FIELD TRIP: LITTLE LAKE WORK PARTY

Just a little, easy work remains to complete the beautiful, handicapped-accessible wildlife viewing overlook at Little Lake. Come join a joint work party, with Kerncrest Audubon members and guests, and Ridgecrest Bureau of Land Management personnel, to complete the work, watch the birds, and celebrate!

Depending upon weather and the availability of portable barbecue equipment, we may picnic on lunches we bring, or be treated to a barbecue. Call Shelley Ellis at 446-5012 or Lee Sutton at 375-1981 to find out, and to sign up.

Bring sunscreen, hat, gloves, and layered clothing. Tools will be provided.

Meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 8:30am. (Non-working supervisors are also welcome.)

NO RICHMOND ROAD CLEANUP

You may have noticed that no Richmond Road cleanup party has been scheduled recently. That’s because the City of Ridgecrest has begun to charge the organizations doing the cleanup $75 per year for the cost of installing and maintaining the signage giving them publicity for the cleanup.

While we recognize the city’s need to recoup these costs, your Board of Directors did not feel our paying it would be a valid use of Audubon Society members’ contributions. While we enjoyed the opportunity to contribute to the beauty of Ridgecrest, the value of the work to habitat conservation or membership development was negligible. Therefore, we voted at a recent board meeting not to continue to participate in the program.

We’ll miss getting together at the Suttons for Shirley’s homemade refreshments, and we thank her for all those years of baking goodies and making coffee for the cleanup crews!

Happy New Year!
Valley Sightings –December 2006

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

A Horned Grebe was at the ponds Nov 28 (SS).
The fifteen Tundra Swans and four Hooded Mergansers at the ponds Nov 29 were new high counts for these species (SS). A male Hooded Merganser was at the ponds Dec 8 (SS).
The six Tundra Swans at the cemetery Dec 17 were the 170th species for that location (BB, MK).
Four Greater White-fronted Geese were at the old sewage ponds Dec 25 (L&ShS, D&BBu).
The 120th species for Lark Seep was the Snow Goose on Dec 13 (SS).
The Peregrine Falcon at the ponds Dec 4 was completely unexpected and our first December record (SS). This sighting is a month later than our next latest sighting date.
Prairie Falcon and Oak Titmouse were new species for No Name Canyon and brought the total there to 97 species on Dec 23 (SS).
The Marbled Godwit at the ponds Dec 7-8 was unexpected this late in the year (SS).
The Red Phalarope at the Inyokern ponds Dec 17 was the 86th species for that location (BS). It is also an extremely late sighting date. Our previous latest date was Nov 27 and the species is more typically only seen occasionally through mid Oct.
Two Red-naped Sapsuckers were at the cemetery Dec 11 with one remaining through Dec 25 (BB).
The Stellar’s Jay W of Ridgecrest Dec 8 was a new yard bird and the first one seen on the valley floor this year (BM).
A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at the pond though Dec 7 (SS).
The Oak Titmouse continues at the cemetery being seen thru the 24th (BB) and S of Inyokern thru the 24th (m.ob).
The interior race Bushtits continue at the ponds being seen through Dec 16 (SS).
The Sage Thrasher at the Inyokern ponds Dec 24 was the 87th species for that location (SS). This bird is probably attempting to winter locally.
Barn Swallows were at the ponds Nov 29 and Dec 17 when later than expected (SS).
Two Varied Thrush were N of Inyokern Dec 2 (LA).
The thirteen Mountain Bluebirds at the college Dec 16 were the 173rd species for that location (SS).

It has been a great year for Mountain Bluebirds as evidenced by the 130 seen in the valley on the CBC – Dec 17 (m.ob.).
The 171st species for the cemetery was a Spotted Towhee on Dec 23 (BB).
Two Lark Sparrows were at the cemetery Dec 25 (BB).
A Golden-crowned Sparrow was at the college Dec 5 (LS).
The Pine Siskin in Ridgecrest Dec 18 was the first one reported this fall (JS).

Christmas bird count highlights from Dec 17 include:
six Tundra Swans, Black-crowned Night-heron, Red-naped Sapsucker, Oak Titmouse and fourteen Mountain Bluebirds, at the cemetery (BB, MK); ninety Mountain Bluebirds, Red-naped Sapsucker, Hairy and Nuttall’s Woodpecker at the golf course (JS, SW); three American White Pelicans flying over B Mountain (KP, RK, BH); Hairy Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, six Cedar Waxwings, Stellar’s Jay in NW Ridgecrest (DLaB, LL, SF); a Brewer’s Sparrow in SE Ridgecrest (PW, SW); thirty Chukar in SE Ridgecrest (GS, SB); two Orange-crowned Warblers in Ridgecrest (L&ShS); Fox Sparrow in SE Ridgecrest LB, SB); one American Avocet, twenty-four Long-billed Dowitcher, four Dunlin, two Common Moorhen, eleven Bushtits, and two Barn Swallows at the ponds (SS), two Cactus Wrens (BH, BS); a Varied Thrush, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at the college (BS); three Oak Titmouse and a Red Phalarope in Inyokern (BS).

Thanks to the following observers: Linda Andrews, Bob Barnes, Lloyd Brubaker, Sherry Brubaker, Dan and Brenda Burnett, Sam Fitton, Brooks Hart, Marianne Kistler, Russell Kokx, Denise LaBerteaux, Lisa Lavalle, Bob Meade, Joyce Seibold, Lee and Shirley Sutton, Peter Woodman, Sam Woodman 2007 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT COMPLETE LIST

Pied-billed Grebe 8
Eared Grebe 21
American White Pelican 3
Great Blue Heron 1
Black-crowned Night-Heron 1
Tundra Swan 6
Snow Goose (blue form) 23
Snow Goose (white form) 3941
Ross’ Goose 428
Canada Goose 17
Cackling Goose 7
Green-winged Teal 259
Mallard 112
Northern Pintail 55
Cinnamon Teal 12
Northern Shoveler 2269
Gadwall 86
American Wigeon 28
Redhead 2
Ring-necked Duck 11
Lesser Scaup 2
Bufflehead 12
Ruddy Duck 365
Northern Harrier 10
Sharp-shinned Hawk 8
Cooper's Hawk 15
“Sharp-shinned/Cooper’s” species 1
Red-tailed Hawk 42
Golden Eagle (Adult) 1
American Kestrel 21
Prairie Falcon 12
Chukar 30
California Quail 513
Virginia Rail 4
Common Moorhen 2
American Coot 822
Killdeer 32
American Avocet 1
Red Phalerope 1
Western Sandpiper 45
Least Sandpiper 43
Dunlin 4
Long-billed Dowitcher 24
Wilson's Snipe 1
Ring-billed Gull 12
California Gull 3
large gull sp. 16
Rock Pigeon 457
Mourning Dove 1037
Eurasian Collared Dove 69
Greater Roadrunner 4
Barn Owl 1
Great Horned Owl 1
Burrowing Owl 4
Long-eared Owl 32
Anna's Hummingbird 21
Costa's Hummingbird 12
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1
Red-naped Sapsucker 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 1
Hairy Woodpecker 2
Northern Flicker (Red-shafted form) 43
Black Phoebe 9
Say's Phoebe 20
Loggerhead Shrike 21
Steller's Jay 1
Common Raven 353
Horned Lark 1982
Barn Swallow 2
Oak Titmouse 4
Verdin 29
Bushtit 11
Red-breasted Nuthatch 1
Bewick's Wren 8
Marsh Wren 18
Cactus Wren 2
Rock Wren 7
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 23
Mountain Bluebird 130
Varied Thrush 1
American Robin 16
Hermit Thrush 1
Northern Mockingbird 65
Le Conte's Thrasher 5
European Starling 960
American Pipit 77
Cedar Waxwing 6
Orange-crowned Warbler 2
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon’s) 52
Spotted Towhee 20
Sage Sparrow 428
Black-throated Sparrow 2
Brewer’s Sparrow 1
Savannah Sparrow 27
White-crowned Sparrow 748
Fox Sparrow 1
Song Sparrow 9
Lincoln's Sparrow 3
Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon) 273
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored) 3
Western Meadowlark 41
Red-winged Blackbird 322
Brewer's Blackbird 456
Great-tailed Grackle 56
House Finch 390
Lesser Goldfinch 26
American Goldfinch 31
American Robin 16
Song Sparrow 545
104 species
18,205 individuals.
2 new species for the count in bold

GET THE LEAD OUT
After many years and many dollars of effort to save the critically endangered California Condor, the so-far successful reintroduction program is threatened by the loss of birds to lead-contaminated meat killed by hunters.

After unsuccessful attempts to get legislation passed barring its use, The Center for Biological Diversity has taken the issue to court, and needs your help in convincing the legislature that lead ammunition must be eliminated in the condors’ range. Says the CBD, “The success of the $40 million California Condor recovery program hangs in the balance.”

For more information and to find out how you can help, visit www.savethecondors.org.