

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

March, 2018

MARCH CALENDAR

Sat Mar 17 Field Trip: Indian Joe Canyon

Wed Mar 14 Board Meeting at Hector Villalobos's

Thu Mar 15 General Meeting Program: Sherry Brubaker

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)

MARCH GENERAL MEETING SHERRY BRUBAKER'S TRIP TO ISRAEL AND JORDAN

Sherry Brubaker was born and raised in Ridgecrest. In college, her undergraduate work was at Cal poly, Pomona in agriculture and education. She later received a Masters degree in Environmental Policy and Management from the University of Denver.

Sherry taught elementary school in Trona for 30 years, finishing with third grade. Upon retirement from teaching she says "I now have the dream job as curator of natural history at the Maturango Museum."

She has traveled to all but one continent and still has the mid-section of the United States to do, planning to start working on that this summer

Sherry's trip to Israel and Petra, Jordan was in November to avoid the heat, since it is just as hot there as here. There was a two-fold reason for going: one was the history and geology, and the other was to take a pilgrimage. Part of the pilgrimage was to also be baptized in the Jordan. Says Sherry, "I definitely saw historical places. Those Romans can sure build. Hebrews not so bad either. The geology is amazing! The region of the Galilee is at the north end of the great rift valley. In one day one can drive from volcanic tuff material to well eroded sedimentary material. The pilgrimage was inspiring. Pictures of Petra don't do it justice."

Come see the pictures anyway, at the Maturango Museum at 6 PM on Thursday, March 15th.

POTENTIAL WATER GRAB

For our members in the Kern River Valley: there is a Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for a project of the Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District to export water from ex-Onyx Ranch property in the South Fork Valley to Bakersfield, via Lake Isabella. A public scoping meeting will be held at the South Fork Elementary School at 6:00 PM on March 6, 2018. **Please attend!** This project is potentially disastrous to bird habitat.

FIELD TRIP: INDIAN JOE CANYON

Our March field trip will be a return to Indian Joe Canyon, a California Department of Fish and Wildlife Ecological Reserve. This 520 acre area lies within the Great Falls Basin Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Bordered by the Great Falls Basin Wilderness, the spring is habitat for the Inyo California Towhee, a State and Federally listed species. We may see this resident on the field trip.

We will meet at the Park and Ride at the corner of Richmond and HWY 178 at 8 am and travel to the canyon. We'll hike up the canyon to the riparian areas where we'll have lunch. There is a trail in places but rough in places. We may drive up to the Great Falls Basin canyon and visit the waterfall afterward.

The date is March 17th. Bring a picnic lunch or snacks, wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing (maybe green – it's St. Patrick's Day). This is a multi-hiking-skill trip. There are pretty and birdy places to stop for those who don't want to go all the way to the spring.

SPRING POINT COUNTS

In the spring of every other year members of Kerncrest Audubon conduct bird surveys for the Bureau of Land Management. This spring will mark the 13th count year for counts in the Indian Wells Canyon and Sand Canyon. The counts occur at 10 to 12 specific points set 200 meters apart along routes in the canyons. The observer stops at each point and records every bird heard or seen during ten minutes at the point.

These point counts are recorded in eBird and other science data bases to help scientist monitor the health of our natural habitat. Recently the Southern Sierra Riparian Canyons were named as important bird areas in part because of the information gathered through these counts. Kerncrest has been asked to also monitor birds in Indian Joe Canyon and has recently been involved in surveys of the springs in the Argus Rang that support the endangered California Inyo Towhee.

More counters are needed. The counts are conducted during fair weather. They involve walks of two to four miles across mostly gentle terrain. They occur during spring when migrating bird species visit and nest in the count areas. If you are interested in joining the count please contact Lee Sutton at (760) 382-6386 or Brenda Burnett at (760) 382-4935.

REMINDERS:

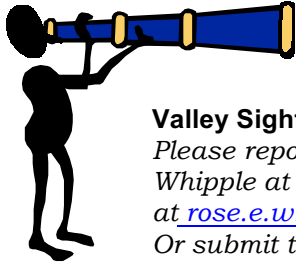
Spring is coming, and any day we may plan a spur-of-the-moment trip to Piute Ponds. If you haven't already done so, to gain access to the ponds you must

***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.

Registration is now open for the OWENS LAKE BIRD FEST coming up April 27 – 29 in Lone Pine. We are assured plenty of space is available on most field trips, and of course for the dinner and receptions.

To register, go to www.friendsoftheinyo.org where you will find a complete list of events and schedules.

If you do not have internet access, call Brenda at (760) 382-4935 for help.



Valley Sightings – February 2018

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.

Two Long Eared Owls near Desert Memorial Park on Feb 1 (BG, DL)
A continuing female Vermilion Flycatcher at the China Lake Golf course on Feb 3rd (BB)
A Ferruginous Hawk at the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife park on Feb 3rd (LS)
A Bell's Sparrow at the Ridgecrest Watchable Wildlife Park on Feb 10 (LS)
A Virginia Rail and a LeConte's Thrasher at the China Lake Sewage ponds on February 10th (BB)
A Cackling Goose, some American White Pelicans, and a continuing White-winged Dove at the China Lake Golf Course on February 15th (SS)
A Cinnamon Teal at the China Lake Sewage ponds on February 15th (SS)
A Sharp-shinned Hawk in E Ridgecrest on Feb 16 (LS)
A Northern Harrier and a continuing female Vermilion Flycatcher at the China Lake Golf Course on February 19th (AIS)
A Lincoln's Sparrow in E Ridgecrest on Feb 9, 13, and 24 (LS)

Thanks to the following observers: Bob Barnes (BB); Bruce Garlinger (BG); Denise LaBerteaux (DLB); Lee Sutton (LS); Susan Steele (SS).

MEMBERSHIP - some new information:

The best place to join or renew a National Audubon Society membership is at the Kerncrest web site: www.kerncrestaudubon.org

There you will find a link to the National's membership form, but with a twist. This form has a space for you to select a chapter affiliation. Please choose C45.

There is no longer any option of choosing a multi-year membership. If you select the pre-highlighted \$50 level, the extra \$30 is taken as a contribution. Your membership or renewal will still be for a single year.

A regular membership is \$20, whether you are a new member or a renewing member.

If you are a new member, select C45, and designate the \$50, or any other level of membership, Kerncrest Audubon Society receives the entire first year membership!

If you do not wish to join or renew online, please contact Nancy Robinson at (760) 382-4895 or Brenda Burnett at (760) 382-4895 for assistance. Kerncrest will accept your paper check and will do the paperwork for you.