

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

November, 2015

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER CALENDAR

Wed	Nov 18	6 pm	Board Meeting: Thompsons'
Thu	Nov 19	7 pm	General Meeting: Movie
Sun	Nov 15	9 am	Field Trip: Owens Lake Ponds
Sun	Dec 20	7 am	Christmas Bird Count

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP

OWENS LAKE "MITIGATION" PONDS

Sunday, November 15. Note the unusual day of the week, and the late time. These are because our trip will be to the freshwater ponds at the south end of Owens Lake that are maintained by a duck hunting group as mitigation for the danger to birds at Searles lake, and they will be shooting on Saturday and early Sunday morning. They kindly accommodate us after their hunters have departed.

Last year, only 2 of us attended this trip, and the silence and beauty of this spectacular setting were awesome! This year we scheduled this trip for earlier in the month than usual, to avoid a conflict with the Central Valley Birding Symposium so more could attend. So come enjoy the opportunity to experience hundreds of wildfowl and shorebirds in view of the snow-covered Sierra Nevada in a serene and photogenic atmosphere.

Call Bob Parker at 760-446-2001 to sign up, and meet at the now-open Inyokern Union 76 station at 9 am. Bring a picnic, or buy one at the station.

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, this year on December 20, from 0700 to 1700.

Count week is from December 18 to 24. 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 20th. The venue for the compilation at 5 pm will be provided when you sign up.

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 again, and new forms have to be filled out. If you wish to bird the "ponds" the day of the

count, email Peter by the last week of November so he can provide you with the necessary forms and give base Security time to process applications.

NOVEMBER PROGRAM THE BIG YEAR:

A Bird Enthusiasts' Movie

Our general meeting and program this month will feature a comedy birding movie that did not make it to Ridgecrest. The movie, which was directed by Howard Franklin, was based on nonfiction book titled *The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature and Fowl Obsession* written by Mark Obmascik. The stars in the movie include Steve Martin, Jack Black, and Owen Wilson. The Big Year storyline follows three men in their birding quest to see or hear as many different species of birds as possible in a calendar year. They will travel the continent, including a trip to a remote Alaskan island, following migration patterns and storm fronts that force birds to ground. The three men do not let life get in way of their pursuit to be birder of the year. One interesting side note of the movie is that during the end credits, photos of every bird found by the winner are shown.

Please plan to join us for popcorn and a movie at the Maturango Museum, Thursday, November 19, 2015, at 7 pm.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Local Christmas Bird Counts:

Saturday, January 2, 2016, South Fork Valley (around Weldon): compiler, Denise LaBerteaux, Phone 760-378-4278

Sunday, January 3, 2016, Kern River Valley (around Lake Isabella): compilers, Bob Barnes & Alison Sheehey. Email Bob at bbarnes@lightspeed.net.

For a complete list visit www.naturali.org.

Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival, January 15-18, 2016. This year's festival has expanded field trips and events. To register and for more information, visit www.morrobaybirdfestival.org.

San Diego Bird Festival, March 3-6. at Marina Village Park. Registration is open and detailed event information is available at www.sandiegoaudubon.org.

SAVE THE DATES:

2016 Field Trips:

February 20: Pixley National Wildlife Refuge

March 19: Lake Isabella & Tilley Creek Campground

April 22-24: Owens Lake Bird Festival

May 21: Inyokern to Red Mt Breeding Bird Survey Rte



Valley Sightings – October 2015

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

A big thank you: Bob Barnes has agreed to take over the Valley Sightings column. Look for his first column early next year.

Western Grebes were seen at the old sewage ponds Oct 15 (SLS), and at the ponds Oct 1, 3 and 19 (SLS, BB). On Oct 20 another Western Grebe landed out on an alfalfa field. It was rescued and released at the ponds. Many thanks to Terri Middlemiss for doing this.

A **Ferruginous Hawk** was in Freeman Canyon Oct 15 (DLaB). This was a new bird for the canyon, #106, and further was a new species for the east side canyons.

Red-shouldered Hawks were noted at the cemetery Oct 6 and the old sewage ponds Oct 15 (SLS).

FOF for **Bonaparte's Gull** was from the ponds Oct 19 (SLS).

A **Belted Kingfisher** was at the old sewage ponds Oct 6 (SLS).

A **Red-breasted Sapsucker** was at the college Oct 7 (SLS).

The **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** at the cemetery Oct 6 was the 147th species for that location (SLS) and another Ladder-backed Woodpecker was SW of Inyokern Oct 4 (LK).

Indian Wells Canyon produced some interesting sighting on Oct 23 during a hike to Jenkins Peak. Six **Hairy Woodpeckers**, three **Canyon Wrens**, three **Western Bluebirds**, and two **Steller's Jays** were scattered along the trail. Two **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were the 142nd species for the canyon. At the top of the peak eleven **Steller's Jays**, eight **Clark's Nutcrackers**, and an **Evening Grosbeak** (species #143 for the canyon) migrated south during our lunch break (BS, SLS).

Another **Hairy Woodpecker** was in Freeman Canyon Oct 23 (BS, SLS).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported in greater numbers and from more locations this month (m.ob).

Our first **Merlin** of the winter was at the old sewage ponds Oct 24 (L&SSu).

A **Hammond's Flycatcher** was at the college Oct 6 (BB).

The **Plumbeous Vireo** at the cemetery Oct 6 was the 148th species for that location (SLS).

LOS for **Warbling Vireo** was from the college Oct 24 (L&SSu).

A **Mountain Chickadee** and **White-breasted Nuthatch** were in Indian Wells Canyon Oct 31 (BS).

An **Oak Titmouse** and **Bushtits** were in Freeman Canyon Oct 23 (BS, SLS).

A **House Wren** was at the ponds Oct 19 (SLS).

Cedar Waxwings were in Ridgcrest Oct 29 (BB), in SW of Inyokern Oct 20 (LK), and at the college Oct 24 (L&SSu).

An **American Redstart** was at the cemetery Oct 6 (SLS).

The **Prothonotary Warbler** in Freeman Canyon Oct 22-27 was the 107th species for that location and a new species for any of our canyons (JB).

Oct 18 was a good day in the valley for **Purple Finches**. They were noted S of Inyokern and in Indian Wells Canyon, species #141, (SLS, BS).

Two **Red Crossbills** were in SE Ridgcrest Oct 21 (L&SSu).

Pine Siskins seem to be staging an invasion. They were noted in Freeman Canyon Oct 23 (species # 108), Indian Wells Canyon Oct 18, and S of Inyokern Oct 7-31 (BS, SLS).

Thanks to the following observers: *Bob Barnes, Jack Bitzer, Louise Knecht, Denise LaBerteaux, Joyce Seibold, Bob Steele, Lee and Shirley Sutton*



Prothonotary Warbler