

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

November 2014

November CALENDAR

Wed	Nov 19	6:00 pm	Board Meeting at Gravelles'
Thu	Nov 20	7:00 pm	General Meeting: DRECP
Sat	Nov 22	7:30 am	Beginning Bird Walk

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP Beginning Bird Walk

Our field trip for November, on Saturday the 22nd, will be a local one. Lots of vagrants are still coming through, and our over-wintering waterfowl have arrived, so it should be good birding at the college and the old sewer ponds and alfalfa fields.

Let's see how many new birders we can attract with an advertisement in the local papers for a Beginning Birders' Event! And of course we need all you intermediate and advanced birders to show up too, to help the newcomers and to enjoy the birds.

Bring a friend and a picnic. Call Bob Parker at 760-446-2000 or email me at chatbird@verizon.net to sign up. We hear the college has a new parking policy, so we're working out a meeting place.

GENERAL MEETING DRECP

The draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) has been released for public review. The review period extends until January 9, 2015. The plan is the result of 5 years of effort by several state and federal government agencies to develop a plan for alternative energy development of 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy generation in the plan area by 2040, while providing for enhanced ecosystems for covered species and focusing energy development away from areas of greatest biological importance or sensitivity.

Our presenter will be Russell Scofield from the Sacramento office of the Bureau of Land Management. Russell is a wildlife biologist and coordinates the soil, air, and water programs for California BLM. Previously Russell has worked in several BLM management positions and served as the Department of Interior Coordinator for the interagency Desert Managers Group. Russell has worked for BLM twenty-one years.

This presentation will provide an overview of the program for those who missed the workshop at the Kerr McGee center, but will emphasize conservation efforts in our area. That will provide us an opportunity to ask many questions, but our comments will not be recorded. It will likely help us formulate comments to submit in writing.

Thursday the 20th, Maturango Museum, 7:00 pm.

DECEMBER FIELD TRIP CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Please join us once again for the annual China Lake Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count. Continuing with tradition, the count will be the first Sunday of the Count Period, December 14, from 0700 to 1700.

Count week is from December 12 to 18. Species that are seen during Count Week but not on Count Day also get tallied, so keep an eye out for interesting species you see during that period, and note where you see them.

We will meet at Leroy Jackson Park at 0700 on the 14th. The venue for the compilation at 5 pm will be provided in next month's edition of The Chat.

Please email compiler Peter Woodman at (Kivabio@aol.com) and let him know if you plan to participate.

Note paperwork for passes for the base sewer ponds has changed recently, and new forms have to be filled out. If you wish to bird the "ponds" the day of the count, email Peter before the last week of November so he can provide you with the necessary forms and give base Security time to process applications.

Other Local Area Bird Counts are:

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

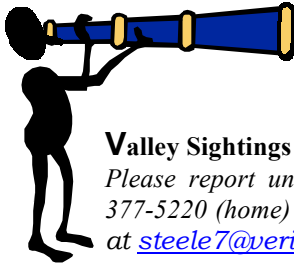
MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

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

The dates are January 16-19, 2015.

Kerncrest Audubon Society Board of Directors

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Alternative Energy	Hector Villalobos	760-446-4908
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Webmaster	Noel Gravelle	760-375-2325



Valley Sightings – October 2014

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

Our first **Snow Goose** of the fall were at the ponds Oct 4 (TW, LA) which is expected.

Our first **Ross's Goose** of the fall was at the ponds Oct 31 (SLS) which is a couple weeks later than expected.

A **Cackling Goose** was at the ponds Oct 27-29 (TL).

A **Horned grebe** was at the ponds Oct 16 (SLS).

Western Grebes were noted on the 16th, 22nd, and 31 (SLS).

The eleven **Common Gallinule** at the ponds Oct 4 was a sign that they had a very successful breeding year (TW, LA).

FOF for **Dulin** was from the ponds Oct 27 (TL).

FOF for **Bonaparte's Gull** was from the ponds Oct 16 (SLS).

FOF for **Herring Gull** was from the ponds Oct 22 (SLS).

A Common Poorwill was in the Rademacher Hills Oct 27 (GW).

An **Acorn Woodpecker** was at the college Oct 30 (SLS) and another was in Ridgecrest Oct 1 (fide LL).

Our coot eating, pond visiting **Peregrine Falcon** was noted intermittently throughout the month (SLS).

A **Pacific Wren** was SW of Inyokern Oct 25 (PW).

A **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was in S Ridgecrest Oct 10 (DMcG).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were noted in Ridgecrest on Oct 16 (BB), at the college Oct 2 (SLS), and in Ridgecrest in late Sept (LL and L&SSu).

A **House Wren** was at the college Oct 2 (SLS).

Phainopepla were at the college Oct 2 and 30 (SLS).

The two **Townsend's Warblers** at the college Oct 30 became our late sighting date by two days (SLS).

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at the college Oct 2 (SLS).

Two **Vesper Sparrows** were at the ponds Oct 27 (TL).

Our only report of **Fox Sparrow** was S of Inyokern Oct 28-31 (SLS).

Tan morph **White-throated Sparrows** were S of Inyokern Oct 28 and at the college Oct 30 (SLS).

Golden-crowned Sparrows were S of Inyokern Oct 28-31 and at the college Oct 30 (SLS).

A **Blue Grosbeak** was in Ridgecrest Oct 31 (BBu).

While this is a late date, it is not unprecedented. We have three November records, the latest being Nov, 8 2009 at the college.

FOF for **American Goldfinch** was from Ridgecrest Oct 25 (BB).

Thanks to the following observers: *Liga Auzins, Lisa Lavelle, Tim Ludwick, Diane McGuire, Bob Steele, Lee and Shirley Sutton, Greg Watson, Peter Woodman, Tom Wurster*

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY OPPORTUNITY

A North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) route is available for someone to take over. Due to pending personal changes, it is time to relinquish the route that I have run for the last 25 years.

The Breeding Bird Survey is an ongoing cooperative program sponsored jointly by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service. During the 1960s, Chandler Robbins and his associates at the Migratory Bird Population Station (now the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center run by the USGS) in Laurel, Maryland, developed the concept of a continental monitoring program for all breeding birds. Its main purpose is to estimate population trends of the many species of birds that nest in North America north of Mexico and that migrate across international boundaries.

Breeding Bird Surveys are conducted during the peak of the nesting season, primarily in June, although surveys in desert regions (which is us) and some southern states, (where the breeding season begins earlier), are conducted in May. Each route is 24.5 miles long, with a total of fifty stops located at 0.5 mile intervals along the route. A three-minute point count is conducted at each stop, during which the observer records all birds heard or seen within 0.25 mile of the stop.

This route (the only BBS route in the area) starts at the intersection of Brown Road and Bowman Road in Inyokern; travels up Brown Road towards US395 to the powerlines; follows the powerlines to Iron Canyon; through Iron Canyon to Garlock Road; through Randsburg; and ending in Red Mountain. The survey starts at 5 am and finishes about 10 am. This is an easy route to survey as it is mostly homogenous desert (except for the "urban" stops in Randsburg and Red Mountain). I have typically run the route around Mother's Day in May. Good eyes and good ears are a requirement to perform the BBS survey.

The survey results are then fed into the USGS BBS database with the data available at their website (www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/ <<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/>>). This website presents population change information for more than 400 species of North American birds, as estimated from the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Estimates of trend (interval-specific estimates of population change), annual indices of abundance, and maps of abundance and population change for these species are presented for a variety of regions.

I will share my past results, tips and techniques, and drive the potential participant along the route to familiarize him or her with the stops. If you are interested or have any further questions, please contact me first by email (hallowellra@gmail.com).

Rick Hallowell

Note the Breeding Bird Survey project described above is a very important citizen science program. And it does not take a big commitment of time. It occurs only once a year, on a date of your choosing! Please volunteer. It would be a shame to let this route go unsurveyed.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

For many years now, the National Audubon Society has under-reimbursed Kerncrest for the cost of publishing and mailing newsletters. The amount we are funded by "National" has stayed constant, while our membership has fluctuated and the cost of publishing and mailing has gone up. We are considering changing the way we handle this issue.

It is our "guesstimate" that we have three kinds of Chat recipients:

A, Those who read it and want to continue to receive it in paper form:

B, Those who read it but would just as soon receive it by email, _____

and C, Those who receive it because they subscribe to the National Audubon magazine, but do not read it.

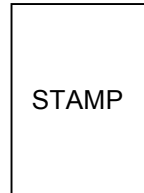
We will be delighted if we can reduce our mailings to only those members in category "A". And if that number turns out to be less than about 80, we will do away with the bulk mail permit and simply mail everything first class, which will result in faster delivery. If it's close but analysis shows it to be a cost increase, we may also ask for a voluntary contribution to cover the stamp expense. (And if the return shows everyone wants to get a paper Chat, we will not change the current method of mailing.)

WHAT WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO

If you wish to continue to receive ***either paper or email*** issues of The Chat, please **circle the letter above** that describes what category you fall into. If it's category B, provide your email address. Then, **fold this sheet so that the stamp and address below are on the outside, tape it shut and mail it.**

If you do not want to receive a paper Chat, you do not need to do anything. If you have a question or wish to discuss the issue, call Brenda at 760-382-4935.

From:



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