

The Chat



Kerncrest Audubon Society, Ridgecrest, California

April, 2018

APRIL/MAY CALENDAR

Thurs	Apr 19	Board Meeting at Burnetts'
Sat	Apr 21	Kern River Valley Bioregions Festival, Kernville
Sun	Apr 22	Birdathon
Fri	Apr 27	Beginning of Owens Lake Bird Festival (register online)
Wed	May 16	Board Meeting, location TBD
Thurs	May 17	Annual Meeting: Program Janet Westbrook
Sat	May 19	Field Trip TBD

APRIL FIELD TRIP 1

KERN RIVER VALLEY BIOREGIONS FESTIVAL, KERNVILLE

Don't forget! Kerncrest will have a booth in Circle Park in Kernville on April 21. (Help attending that booth will be welcome!) A full program of events is attached.

APRIL FIELD TRIP 2

BIRDATHON

It's time again! Our one-and-only fund raiser for our education program and our donation to the Kern River Preserve is on April 22nd. A donation form is attached. Mail it with your check to us at PO Box 984, Ridgecrest CA 93556, or call any board member to come pick up your donation.

And come bird with us! Form a team, even if it's a team of one, or call Lee Sutton at 760-382-6386 to be added to a team or with help building a team.

We will gather after the count to tally species seen and to have a pizza party. Venue to be announced.

For further info contact See Sutton – 760-382-6386.

APRIL FIELD TRIP 3

OWEN LAKE BIRD FESTIVAL

Yes, that's in April, too. Many field trips are available. See the whole schedule and register at friendsoftheinyo.org/owens-lake-bird-festival

Beginning reception and last minute registration are at 6 PM on Friday, April 27 at the Lone Pine Film Museum.

MAY ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

AUSTRALIA'S KIMBERLEY REGION WITH JANET WESTBROOK

Don't miss our May general meeting at the Maturango Museum at 7 PM on Thursday, May 17. It's our annual meeting, so refreshments will be served.

Janet Westbrook came to Ridgecrest in 1966 and taught at Burroughs High School, then Biological Sciences of many sorts for 40 years at Cerro Coso College. She went to UCSB, UC Berkeley, and Chapman College and has degrees in Field Biology, Zoology, an MA, and life time CA teaching credential. She has worked with the Maturango Museum since 1966, and with the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group since 1967, among other groups and activities.

She is now a world traveler, having been to all 50 states and all the Canadian Provinces, all 8 Continents (counting Greenland), and has visited 115 Countries.

One of the most intriguing places she has visited in Australia's Kimberley Region, the NW corner of the continent, from Darwin to Broome, on the National Geographic/Lindblad Expedition ship, the Orion.

Australia is unique, and large, and this NW corner has some very unique features which may be explored on rough 4x4 roads, or by zodiac into the various river channels. During "the Big Wet" the whole inland area of the Kimberley is underwater, and during the dry season (their winter) it is very possible to go up rivers. In so doing, one sees a lot of familiar shapes of shorebirds, but they're all a different species - like Oystercatchers, Herons, Osprey, etc. and in the Mangrove forests, big black Fruit Bats. But the most common animals are the crocodiles - the fresh-water "freshies" crocs who are sort of friendly, and the much larger salt water "salties" crocs that are truly dangerous. Of course mudskippers and crabs inhabit the muddy banks of the rivers. And there are a few tribes of Aboriginal peoples and their rock art.

It's a unique corner of the world, down under.

Says Janet, having recently reviewed her photos of the trip "I have good photos of a lot more birds than I remembered, and tons of crocodiles!! Crocodile Dundee, and Steve Irwin were based out of Darwin."

POTENTIAL CHAPTER GIS TRAINING

Victoria (Tory) Elmore, the Audubon California Desert Advocate, is willing to come to Ridgecrest (or perhaps Weldon, it that's where all the interest is) to teach us how to use GIS, the online data and mapping system. Here is her description of that program:

"Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a powerful tool for visualizing and analyzing spatial data. Where are the best places to bird in my county? How will that new development impact a particular species? Which Congressmen should I contact about proposed legislation? What routes should our bird count cover? How best to monitor our nest boxes? These (and many more) are all questions that Audubon and its members are currently using GIS to answer.

"All you need is a computer, an email address, and an internet connection.

"Using ArcGIS Online, participants will learn how to

- Upload multiple data types, including eBird data, membership/donor mailing lists, habitat types, park boundaries, roads and traffic, congressional boundaries and more
- Add and change base maps and map symbols
- Run basic spatial analyses
- Create both interactive and printer-friendly web maps
- Develop simple data collection and mapping applications."

The class will likely be scheduled for late May, after all the April migration-based festivals and events have played out. Are you interested? If so, please notify Dan Burnett at 760-382-4934, or Brenda at 760-382-4935 and we will add your name to a list of possible attendees.

AUDUBON CALIFORNIA SUPPORTS PROPOSITION 68

THE CLEAN WATER AND SAFE PARKS ACT is a general obligation bond that invests \$4 billion in the coming years to address some of California's most important water, parks, and natural resource needs. The state legislature passed the California Clean Water and Safe Parks Act (SB5) with bipartisan support, and it will appear on the June statewide ballot as Proposition 68 (I think).

Audubon California and other environmental organizations worked with the legislature to get this act passed and on the ballot. **VOTE YES.**