



The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

January 2015

January CALENDAR

Sat	Jan 3	call	South Fork Valley CBC
Sun	Jan 4	call	Kern River Valley CBC
Sat	Jan 10	call	Field Trip to Barstow
Wed	Jan 14	6:00 pm	Board Meeting: Thompsons'
Thu	Jan 15	7:00 pm	General Meeting

JANUARY FIELD TRIP Barstow/Yermo

Stephanie White works at the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow in Environmental Operations. She wants to use birding as an outreach opportunity for that installation, and has issued an email invitation to a Christmas Bird Count style event on Saturday, January 10th.

If you are interested in birding, CBC-style, on Saturday, January 10th, please let Bob Parker at 446-2001 or Brenda Burnett at 375-8634 know, so that we can let Stephanie know. This is a great opportunity to bird areas we don't usually have access to in some really interesting habitat. We may also bird Harper Lake on the way home.

Says Stephanie, "I'm working on firming up a meeting location -- we'll probably meet just outside the front gate to facilitate non-CAC'd visitors." (For those of you non-CAC'd, a CAC is a card issued to DoD employees and retirees for access to military installations. CAC stands for Civilian Access Card, many call it, redundantly, a Cack card.)

We'll car pool or provide rides from Ridgecrest. Time and place to meet to be determined by further communication and depending on who signs up.

If you are out of the Ridgecrest area and wish to meet in Barstow, you may contact Stephanie directly at:

Stephanie L. White
Natural & Cultural Resources
Environmental Operations
MCLB Barstow
(760) 577-6111

Don't forget these other Christmas Bird Counts:

South Fork Valley: Saturday, January 3:
compiler Denise LaBerteaux. Phone 760-378-4278.
Kern River Valley: Sunday, January 4:
compiler Tim Ludwick, phone 724-689-3189



BRIDLED SPARROW

GENERAL MEETING

Birds, Wildlife and Scenery of Southern Mexico with Tim Ludwick

Mexico is a large and diverse country. Steaming jungles, forested mountains, and parched deserts provide a wealth of habitats for over 1000 bird species, many which are country or regional endemics. Not only does Mexico boast an impressive bird list, it also has a long and vibrant history and spectacular scenery. The presentation will showcase some of the fantastic birds, wildlife, and scenery of southern Mexico from Oaxaca to the Yucatan.

Tim Ludwick has been a birder since he got his first field guide, *The Golden Guide to Birds*, as a child. Ever since then, he's been chasing birds across the US, and, more recently, Central and South America. When not out looking for birds, Tim works as a biologist for NAWA China Lake.

Thursday, January 15th, Maturango Museum,
7:00 pm.

MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

Registration is open and information and schedule are available at
www.morrobaybirdfestival.org/

The dates are January 16-19, 2015.



Valley Sightings – November 2014

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

The big birding news is the addition of a new species to the Kern County list; a **Pine Warbler** that was discovered at the cemetery Nov 8 (TB). According to Bob Barnes this is the 45 species of warbler for Kern County. This puts us in second place behind San Francisco County which includes the Farallon Islands and has recorded all 46 species.

The 151st species for Sand Canyon was an **American Wigeon** on Nov 13 (MK).

Common Goldeneye were at the ponds Nov 13 (SLS).

Western and **Clark's Grebes** were at the old sewage ponds Nov 22 (TL, DBBu). Another **Western Grebe** was at the ponds Nov 3 (SLS).

Two **Long-eared Owls** were at the cemetery Nov 8-9 (m.ob).

A female **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was first noted at the cemetery Nov 6 (SLS). It was also seen the 10 (LS) and 12 (SLS).

A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was at the college Nov 22 (TL, DBBu).

A **Merlin** was at the golf course Nov 27 (SLS) and a **Peregrine Falcon** was at the ponds Nov 13 (TL).

A **Vermilion Flycatcher** was at the ponds Nov 25-27 (SLS).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were noted in Ridgecrest Nov 7 (BB), and at the college Nov 4-8 (m.ob).

House Wrens were noted at the old sewage ponds and college Nov 22 ponds (TL, DBBu), at the ponds Nov 27 (SLS).

Golden-crowned Kinglets were at the cemetery Nov 8-9 (m.ob).

Mountain Bluebirds returned to winter in the valley on Nov 27 being noted at the ponds and the golf course (SLS).

A **Townsend's Solitaire** was at the college Nov 4 (SF).

Varied Thrush are putting on a good show in southern California with some locations reporting over a thousand birds per hour on the move in migration. We are even getting in on the action.

Our first was noted at the college Nov 5 (SLS) and they were seen there throughout the month. One was also seen at the cemetery Nov 25 (SLS).

Phainopeplas were at the college Nov 4-5 (SF).

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was in Ridgecrest Nov 9 (BB).

Vesper Sparrows were at the ponds Nov 17 (R&NO).

Fox Sparrow reports include a Slate-colored bird in Ridgecrest on Nov 20-21 (LS), a Sooty at the college Nov 4 (SF), and Nov 11 (GS), and a bird not identified to subspecies S of Inyokern Nov 2 (SLS).

Our **Swamp Sparrow** continued at the ponds through Nov 8 (TB, BSi).

A **White-throated Sparrow** was nicely photographed in Sand Canyon Nov 13 (MK).

Golden-crowned Sparrows were S of Inyokern Nov 2 (SLS), and at the ponds Nov 17 (R&NO).

A **Purple Finch** was at the college Nov 5 (SLS), and another was at the cemetery Nov 9 (TW).

Pine Siskins were noted in Ridgecrest Nov 7 (BB), and at the cemetery Nov 4 (SF).

An **Evening Grosbeak** was seen and heard as it flew over a Ridgecrest neighborhood Nov 22 (BB).

Thanks to the following observers: *Bob Barnes, Tom Benson, Dan Burnett, Tim Ludwick, Sean Fitzgerald, Melinda Kashuba, Ron and Nancy Overholtz, Brad Singer, Ginger Spinelli, Lee Sutton*

GIVE CHILDREN BIRD BOOKS!!

I have received several votes recently for running more articles and tidbits out of Bird Watcher's Digest. So here's one more. The entire article, by Kyle Carlsen, the magazine's assistant editor, was several pages and was about the Evening grosbeak, but I thought the most important part was in the first two paragraphs. The author rambled a bit, then began:

"But I digress. The topic at hand is evening grosbeaks. My first exposure to these black-and-gold birds happened nearly two decades ago. I must have been 6 years old. My sole bird book was an early copy of Peterson's *How to Know the Birds*, a volume my dad had picked up at an old, used bookstore down the road from our house. I read that little paperback from cover to cover, though it was missing its front cover, along with its first few pages. I didn't mind. It was my bible. Funny how one old book can make

such an impact. It was through those pages that I was introduced to marsh hawks, crested flycatchers, and score of other winged creatures I had never encountered. I wondered whether it was possible for one person to see all those birds.

"Most were in simple black and white, though there was also that cool section in the middle of the book where the birds were depicted in full-color paintings."

So here's another birder who began at an early age, interest piqued by pictures in a bird book!

I believe young children naturally love birds. That's why our Junior Audubon clubs are so popular. But access to a bird book at a very early age is what gets many of them going.

So give all the small children you know bird books! The museum gift shop has them, Amazon has them new and used, and the Friends of the Library may have used ones.

And don't let those unused ones in your bookshelves go to waste. I have been purging my collection recently and giving all I can spare to the thrift shops, in hopes they will end up in the hands of children. As Kenn Kaufman said in the article we ran a couple of months ago, "The mountain doesn't need skiers, the water doesn't need swimmers, but birds need all the friends they can get."

By the way, here's a picture of the bird that hooked Mr. Carlson into birding:



MALE ADULT EVENING GROSBEEK

READER SURVEY RESULTS

Last month, we ran a survey to determine how many paper issues of The Chat we really need to send out, and whether it would save money and provide better service if we send those by first class mail.

First, we want to apologize for the terrible condition many of those mailed arrived in. The Post Office machines chewed up many copies. That was terrible timing, since many questionnaires we received back were missing parts and undecipherable. For that reason, some who wanted email editions may receive a paper copy this month. If that happens to you, please let us know by emailing chatbird@verizon.net, giving your name and saying you prefer an email Chat.

By the way, there were only 18 people who far prefer a paper copy. If you indicated you would give email a try but find you don't like it, don't feel bad about requesting a paper copy in the future.

So clearly, it makes sense for us to send the Chat by first class mail. And use better paper. And maybe even print occasionally in color. (Note email editions, if there are photos, will always be in color.)

And if you didn't read last month's issue so did not return the questionnaire, please do so! Or if you did not receive it or could not read it, call me at 760-375-8634 and leave a message with your name, address, and preference as to paper or email Chat. (Or if your preference is for email, just email me. That way I'll have your e-address.)

Thanks!

Brenda Burnett, editor

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