

# The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

May, 2017

## **MAY CALENDAR**

Wed	May 17 Board Meeting: Burnetts'
Thu	May 18 Annual Meeting: Bob Steele

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

*Program: Bob Steele*

### ***Chasing Spring on the Pacific Crest Trail***

In 2016 Bob and his wife Susan thru-hiked the 2650 mile-long Pacific Crest Trail with one different goal for the trail than anyone else – counting all the birds. Their trek passed through magnificent scenery, diverse habitats, and afforded the chance to see birds moving northbound, from spring migration to summer breeding.

With technically stunning photography and storytelling, this evening presentation will take you along the mountainous spine of the west coast, winding from Mexico to Canada with a keen eye toward natural history and birds. Share in the joy and challenge of backpacking 140 days on one of the most famous trails in the Western Hemisphere, and glimpse some of the 200 species of birds found along the way.

Join us at the Maturango Museum at 7pm on May 18th. It's our annual meeting, so there will be cookies.

## **BIRDATHON 2017**

Was this the windiest the Kerncrest Birdathon has ever been? It would be interesting to know. I can remember days when the wind came up during the afternoon and blew whitecaps on the China Lake Ponds, but this year it blew all day.

Nevertheless, we saw 104 species of birds, in spite of the fact that our usual birder of the high local canyons did not participate.

The high count might have been in spite of the wind, or it might have been because of it. Or it could have been because the event was a week or two later than in years past.

Flycatcher species were up (almost certainly as a result of the late date), as were warblers (likely staying below the wind), with highlights being a Black-throated gray warbler and a Yellow-breasted

Chat in Terri Middlemiss's mulberry tree. Both were spotted/heard by Team Barnes.

Highlights for Team Sutton were a Green Heron and 2 late Canada Geese at the golf course.

Probably the strangest birds of the day were 2 Snowy Egrets spotted by the Bushtits on Highway 14 just south of the intersection with 178 from Inyokern. The poor birds were hunkered down on the ground, above a road cut on the west side of the highway, pointed into a fierce south wind. We hoped they would find their way to water when the wind let up.

Another phenomenon of this count was that Phainopepla were migrating through. Every team saw at least one.

A complete list may be found on page 2.

Don't forget to mail your contribution to PO Box 984, Ridgecrest CA 93556, or call any board member to pick it up.

## **CONDOR KIOSK AT BITTER CREEK NWR**

This from Martin Fletcher, Friends of Condors Wild and Free, on 4/30/17:

"We ran a tour yesterday at Bitter Creek. They have a newly installed nest-cam in the nest in Bitter Creek Canyon. On Friday there was an egg. Yesterday morning a new chick.

Kiosks are set up first and third Saturday's of each month starting Memorial Day Weekend and running through Labor Day. Our folks are there to interpret from 10:00 to 3:00. The kiosk is on Hudson Ranch Road next to the upper Bitter Creek Sign. Hudson Ranch Road on older maps is Cerro Noroeste Rd. It takes off to the left just after Soda Lake Road from Hwy 166/33. The sign is between 5 and 6 miles from the intersection. Down canyon from the sign and kiosk is the nest site. While you can't see the nest from the kiosk condors are very social and often fly by on their way to the flight pen or to mix with the condors above the nest.

"This should be a great year for condor viewing from the kiosk, or any other time one might be nearby to stop at the upper sign turnout."

***Note: Valley Sightings will be sent separately, at the end of May.***

## BIRDATHON 2017

Canada Goose	Ash-throated Flycatcher
Gadwall	Western Kingbird
Mallard	Cassin's Vireo
Cinnamon Teal	Warbling Vireo
Northern Shoveler	California Scrub Jay
Green-winged Teal	Common Raven
Redhead	Horned Lark
Ruddy Duck	Tree Swallow
California Quail	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Eared Grebe	Barn Swallow
Western Grebe	Verdin
Snowy Egret	Cactus Wren
Turkey Vulture	Bewick's Wren
Cooper's Hawk	Marsh Wren
Red-tailed Hawk	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
American Kestrel	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Virginia Rail	Swainson's Thrush
Sora	American Robin
Common Moorhen	Northern Mockingbird
American Coot	Sage Thrasher
Semipalmated Plover	European Starling
Killdeer	Phainopepla
Black-necked Stilt	Orange-crowned Warbler
American Avocet	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Spotted Sandpiper	Yellow Warbler
Solitary Sandpiper	Wilson's Warbler
Greater Yellowlegs	Black-throated Gray Warbler
Western Sandpiper	Mac Gillivray's Warbler
Least Sandpiper	Common Yellowthroat
Long-billed Dowitcher	Yellow-breasted Chat
Wilson's Phalarope	Green-tailed Towhee
Red-necked Phalarope	Black-throated Sparrow
California Gull	Song Sparrow
Bonaparte's Gull	Lark Sparrow
Ring-billed Gull	Bell's (formerly Sage) Sparrow
Eurasian Collared-Dove	White-crowned Sparrow
White-winged Dove	Lazuli Bunting
Mourning Dove	Western Tanager
Greater Roadrunner	Black-headed Grosbeak
Barn Owl	Red-winged Blackbird
Burrowing Owl	Western Meadowlark
Long-eared Owl	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Brewer's Blackbird
Anna's Hummingbird	Great-tailed Grackle
Costa's Hummingbird	Hooded Oriole
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Bullock's Oriole
Western Wood-Pewee	House Finch
Willow Flycatcher	Lesser Goldfinch
Hammond's Flycatcher	Lawrence's Goldfinch
Gray Flycatcher	House Sparrow
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)
Black Phoebe	
Say's Phoebe	
	<b>Total 104</b>