

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

February, 2018

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sat Feb 17 Kern NWR and Pixley NWR Crane Fly-in

Wed Feb 14 Board Meeting at Suttons'

Future dates to save:

Sat Apr 21 Kern River Valley Bioregions Festival, Kernville

Sun Apr 22 Birdathon

Fri Apr 27 Beginning of Owens Lake Bird Festival (register online)

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP

Pixley and Kern National Wildlife Refuges

It's time again for our Annual foray to the wetlands of the southern San Joaquin Valley to view wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, and to watch the daily Spectacular Show of the Sandhill Crane and White-faced Ibis fly-in at the Pixley National Wildlife Refuge.

Some will take RVs and depart on Friday, February 16. To join those, call Brenda Burnett at 760-382-4935.

Some will come just for Saturday. To join those from Ridgecrest, call Bob Parker at 760-446-2001. Also call Bob if you would like to arrange another meeting place.

Particulars will be provided as folks sign up and express their preferences for meeting places and departure times. Bob will probably lead a group departing Ridgecrest early Saturday morning. Others from different locales may want to arrange meeting places other places, such as California City or Lake Isabella, or the campground at Colonel Allensworth State Park, where the people camping will be. (That is also a fun, historical park to visit.)

Tents are also allowed at that campground, so if that's all you have, bring it! If you don't have a camp stove, the Burnetts' galley is available. There are public restrooms and showers in the park.

The Burnett cell phone above will be available for contact at all times.

(PS: Some stalwart birders may get up Sunday to go to the Pixley NWR for the Crane departure. That is supposed to be even more spectacular than the fly-in, because the birds lift off in bigger groups. Yours truly hasn't made it yet.)

PIUTE PONDS

John Birsner, expert birder from the Antelope Valley led us to Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base on Saturday, January 20th, 2018. A small group of us went, and froze! But we had a great time and saw a lot of birds.

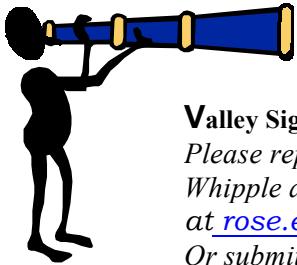
Our thanks to John!

This is really a great, close-to-home trip, and we plan to do it again soon. But *it is essential attendees have a letter of access to the ponds. They are on a remote section of Edwards, and hunting is allowed during season, so strict access requirements are enforced.*

To gain a letter of access you must do the following:

***First talk with Misty Hailstone on the base by phone at (661) 275-2435 between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. any weekday to arrange a required annual pass ***. Tell her your personal information (legal name, •driver's license number and state issued, •social security number, •date of birth, •email address, and •phone number). Please DO NOT e-mail or leave a message. Access for foreign nationals is trickier but still possible.

PLEASE DO THIS SOON, if you think you might want to attend a future trip. The pass is good for a year, and easily renewable for another year.



Valley Sightings – Winter 2017/18

Please report unusual sightings to Rose Whipple at (360) 348-1609, or by email at rose.e.whipple@gmail.com.

Or submit to ebird for Rose to glean.

December, 2017

A **Prairie Falcon** and a **Western Meadowlark** at the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park on Dec 9 (LS)

A **Merlin** West of Inyokern on Dec 13 (SM)

An **Orange Crowned Warbler** in NW Ridgecrest on Dec 14 (BB).

A **White Winged Dove** at the China Lake Golf Course on Dec 17 (RW, BBu, LS SSu)

A **Harris's Sparrow** in the base housing on Dec 17 (RW, BBu)

A **Barn Owl** South of Hwy 178 in Inyokern on Dec 31

January, 2018

10 **Ross's Geese** at the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park on Jan 3 (BG, DL)

A **Burrowing Owl** in downtown Ridgecrest on Jan 4 (RW, RaW)

A **Great Horned Owl** and a **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** at Cerro Coso Community College on Jan 13 (TM)

A **Prairie Falcon** at the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park on Jan 16 (LS)

A **Green-winged Teal** at that park on Jan 16 (SS)

A **Bufflehead** and a **Loggerhead Shrike** at the China Lake Sewage Ponds on Jan 16 (SS)

A **Cackling Goose**, **Cinnamon Teal** and a continuing female **Vermilion Flycatcher** at the China Lake Golf Course on Jan 16 (SS)

2 **Common Gallinules** at the China Lake Sewage Ponds on Jan 19 (SS)

2 **Spotted Towhees** in Inyokern on Jan 24 (BG, DL)

An **American Kestrel** in Inyokern on Jan 28 (BS, SS)

Long-eared Owls near Desert Memorial Park and at the college on Jan 28 (SS, AS)
4 Ross's Geese in the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park on Jan 28 (AS)
3 Golden Eagles and **2 Pinyon Jays** in Indian Wells Canyon on Jan 29 (SS, BS)
A Greater Yellowlegs and several ducks including **2 Cinnamon Teal**, **2 Redheads**, and
Ring-necked Ducks at the Sewage Ponds on Jan 30 (SS, BS)

Thanks to the following observers: Bob Barnes (BB); Brenda Burnett (BBu); Bruce Garlinger (BG); Denise LaBerteaux (DLB); Thomas Miko (TM); Alison Sheehey (AS), Lee Sutton (LS); Shirley Sutton (SSu); Susan Steele (SS); Bob Steele (BS); Rose Whipple (RW); Ransom Whipple (RaW).

RENEWALS - reminder

It has come to our attention that there is no opportunity, if you attempt to renew your National Audubon Society membership online, to enter your subscription number. If you try to renew there anyway, you will be assigned a new membership number and sent an additional magazine until the overlapping membership expires. We recommend you renew by mail. If you do opt to go ahead and accept the new membership designation, please indicate chapter C45 as your preference, so maybe we will get a cut of the fee.

Regarding Kerncrest memberships: it is time to renew those. Though we will not stop sending you a newsletter unless you ask us to, an annual membership donation of \$15 is always appreciated. Please mail that to Kerncrest Audubon Society, PO Box 984, Ridgecrest CA 93556. (Disregard this request if you are a regular donor to our Birdathon, or if making a donation is a problem for you.)

Thank you to those of you who have already renewed for 2018!

OWENS LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL

Registration is now open for members of Friends of the Inyo online at friendsoftheinyo.org
You can also join online. I don't know if that makes you immediately eligible for early registration. In any case, if you want to go, register soon. This fun festival, with many, many interesting tours and workshops, sells out early.

Coming up April 27th through 30th!

FUNDING NEEDED FOR SSRS MAPS INTERNSHIP

MAPS stands for Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival. Practitioners of that program mist net birds, weigh and measure them and record detailed information on their age and sex, among other details. Extensive training is required for licensing. SSRS needs funding for internships for 3 technicians to help run stations this spring. In addition, donations to that program will help provide equipment needed for another MAPS station run by volunteers Denise LaBerteaux and Bruce Garlinger.

Photos and further information can be found on the SSRS website at southernsierraresearch.org

Click on RESEARCH. You may then donate online. Or mail donations to Southern Sierra Research Station, P.O. Box 1316, Weldon, CA 93283.

2017
CHRISTMAS
BIRD COUNT

<u>Species</u>	<u>China Lake</u>	<u>South Fork Valley</u>
Snow Goose (white form)	1844	
<i>Snow Goose (blue form)</i>	7	
Ross' Goose	200	
Cackling Goose *	1	
Canada Goose	1	
Gadwall	42	
American Wigeon	44	25
Mallard	110	253
Cinnamon Teal	7	
Northern Shoveler	1333	
Northern Pintail	34	
American Green-winged Teal	291	cw
Ring-necked Duck	12	
Bufflehead	4	
Hooded Merganser		3
Ruddy Duck	96	
California Quail	141	311
Wild Turkey		38
Chukar	2	
Pied-billed Grebe	1	
Eared Grebe	7	
American White Pelican **	5	
Great Blue Heron	3	
White-tailed Kite		3
Golden Eagle		4
Northern Harrier	9	5
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	4
Cooper's Hawk	8	7
Red-tailed Hawk	20	35
Ferruginous Hawk		3
Virginia Rail	5	4
Sora	1	3
Common Gallinule	2	
American Coot	586	131
Killdeer	60	2
Least Sandpiper	58	
Wilson's Snipe	5	
Ring-billed Gull	30	
California Gull	56	
Rock Pigeon	409	3
Eurasian Collared Dove	294	84
White-winged Dove	1	
Mourning Dove	313	4
Greater Roadrunner	9	
Burrowing Owl	1	
Long-eared Owl	6	
Barn Owl		cw
Great Horned Owl		23
Anna's Hummingbird	16	6
Costa's Hummingbird	24	

<i>Hummingbird species</i>	4	
Red-naped Sapsucker	1	
Red-breasted Sapsucker		6
Ladder-backed Woodpecker		2
Nuttall's Woodpecker**	1	14
Downy Woodpecker		7
Hairy Woodpecker		17
White-headed Woodpecker		1
Northern Flicker (Red-shafted)	36	16
American Kestrel	9	15
Merlin	1	4
Peregrine Falcon**	1	
Prairie Falcon	5	3
Black Phoebe	25	21
Say's Phoebe	40	15
Vermillion Flycatcher	1	
Loggerhead Shrike	12	14
Plumbeous Vireo **	3	
Pinyon Jay		126
Steller's Jay		3
Western Scrub-Jay (Coastal)		90
American Crow		1
Common Raven	572	246
Horned Lark	1723	75
Mountain Chickadee		cw
Oak Titmouse		45
Verdin	21	
Bushtit		77
Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	cw
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	5
Pygmy Nuthatch		cw
Brown Creeper		cw
Rock Wren	6	14
Canyon Wren		6
House Wren		3
Marsh Wren	25	13
Bewick's Wren	2	45
Cactus Wren	1	9
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	31	75
Wrentit		3
Western Bluebird	5	240
Mountain Bluebird	67	82
Hermit Thrush	7	9
American Robin	2	3
LeConte's Thrasher	4	
California Thrasher		1
Northern Mockingbird	29	8
European Starling	640	314
American Pipit	54	5
Phainopepla		7
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler		
(Audubon's)	58	24
<i>Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)</i>	1	
Black-throated Sparrow	16	7
Lark Sparrow		12
Fox Sparrow	1	15

Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)	168	55
<i>Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)</i>	3	3
White-crowned Sparrow	487	2572
Golden-crowned Sparrow		161
White-throated Sparrow		cw
Harris's Sparrow **	1	
Sagebrush Sparrow	4	
Bell's Sparrow (Mojave)	165	22
Vesper Sparrow **	1	3
Savannah Sparrow	41	29
Song Sparrow	6	53
Lincoln's Sparrow	17	24
California Towhee		17
Rufous-crowned Sparrow		31
Spotted Towhee	10	23
Red-winged Blackbird	51	783
Tricolored Blackbird		45
Western Meadowlark	18	90
Brewer's Blackbird	163	234
Great-tailed Grackle	3	
Brown-headed Cowbird	4	8
blackbird sp		75
House Finch	199	397
Pine Siskin		2
Lesser Goldfinch	177	27
American Goldfinch	13	15
House Sparrow	265	157
Total Species (191)	95	90
Additional Forms (10)	3	
Unidentified Species (6)	1	
Count Week Additions	1	6
New Species	0	
Total Birds	11313	7811