



# The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

June 2008

## JUNE CALENDAR

We are dark for the summer. See you in September!

### Valley Sightings – May 2008

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

A **Wood Duck** was at the Inyokern ponds May 4 (BS).

The **Eurasian Wigeon** at the ponds May 15 was both rare and later than expected (SS).

The **Greater Scaup** continued at the ponds being seen intermittently through May 3 (m. ob.).

An unexpected yardbird applies to the **Sora** found May 23 in Ridgecrest (EC).

The **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the ponds May 3 was only our 3<sup>rd</sup> spring record (WF).

**Franklin's Gulls** put in a good appearance at the ponds this month being seen May 4 – 23 (m. ob.). A high count of nine was recorded on May 15 (AH, TW, SK).

A **Herring Gull** was at the ponds May 6 (SS).

**Least Tern** (AH), 7<sup>th</sup> valley record, and **Common Tern** (SK) were both recorded at the ponds May 17. Another **Common Tern** was at the ponds May 22 (SS).

Here's an interesting observation from Bob Barnes: Eurasian Collared-Doves have been observed knocking Mourning Doves off tallest perches in neighborhood numerous times. The opposite, MODOs knocking off ECDOs, has not been observed. ECDOs seem to be increasing in the neighborhood. MODOs still seem to be present in good numbers. But, MODOs seem to be perched lower than the ECDOs and dominated by them. I am curious to see how overall numbers of MODOs fare over time in areas also occupied by ECDOs.

The **Eurasian Collared-Doves** W of Ridgecrest May 21 were new yard birds (BMD).

**Long-eared Owls** seem to have left the valley for better hunting with only one bird noted SW of Inyokern Apr 21 and 23 (LK).

A **Common Poorwill** was in Indian Wells Canyon May 9 (L&SSu). Another was on the valley floor, SW of Inyokern, May 21-23, where they are unexpected (SM).

The **Vaux's Swift** at the ponds May 22 was later than expected (SS).

The **Belted Kingfisher** N of Inyokern May 15 was yard bird #151 (BB).

Two **Cassin's Kingbirds** were at the ponds May 20 for the 7<sup>th</sup> valley record (SS). Five of these records have been from May 17-31.

During the Jr Audubon trip to the college May 20 they were treated to **Horned Lark** near its nest, a very cool sighting, and heard **Red-breasted Nuthatches** (BBu). Annie Ewbank was fortunate to spot the nuthatches as they clung to the pine and poked in the bark looking for insects.

Twenty **Clark's Nutcrackers**, twelve **Stellar's Jays**, a female **Western Bluebird**, and a **White-breasted Nuthatch** were in upper Nine Mile Canyon on May 10 (SE, SS).

**Red-breasted Nuthatches** were seen at the cemetery through May 9 (SS), at the college May 2 (JS, SS), and in Nine Mile Canyon May 10 (BS).

The pair of **Western Bluebirds** in Sand Canyon was feeding young on May 9 (SE).

**Phainopeplas** were SW of Inyokern May 6 and 9 (LK), and in Indian Wells Canyon May 9 (L&SSu).

Bob Meade made an interesting observation on **Common Yellowthroat** feeding behavior when he saw it eating on ants as they came out of their nest hole.

The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> valley records for **Hooded Warbler** were at the college May 6. First found was a male (AS), and later a female was discovered (BS).

**Purple Finches** are unexpected on the east side of the Sierra, but do occur occasionally. A male was found on May 2 N of Inyokern (BB). This is the first one seen in the valley since Oct 28, 2007.

**Cassin's Finches** continue SW of Inyokern May 6(LK), SE Ridgecrest May 8 (LS), Indian Wells Canyon May 9 (L&SSu), and in Nine Mile Canyon May 10 (SE, SS). And more than continue, they appear to have bred in the valley as a male was seen feeding a juvenile N of Inyokern on May 19 (PG).

Three **Red Crossbills** were S of Inyokern May 2 (SS), twelve were at the college May 6 (SS), two were N of Inyokern May 4 (JS) -15 (BB), and another pair was in Ridgecrest May 18-22 (BB).

**Pine Siskins** were in Ridgecrest May 4 (BBu), Nine Mile Canyon May 10 (SE, SS), and N of Inyokern May 15 (BB).

FOS reports include: **Black Tern** Apr 29 ponds (SS), **Olive-sided Flycatcher** Apr 27 college (JS), **Swainson's Thrush** Apr 29 SE Ridgecrest (LS), **MacGillivray's Warbler** Apr 28 Ridgecrest (JS), **Yellow-breasted Chat** May 4 S of Inyokern (BS), **Green-tailed Towhee** May 2 ponds (SS), **Blue Grosbeak** May 13 SW of Inyokern (SM).

LOS for **Rufous Hummingbird** was from the college May 8 (LL).

Thanks to the following observers: *Brenda Burnett, Encar Card, Annie Ewbank, Wes Fritz, Patrice Glasco, Andrew Howe, Sandy Koonce, Louise Knecht, Lisa Lavelle, Bob Meade, Susan Moore, Joyce Seibold, Alison Sheehy, Bob Steele, John Sterling, Lee and Shirley Sutton, Tom Wurster.*

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***The Chat***

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