor and make any necessary repairs to Cow Heaven Spring. Call Shelley Ellis at 760-384-5426 if you would like to help. Meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 9:00 am to car pool.

May 16 is Endangered Species Day. We will likely schedule our postponed April Desert Tortoise Natural Area field trip to the next day, Saturday the 17th. There will be more information in the next Chat.

Kerncrest Audubon Society Board of Directors

President	Brenda Burnett	760-375-8634
Vice President	Hector Villalobos	760-446-4908
Secretary	Sherry Brubaker	760-375-7245
Treasurer	Dan Burnett	760-375-8634
Member	Shelley Ellis	760-375-7245
Member	Tim Ludwick	724-689-3189
Committee Chairs		
Field Trips	Robert Parker	760-446-2001
Conservation	Robert Parker	
Publications	Terri Middlemiss	760-377-5192
Membership	Noel Gravelle	760-375-2325
Birdathon	Lee Sutton	760-375-1981
Alternative Energy	Hector Villalobos	760-446-4908
Newsletter Ed.	Brenda Burnett	760-375-8634
Webmaster	Noel Gravelle	760-375-2325



Valley Sightings – March 2014

Please report unusual sightings to Susan Steele at 377-5220 (home) or 939-1722 (work), or by email at steele7@verizon.net.

LOS for **Greater White-fronted Geese** was from the ponds Mar 19 (TL).

Two **Great Egrets** were SW of Inyokern Mar 10 (PW, SM).

One of the signs of spring includes migrating **Turkey Vultures**. A flock of thirty was seen in Ridgecrest Mar 21 (LL).

The **Whimbrel** at the alfalfa fields on Mar 1 was earlier than expected (L&SSu). Our previous early date was Mar 13.

FOS for **Bonaparte’s Gull** was from the ponds Mar 24 (SLS).

Long-eared Owls have been scarce in the valley this year with the only report one in the cemetery Mar 5 (SLS).

A hike to the top of Owens Peak Mar 22 produced a number of nice sightings including **White-throated Swift**, **Downy Woodpecker**, and our first **Wrentit** report in eight years (BS).

A **Peregrine Falcon** was at the ponds Mar 24 (SLS).

FOS for **Cliff Swallow** was Mar 5, for **Barn Swallow** was Mar 13 (SLS), and for **Violet-green Swallow** Mar 9 (TL). Both were at the ponds.

A **House Wren** was SW of Inyokern Mar 31 (LK).

FOS for **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was from Indian Wells Canyon Mar 28 (LSu).

The nineteen **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** in Indian Wells Canyon Mar 28 was a good number (LSu).

Sage Thrashers were on base Mar 6 (SLS) and at the ponds Mar 14 (TL).

FOS for **Wilson’s Warbler** was from Indian Wells Canyon Mar 28 (LSu).

FOS for **Common Yellowthroat** was from the ponds Mar 7 (SLS).

The “Sooty” **Fox Sparrow** continued S of Inyokern throughout the month (SLS). **Fox Sparrows** put in a big appearance in the valley on Mar 31 being seen SW of Inyokern in two different yards (LK, PW, SM), and in Ridgecrest (BBu). A “Thick-billed” **Fox Sparrow** was SW of Inyokern Mar 18 (PW, SM).

The **Swamp Sparrow** at the ponds Mar 7 was completely unexpected (SLS).

The **Harris’s Sparrows** continued to be seen at the ponds throughout the month (SLS, TL). The last time both were seen together was Mar 14.

FOS for **Hooded Oriole** was from Ridgecrest Mar 8 and the same yard produced our FOS **Bullock’s Oriole** sighting on the 22 (SE).

A male **Lawrence’s Goldfinch** was SW of Inyokern Mar 29 (LK).

Thanks to the following observers: *Bob Barnes, Brenda Burnett, Shelley Ellis, Lisa Lavelle, Tim Ludwick, Louise Knecht, Susan Moore, Bob Steele, Lee and Shirley Sutton, Peter Woodman*

KERNCREST AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRDATHON Pledge/Contribution

-Donation is tax-deductible

-Contributions support local Audubon Education Programs and the Kern River Preserve

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** _____

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

BIRDATHON

The 25th annual Kerncrest Audubon Society BIRDATHON will be held Saturday, May 3rd, 2014. We need you to form a team – even if it's only a team of one -- and sign up sponsors to contribute in support of the Kern River Preserve and our education programs. If you'd like to join, be, or form, a team, phone Lee Sutton at 760-375-1981. Teams can meet at any time or place they like, but it's best to let Lee know where you plan to go, so that he can provide a "clearing house" to ensure maximum coverage of the area to maximize the number of species seen. This is also the weekend of the attempt to have Kern County again recorded as the nation's "Birdiest Inland County," so all the species we see will be entered there, as well.

We'll bird all day (and all night, starting at sundown on the 2nd, if you want to get owls) then meet at 6 pm at a restaurant TBD to compare and consolidate lists, and to celebrate!

Proceeds are split between the Kern River Preserve and our own education programs. This past year's education funds were spent entirely on expenses for the Faller and Inyokern Elementary School Junior Audubon Clubs. We can't think of a better way to ensure these children retain their excitement about birds!

This year's Birdathon is especially important, because we may have an opportunity to apply contributions toward a two-for-one matching grant from Audubon California for the restoration of habitat for Tri-colored blackbirds on the preserve!

So Sign up for a Birdathon Team, and sign up friends and acquaintances too. 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. (Use the pledge sheet on the opposite page.) E-mail Lee at 2roadrunner@verizon.net or call 760-375-1981 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.