



Friends of the Kern River Preserve

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 **Audubon** CALIFORNIA

Spring 2010

Audubon's mission is "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity."

MORE ALEXANDER RANCH PROTECTED – FINALLY

by Reed Tollefson

In December of 2009, Audubon was able to add another 106 acres to the Kern River Preserve. This new property is the second half of the Alexander Ranch and like the first part purchased in 2007, it has excellent riparian forest, native perennial grasslands, and areas suitable for restoration to floodplain scrub. Years ago, drier areas were cleared for the cultivation of hay, and here we intend to plant native shrubs including four-winged saltbush



This pond is on the border of the two Alexander parcels permanently protected from development in 2006 and 2009.

see Alexander page 2

FESTIVALS CELEBRATE NATURE'S DIVERSITY!

For the past sixteen years, Friends of the Kern River Preserve have sponsored and become the principle planners for four nature festivals each year. Here is a brief rundown of this year's festivals.

The 16th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival exhibits and activities will take place on Saturday May 1, 2010. Exhibits and workshop run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. An Ice Cream Social and Evening Program is offered with David Lukas author of the 2004 revised edition of "Sierra Nevada Natural History" beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the South Fork Women's Club. Field trips will run from April 29th through May 4th.

This year we are attempting online registration which is off to a slow start. See our Saturday activities on page 9 then visit our website to sign up for the paid events.

In June we celebrate California reptiles and amphibians. The Kern River Valley and nearby mountains have many amazing reptiles. Did you know Kern County has four species of rattlesnakes: Speckled, Mojave, Sidewinder and Western (which has three subspecies)! Herpetologists are really



A participant at the 2009 reptile festival is lost in thought to the fascinating world of birds.

see Festivals page 2

Calendar of Events

Check our website for special events!

KRP Friends meet 1st Friday of each month
- 1pm - 3pm at the Sprague House

KRP Work parties 3rd Saturday of each month
- 8 a.m. to Noon.

Saturday, April 3 – Stewardship Stroll

Saturday, April 17 – Trail Maintenance.

Saturday, April 24/25 - South Fork/Kelso
Butterfly Count weekend.

Thursday - Tuesday, April 29 - May 4
- KRVSNF Field Trips

Saturday, May 1 - Kern River Valley Spring
Nature Festival - keynote - exhibits

Saturday, June 5. Fire Safe Workshop.

Saturday, June 5 S. Sequoia Butterfly Count.

Saturday, June 12 - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
California Reptile Celebration.

Saturday, July 3 Geology Workshop.

Saturday, July 3/4 Sequoia Forest/
Monument Butterfly Counts.

Saturday, August 7 - 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Kern
Valley Hummingbird Celebration.

Saturday, September 18 - 7:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Kern Valley Pride Day.

Saturday, September 25 - 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Kern Valley Vulture Festival

Saturday, October 2 - Watercolor Workshop

Saturday, October 16 - Volunteer Workday.

Saturday, October 30 – KRP Friends Day

Saturday, November 20 – Volunteer
Workday

Saturday, December 4 KRP Potluck.

For more information or to
See our website: <http://kern.audubon.org> :
krpfriends@audubon.org

Friends of the Kern River Preserve



P.O. Box 833
 Weldon, CA 93283-0833
 email: krpfriends@audubon.org
 website: <http://kern.audubon.org>

The Kern River Preserve is managed by Audubon California for the preservation of one of California's largest contiguous cottonwood-willow riparian forests and the wildlife it supports.

The Friends of the Kern River Preserve is a membership organization that provides volunteer & financial support for outreach, education, wildlife habitat protection & stewardship. Your support is critical to the success of the Kern River Preserve. Please consider making a donation by filling out the membership form and mailing it to the Friends.

STAFF

PRESERVE MANAGER..... REED TOLLEFSON
 LAND STEWARD SEAN ROWE
 OUTREACH DIRECTOR ALISON SHEEHY
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... SANDRA WIESER
 OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION ASST DENIS DUNNING
 MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS..... JEFF KING

VOLUNTEERS

BIRD FEEDING COORDINATOR..... BIRDIE FOSTER
 FEEDERS: DARRELL BARNES, ELEANORE FAHEY, MARIA GARCIA,
 GORDON & CHRIS HANCOCK, CHLOE KENNEDY, MARTINE
 METZENHEIM, MARYA MILLER, BOB SHOWERS & GERRY
 TESSMAN

SPECIAL PROJECTS

BOB BARNES, VALERIE CASSITY, BILL FOSTER, MIKE GALLAGHER,
 RON GILLENLINE, CHARLOTTE GOODSON, TERRY HARRIS, BUZ
 LUNSFORD, KERNCREST AUDUBON SOCIETY, JULIE ROWE, JOHN
 SCHMITT, PAT SEAMOUNT

Alexander cont. from page 1

the host plant for our rare San Emigdio Blue Butterfly. On the native grasslands we will work with our neighboring ranch families to use grazing as a management tool.

We also captured the second half of a freshwater pond of which we acquired the first half in our first Alexander purchase. Since that time, our Turtle Team volunteers found this pond to be an important refuge for southern Pacific pond turtles, a species of special concern. The pond and the grasslands are also important to Tricolored and Kern Red-winged Blackbirds. The riparian forest on this property has majestic cottonwoods and willows that provide habitat for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (Federally



This male San Emigdio Blue butterfly was one of 42 seen on the preserve's restoration site during the 2008 butterfly count (more than anywhere else in the Kern Valley).

Endangered), Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo (State Endangered) and many other species of concern like Summer Tanagers, Vermilion Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler among many others.



Southern Pacific Pond Turtles (aka Western Pond Turtle) are well protected along the South Fork Kern River thanks to Audubon.

Preserve files regarding this property and going back as far as 1983 include letters of interest as well as an offer to purchase which the owners rejected. In the early 1990's some of the owners offered to sell at a mutually agreeable price but we could not raise the funds to make the purchase. After 27 years, we finally reached price agreement with the last of the owners and with the generous support of an anonymous donor were able to back up our offer. With this we were able to leverage additional funding to cover 10% of the land purchase plus \$30,000 to invest in our Preserve stewardship endowment from a mitigation project through the Center for Lands Management.

Audubon is most pleased that we have finally succeeded in protecting the entirety of this wonderful property. It is only with the support of our members that we are able to maintain our long term efforts at land protection, stewardship and outreach in the South Fork Kern River Valley. §

Festivals cont. from page 1

passionate about these little known and seldom encountered animals. Come on out and join Buz Lunsford and his crew from HerpEcology as they showcase the reptiles and amphibians of California on June 12th.

The Hummingbird Celebration is one of our most popular festivals and will be held this year on August 7th. Come see thousands of hummingbirds zipping around frantically boosting their energy during their annual trek southward. Six species of hummingbirds can be found feeding on the preserve's feeders in July and August; Anna's, Black-chinned, Rufous, Allen's, Costa's and Calliope. We'll have workshops on hummingbird feeding, identification, and hummingbird gardening.

Our last festival of the year celebrates the beauty of fall in the Kern River Valley and one of the west's most impressive phenomena: Turkey Vulture migration. The Fall Nature and Vulture Festival is scheduled for September 25. §



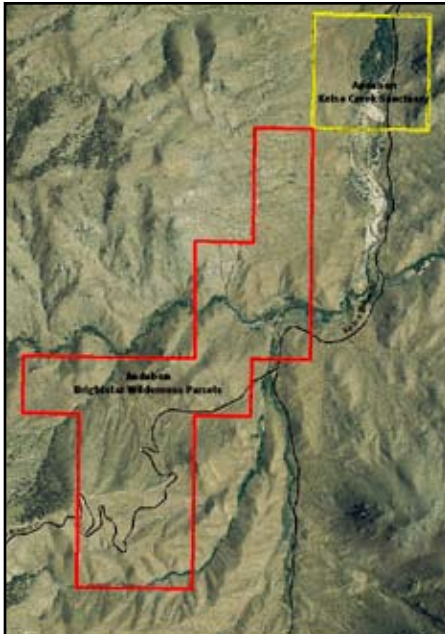
Dr. Jason Saleeby led a large group of geology enthusiasts during last year's Spring Nature Festival. Photo by Sandra Wieser

LAND PROTECTION

PROTECTING KELSO CREEK

by Reed Tollefson

In January, Audubon completed the purchase of the last two parcels needed to finalize the protection of 602 acres of riparian and desert habitat along Kelso Creek just upstream from our 156-acre Kelso Creek Sanctuary. It took a long time to close escrow but National Audubon's real estate and legal staff worked diligently to clear up problems and complete the purchase. This purchase was funded by a private donor that prefers to remain anonymous.



Audubon's Kelso Creek Sanctuary is adjacent to the BLM's Bright Star Wilderness. The new parcel's will be transferred into the wilderness. Map by Sean Rowe



Brown-crested Flycatchers reach the limit of their northwestern breeding range in the South Fork Valley.

We are currently working to transfer these parcels to the Bureau of Land Management where the land will never be developed but remain open to the public for non-motorized recreation. In fact, parcels north of Piute Mountain Road or about 75% of the land will be added to the adjoining Bright Star Wilderness Area.

Kelso Creek's north-south orientation makes it a very important migratory pathway for songbirds, raptors and bats as they

fly through this area on their annual migrations. The properties Audubon has protected have cottonwood/willow forest, Mojave Desert scrub and very nice Joshua tree woodlands. Brown-crested Flycatcher, Great Horned Owl, Scott's Oriole, Long-eared Owl, Ladder-backed Woodpecker and Pinyon Jay have been seen on the sanctuary along with many other species. Check out our

website for plant and bird lists from this and our other Kern Valley Sanctuaries

Find the remote Kelso Creek Sanctuary about 15-miles south of the Kern River Preserve on Kelso Valley Road. It is open to the public. However, the Sanctuary can be difficult to locate and there are no formal trails but there is a walk through gate and some paths to follow. Staff, volunteers and local birding guides bring groups through the area on tours, especially on their way out to Butterbred Springs or to see desert wildflowers in the spring.



Another 1/2 mile stretch of Kelso Creek is now protected from development in perpetuity.



Much of the Kelso Creek area falls within the Jawbone Butterbred ACEC.

The original Kelso Creek Sanctuary, purchased in 1999 will be retained by Audubon to continue to act as our focal point for further conservation work in the area. In fact, we are currently working to secure funding to protect several additional properties with outstanding qualities and

that would further enhance the overall protection of this important area. §

NEWS BRIEFS

STEWARDSHIP

Tricolored Blackbird Habitat Project

In order to provide habitat for the Tricolored Blackbird (a species of concern) staff have begun a new stewardship project on the preserve. An old canal was rehabilitated to provide water to the native marshland that had been converted to agriculture. Staff and volunteers planted mulefat, mugwort, wild rose, stinging nettle and



Staff & volunteers planted Tricolored Blackbird habitat this winter. L-R Sandra Wieser, Don Davis, Casey Davis, Ron Gillentine, Katy Harvey and Jill Davis. not pictured: Birdie Foster, Jeff King, Sean Rowe, Alison Sheehy, Reed Tollefson.

sandbar willow on January 16th and February 20th. The new plants are already starting to grow and we hope to see Tricolored Blackbirds occupying the area within the year. §

Green Job Training

Employers Training Resource sent four students from Bakersfield to the preserve to train with our Land Steward for four days in November. While Audubon provided some necessary training the crew helped remove fence, groom the nature trail and headquarters. We hope to provide more opportunities for interns looking to find out what green jobs are all about. §

High School Students Practice Stewardship



Student interns helped to complete a task that would have taken staff years to do. Photo by Sean Rowe.

Fifteen high school students from Bakersfield helped with several projects last July. They cleared the shaded fire break of brush surrounding the Kern River Preserve headquarters compound. In two mornings of work the students collected and hauled dozens of loads of woody debris

away from the KRP structures. This was crucial in protecting headquarters infrastructure from the threat of wildfires.

The students then removed 4,670 feet of old and no longer functional fencing. This is part of an ongoing project that is aimed at removing fences from natural areas on the preserve that no longer serve a useful purpose and can pose a significant hazard to wildlife as well as a barrier to their movements.

They also removed hundreds of feet of old irrigation line left over from former habitat restoration projects. Much of this material was still in good condition and will be reused on future projects.

Without the dedication and hard work of volunteers in programs such as those at Bakersfield area high schools, much needed work might go unfinished. It is always a pleasure to work with youth who are as motivated and hard working as these students proved to be. §

Student Conservation Association Cleans Up

Over the past five years Audubon has purchased several properties which have ranch-based dumps associated with them. This was common and accepted practice among ranchers – although in retrospect a poor choice. These eyesores have been



KRP staff and a team of Student Conservation Association interns picked up 8 tons of trash. Photo by Sean Rowe.

a project that many volunteers and staff have tackled. Through an amazing twist of fate we were able to secure the services of five very energetic people from the Student Conservation Association (SCA). From Friday through Sunday, January 22-24 this SCA crew along with our own Sean

Rowe and Katy Harvey helped to fill an entire roll-off dumpster with 16-thousand pounds of garbage.

The crew hauled off non-recyclables, recycled trash and assisted with some other preserve projects over the weekend. While they didn't finish clearing the dump they made a significant dent in ridding the preserve of this nuisance trash.

Audubon staff and volunteers have made great progress on these dumps since we purchased the property. Tons of steel has been recycled including wire, broken equipment, and appliance. Fertilizer, pesticides, used oils and hundreds of tires have been hauled to the appropriate waste facility. Open agricultural wells have been closed and fuel storage tanks have been removed. What was/is left is largely nuisance trash and plenty of it. We look to continue working with our staff and volunteers to finish up.

The SCA is a national, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. They are funded through cost-share agreements with their resource management partners, individual donors, foundations, and corporate sponsors. SCA provides college and high school-aged members with hands-on conservation service opportunities in virtually every field imaginable, from tracking grizzlies through the Tetons to restoring desert ecosystems and teaching environmental education at Washington, D.C.'s Urban Tree House. We thank our amazing SCA crew: Jamie, Allison, Daniel, Alexandra, and Chris for their hard work and hope they can return to help on a more fun project in the future. §



This ranch dump and others like it have been projects KRP staff and volunteers have worked on for years.

Restoration Site Improvement Project

In the next few months you might notice some changes around some of our park-like restoration sites. After 20 years of growth we are starting a project to improve the habitat with

the help of a generous grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Wetland Reserve Program. We are trying to create more diversity on the site and provide greater benefits to wildlife. This new project will require felling of a few trees with some chipped and others left to decay in place. Stumped trees will sprout creating denser understory. More light will help the remaining trees grow much larger. Other trees will be girdled and left as standing snags for woodpeckers and other cavity nesters. This should help provide more nesting habitat for many of the over 100-species of birds known to breed on the preserve. §



Straight rows of trees are pretty but not as attractive to wildlife as the more chaotic natural forest. Photo by Sandra Wieser

Wildlife Friendly Fencing

If you look around the preserve you might notice there is something missing or something new. For the past six months our Land Steward, Sean Rowe and his crew and volunteers have been removing old fences. Most of the fencing is not being replaced but where the fence is replaced, it has been replaced with wildlife friendly fencing. Deer are capable of jumping fences, but they occasionally get caught in barbed wire. The does and fawns crawl under fences but bucks with full racks have to jump over. In winter deer are at their weakest and become more vulnerable to being caught in the fences. Often the top strand is too high and fences obstruct daily and seasonal movements of wildlife. To remedy this, we applied for a grant to remove or rebuild most of the fences around the ever expanding preserve.



Sean Rowe & Jeff King string barbed wire on newly reconstructed exterior fencing.

Several deer crossings have been constructed of smooth posts. They have been placed in areas where deer are known to migrate through. To protect deer and other wildlife the top strand of barbed wire has been lowered and the spacing between the top two wires has been increased. The bottom wire is higher and strung with smooth wire. Staff and volunteers have removed 14,541 feet, rebuilt 5,335 feet and built 2,081 feet of fence. Over the next several years another 51,549 feet will be removed, rebuilt, modified, or built. This has all been possible because of a grant from the Wetlands Reserve Program of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). §

Bird and Wildlife Deathtraps - Open Vertical Pipes

by Reed Tollefson



View from inside an uncapped pipe revealed the terrible fate for a Northern Flicker and Side-blotched Lizard. Photo by Jeff King.

Open top vertical pipes are a hazard to birds, lizards, small mammals and other wildlife that get into these pipes and are unable to get out. Birds looking for nest cavities, animals escaping from predators or lizards just scampering into open pipes are frequently trapped. This leads to a miserable death from starvation and exposure, which is completely unnecessary.

Last fall on a property adjacent to the Kern River Preserve, a 20 foot tall by 8 inch diameter vent tube on an abandoned irrigation system rusted and fell over. When Audubon stewardship staff picked up the pipe they were shocked to find inside a 7 foot long, black mass composed entirely of decomposed carcasses of hundreds of dead birds and animals including kestrels, flickers, bluebirds and fence lizards. The date etched into the concrete at the base of this vent pipe showed that it had been in place for over 50 years. All that time animals had been silently suffering and dying in this trap as unsuspecting people went about their business nearby.

After learning about this problem, Kern River Preserve staff started seeing open topped pipes all over the landscape on our Preserve and on neighboring lands. We were disgusted by the senseless loss of life in pipes as small as 1 inch and up to 10 inches in diameter. We immediately began to remove, cap or screen open topped pipes found on our preserve as well as neighboring properties – there is still a lot of work to do.



The remains of hundreds of birds and other wildlife from one pipe. Photo by Jeff King.

Please look around and you will find open top vertical pipes on signs, fence posts, survey markers, buildings and irrigation systems. All responsible landowners should cap, close, remove or screen all open topped pipes on their property. §

Solar and Wind Energy on the Preserve

Thanks to a generous donation from the Wilderness Land Trust of equipment; the preserve installed a wind-powered



Reed Tollefson & Sean Rowe discuss livestock exclusion zones next to the new solar pump on a wildlife pond.

water pump in the Palmer pasture. Last summer that organization purchased an in-holding in the Owens Peak Wilderness Area. They had to dismantle the structures on the property so it could be included in the wilderness. The preserve happily accepted several of the items removed from the property: a solar pump and panels, a windmill, several gates, and various other

ranch items.

We plan on installing the solar pump on the Sprague Restoration site this spring. This new pump will provide water to the various restoration projects and the turtle headstart project on KRP's Sprague addition.

Last summer two additional solar pumps, panels and a holding tank were purchased with a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service - Partners for Wildlife Program in order to provide water to wildlife. One of the new pumps replaced a dirty gas powered pump that filled a small pond in the Palmer restoration site. §

Southern Sierra Partnership – Conservation Action Planning

For the past year staff of the Kern River Preserve has been working with many conservation partners trying to figure out how to respond to the usual threats to wildlands along with the compounding effects of global climate change. As with any shift



Bartolas Country is in Kern County on the Kern Plateau. This southernmost conifer forest is likely to shift toward a dryer habitat type as global climate change disrupts the normal pattern of rainfall and temperature.

in the natural environment, climate change may cause species' reductions or increases in range, breeding success, and total population size. There are two teams working on mapping threats in the Southern Sierra from Fresno County down to the Tehachapi's. The teams are working to use climate change models and predictions to revise conservation action plans for the Southern Sierra Nevada.

The impacts of immense wind and solar energy developments and other emerging conservation issues in the region are also being considered. This effort will attempt to set precedents for conservation planning and is supported by a grant from

a philanthropic foundation. Participants of the Southern Sierra partnership include Audubon California, The Nature Conservancy, Tejon Ranch Conservancy, Sierra Business Council and Sequoia Riverlands Trust as well as several government agencies. §

Restoration on KRPs Sprague Addition

Another year of plantings are planned on KRP's Sprague addition upland restoration site. This experimental project is trying different methods of restoring desert vegetation. There are also riparian and marshland restoration projects ongoing. Restoration projects are done with plants found only within the South Fork Valley in order to keep the genetic purity of the region. Why, because many plants even within Kern County, evolve to grow in specific soils, or within the microclimates of the South Fork Valley.

Each season; our land steward team have been gathering seed from Kern River Preserve native plants including four-winged saltbush, Joshua tree, silver cholla, beavertail, Jimsonweed, Calabazilla, narrowleaf goldenbush, Fremont cottonwood, red willow, sandbar willow, mulefat, mugwort, wild rose. and Acton's encelia.

The Kern River Preserve was one of the first large scale restoration efforts and pioneered many of the planting methods. These efforts are now emulated throughout the country and we hope to develop all types of restoration methods as lands that have been denuded are restored to their native glory. §



Much of the land along Fay Creek is a mix of desert plants. Our upland restoration project should help desert wildlife reoccupy the land.

OUTREACH

Monthly Nature Explorations

Thanks to Chana Cortez we resumed the monthly nature explorations last year. The Friends of the Kern River Preserve holds their free monthly family nature programs on the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. -11 a.m. outdoors at the Kern River Preserve headquarters.

Monthly events are free and most are appropriate for ages 5 and up. All interested persons (children are welcome but those under 14 must be accompanied by an adult). Here is the schedule.

Saturday, April 3 – Restoration Techniques – Reed Tollefson.



Walter Mecham demonstrated cowboy horse training techniques during our December program.

Learn how the Kern River Preserve restores forests and uplands. (hiking along a flat trail)

Saturday, May 1 - 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.– Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival

Saturday, June 5 –Proper Fire Clearance by the Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council

Saturday, July 3 – Kern River Valley Geology – Ernie Anderson

Saturday, August 7 - 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Kern Valley Hummingbird Celebration

Saturday, September 4 – Southern Pacific Pond Turtle – Darrell Barnes. Learn about the preserve’s efforts to help head-

start this native species of concern.

Saturday, October 2 - Plein Air (in the open air) Watercolor Workshop (for adults only) - Learn how to paint in the field with Pat Seamount - for plein air painting bring watercolor paper, paints, brushes, water, a cup, towel, trash bag, and field chair. Tips: 1. Wear neutral colored clothing (creams, beiges) rather than white or bright colors so they don’t reflect onto your painting. 2. Bring a camera to record the scene in case you need to finish the painting after you leave the field site. (minimal walking)

Saturday, November 6 - History, culture and language of the Tubatulabal

Saturday, December 4 - Geocaching – How to use GPS and the game of geocaching

Dress for the weather including a hat, long sleeves, shoes, and or a coat. All activities will be outdoors so, don’t forget water, sunscreen and bug spray. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy at the preserve after the program if you like. There are picnic tables and port-a-potties. NOTE: The preserve is a pack in/pack out facility. There is no potable water or garbage facilities available.

For more information on Monthly Events call (760) 378-2029. Kids 14 and under must be accompanied by an adult. If you are bringing a group of 10 or more, please RSVP. §

California eBird Do You eBird?

For those of you with computers, a fun and comprehensive way to help science and keep track of your own sightings is to use eBird. What is eBird? It is a real-time, online checklist program, eBird is revolutionizing the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National



Audubon Society, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution. It might seem rather bothersome at first to keep track of sightings on more than just a short list, but when you see your life list broken down by site, city, county, state, region and country it becomes really useful! You can also use ebird to find out about what is expected in an area and what is extremely uncommon. Your records of sightings are exceptionally important to fill in the blanks and show the whole picture of bird diversity.

The Kern River Preserve has many subsets listed on ebird as hotspots. You can find out what birds have been seen in the South Fork Valley by exploring the ebird data. It is a great way to add your data to the scientific record and to keep track of your life list!

Find ebird at <http://ebird.org> and for California birding only go to <http://ebird.org/content/ca> §

Spring Migration

Spring migration in the southern Sierra Nevada begins in February and peaks around the third week in May. It is a busy time of year... the hills green, the birds sing, the wildflowers pop and bless the earth with a palate of amazing color. Here are some neotropical migrants that appear each spring along with their recorded arrival date range.

- Yellow-billed Cuckoo - May 22 – Jun 9
- Vaux's Swift - Apr 14
- Black-chinned Hummingbird - Mar 19 - Apr 16
- Rufous Hummingbird - Feb 19 - Mar 23
- Willow Flycatcher –May 12-16
- Dusky Flycatcher –Apr 10-20
- Gray Flycatcher –Apr 8-19
- Vermilion Flycatcher –Mar 26- Apr 3
- Ash-throated Flycatcher –Apr 10-17
- Western Kingbird - Mar 16-26
- Cassin's Vireo –Apr 8-10
- Warbling Vireo –Apr 6-18
- Tree Swallow - Feb 14 – Mar 01
- House Wren –Mar 18-27
- Orange-crowned Warbler - Mar 29 – Apr 4
- Nashville Warbler – Apr 10-17
- Yellow Warbler - Mar 30 – Apr 15
- Black-throated Gray Warbler –Apr 2-17
- Common Yellowthroat - Mar 23 - Apr 3
- Wilson's Warbler –Mar 31 – Apr 17
- Summer Tanager - Apr 26 – May 4
- Western Tanager - Apr 18
- Brewer's Sparrow –Mar 30 - Apr 15



Black-chinned Hummingbird



Willow Flycatcher



Vermilion Flycatcher



House Wren



Yellow Warbler

- Black-headed Grosbeak –Apr 3-13
- Blue Grosbeak –Apr 15-21
- Lazuli Bunting –Apr 10-19
- Hooded Oriole –Mar 23 - Apr 3
- Bullock's Oriole –Mar 19-28
- Scott's Oriole –Feb 17-24
- Lawrence's Goldfinch - Feb 16 –Mar 24



Read our next article to see how you can help these migrants return to the preserve each year.

Bird Friendly Coffee

Each year we anxiously await the return of our feathered friends from their winter homes in Central and South America with growing concern. While Audubon and our partners are doing an amazing job of protecting habitat from all types of threats in North America, trouble keeps brewing for birds in the tropics. As you sip your morning coffee, consider the fact that acres of tropical forest will be lost in the time it takes you to drink just one cup. But we can't do anything about what goes on in those countries or can we?



Western Tanagers migrate through the preserve by the thousands. They winter throughout Central America and benefit from shade -grown coffee plantations.

Each morning as we struggle to awaken, many of us crave our morning cup of coffee, cocoa or tea. Our addiction to these amazing substances is threatening the very existence of all neotropical migrants. A birder and Friend of the Kern River Preserve, Frank Gibson related his experience in Central America. While traveling through Costa Rica and Nicaragua; he was disturbed by the absence of birds in the manipulated coffee plantations and was overjoyed at the discovery of many birds in the shade-grown plantations.

You can help the birds by buying only certified shade-grown coffee. There are multiple benefits to doing this and it is not just for the birds. One is your health, certified shade-grown coffee is grown organically which means no chemical contaminants to worry about.

Two is for the health of the tropical community where it is grown; shade-grown coffee is part of the fair trade movement. The Fair Trade community pays people a fair wage making for healthy communities.

Third and last is to benefit the birds. The term shade-grown is not a legal term so can be used as a marketing ploy by disreputable companies. Kenn Kaufman told us that the only way to be sure

is to buy from certified growers. For information on where to find certified shade-grown coffees check out the Migratory Bird Center at the Smithsonian Institute website. <http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/> §

Will El Nino Provide a Great Spring Wildflower Season?

Spring is a blessing filled with all kinds of joy. Join us for a walk on Sunday March 21st at 8 a.m. California wildflowers are one of the most spectacular miracles of spring. We are looking forward to another amazing display of flowers and hope to share their discovery with old friends and new.



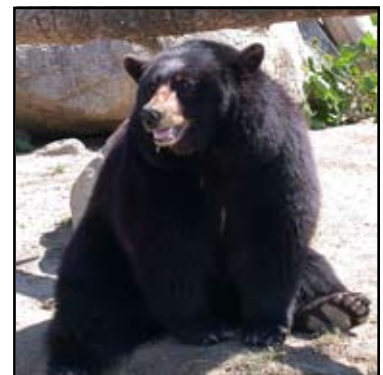
Will the wildflowers of 2010 be anything like 2005? The preserve will sponsor wildflower walks if the season proves to be as good as it looks like it might! Watch for last minute announcements of wildflower trips via our e-newsletter and on our webpage.

The track along the South Fork Kern River starting at the Sierra Way bridge - "Migrant Corner" can have a diverse mix of annual wildflowers Here are some to name but a few thistle sage, red maids, popcorn flower, brown-eyed primrose, fiddleneck, owl's clover, California poppy, cream cups, floriferous monkeyflower, and lacy phacelia. §

Wildlife Encounters on the Kern River Preserve - American Black Bear

by Reed Tollefson

On November 10, while doing stewardship work on Audubon's Sprague Addition Sean Rowe and Jeff King saw this black bear ambling through the fields. It was moving from the riparian forest along the South Fork Valley toward Fay Canyon which leads up to the Kern Plateau. This helps to shows how protecting the river forest and connections to the surrounding public lands allows wildlife to move



American Black Bear live around and amongst us. Learning to wildlife proof your homes helps all wildlife live in peace with humans.

through this area.

Protecting wildlife movement corridors within the Southern Sierra Nevada will help wildlife meet their daily needs as well as improve their ability to respond to the stresses caused by future development and climate change.

Black bear are known to wake up during their winter sleep and move around but it is likely that this bear is heading to a place to resume its winter rest. From tracks and scat, we know that bears are common on the Kern River Preserve in the spring, summer and fall but they are very shy of people and seldom seen. §

Celebrating our Friends

A great year of fun and accomplishments was capped off at our annual Friends of the Kern River Preserve holiday potluck. In early December, 46 members of KRP Friends joined in the celebration. The amazing talents of our friends was shared with great food with this year's slide showing showcasing 5 slides from each of our guests year of activities! We appreciate all of the Friends of the Kern River Preserve so much, we hope for another successful year



Each year our friends gather to reminisce about the accomplishments of the past year. © Sandra Wieser

for volunteers and staff. Our donors keep the doors open so to speak while our volunteers have provided so much to the preserve over the past several years. Thanks go to some of our top volunteers including Birdie Foster, Bill Foster, Marya Miller, Darrell Barnes, Chris Hancock, Gordon Hancock, Don Davis, Jill Davis, Casey Davis, and Julie Rowe, §

Pond Turtle Headstart Project Update

The fifth year of the pond turtle project has begun. Even though we lack funding, our volunteers have committed to keeping the program going one more year. In summer 2009, 11 hatchlings were released back to the wild. Another 26 young are planned to be released this year and the 8 hatchlings from last year will be allowed to grown one more season before being released. Hatchlings are released when they reach 90 mm and 70 grams.



This hatchling was released into the pond in 2009 and should be released into the wild this spring.

With the grant over, last year the project went unfunded. A lot has been learned about the population of Southern Pacific Pond Turtles over the past four years but much more can be learned. Thanks go to the turtle team Bill & Birdie Foster, Gordon & Chris Hancock, Darrell & Marya Barnes and the final year's foster parent Jeff King. §

Geocaching on the Preserve

How many of you own a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) device? There is a fun treasure hunting game where people use GPS devices in a competitive nature as an excuse to get outside and enjoy nature. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share the experience online.



Recently some local geocachers asked if they could place some caches on the preserve in the public areas. A traditional cache is filled with swag (approximately 10 desirable items but of little value) and is hidden by the cache owner for other Geocachers to find. It is a Geocaching rule that if a finder takes something he will leave something. For many Geocachers the value in the cache lies in the search rather than in the value of the swag and they prefer to take nothing and leave nothing.

So if you want to play the game, search www.geocaching.com for birdland, birdland1 and birdland2 around these coordinates N 35° 40.323 W 118° 18.118. Be sure to sign the guestbook in the Visitor Center while you are here so we know how many people are playing the game. §

2009 South Fork School Visit

In November, the entire student body of South Fork Elementary School visited the preserve. While a small school, there were a total of 110 children plus teachers and chaperones. The donated binoculars in memory of Jim Clark were used by the entire 3rd /4th combo and 4th grade classes. Sandra Wieser led the kindergarten and 1st grade classes on a hike while Reed Tollefson took the 2nd and 3rd grade classes to another part of the preserve. We really enjoy this annual visit of our local school children and look forward to their visits more often once the new visitors' center is built. §



Third & fourth grade students learn how to use binoculars and how to identify birds.

Mammals of Audubon's Kern River Preserve

There are 49 species of mammals that have been found on the Kern River Preserve, yet few have been seen by visitors. Why? Because mammals are mostly nocturnal, meaning they are active at night. Below you will find 35 photos of species seen on the preserve. Missing species are among the 12 bats or 20 rodents that are found on the preserve.

What makes a mammal? There are two characteristics that are truly found only in mammals – fur and mammary (milk producing) glands. Some mammals lay eggs, some mammals fly, and some mammals are active during the day.

Look around and see which mammals you can see during the day... if you look in a mirror you will see a mammal every time. Look in the field as you enter the preserve... large non-native mammals browse on grass. Near dawn or dusk other mammals can be seen in the field as well. Some are large, some are medium sized, and some are very tiny.



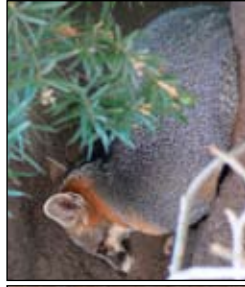
Virginia Opossum



Ornate Shrew



California Myotis



Gray Fox



Coyote



American Black Bear



Raccoon



Long-tailed Weasel



Badger



Spotted Skunk



Striped Skunk



Bobcat



Mountain Lion



Mule Deer



Cow



Merriam's Chipmunk



White-tailed Antelope Squirrel



California Ground Squirrel



Beaver



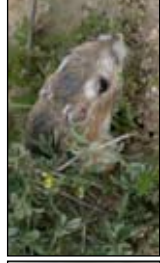
Botta's Pocket Gopher



Little Pocket Mouse



California Pocket Mouse



Panamint Kangaroo Rat



Pacific Kangaroo Rat



Desert Woodrat



Big-eared Woodrat



Southern Grasshopper Mouse



Deer Mouse



Brush Mouse



Pinyon Mouse



Western Harvest Mouse



California Vole



Brush Rabbit



Desert Cottontail



Black-tailed Jackrabbit

PHOTOS NOT TO SCALE

Not all species represented with photos



Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival

SCHEDULE OF FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY, May 1st

6am-1pm. SOUTH FORK VALLEY BIRDING. Fee: \$30
 6am-1pm. EASTERN SIERRA BIRDING. Fee: \$30
 6am-1pm. KERN RIVER VALLEY BIRDING. Fee: \$30
 6 am-1 pm. MOJAVE DESERT BIRDING. Fee: \$30
 9 am-3 pm. KERN VALLEY BUTTERFLIES. Fee: \$30
 9 am-11a.m. Kern River Preserve Bird Walk. FREE.
 9 am-11 a.m. Habitat Enhancements and Stewardship at the Kern River Preserve. FREE.
 10 am - 10:30 am. Southwestern Pond Turtle Headstart Program. FREE
 10 am-11:30 am. Musical Entertainment. DONATION
 10 am - 4 pm. Kern Valley Spring Nature Festival Postal Station
 10 am – 4 pm. Children’s Activities at the Kern River Preserve. Nature crafts, storytelling. FREE
 10am – 4 pm. Live Native Amphibians & Reptiles, Herp-Ecology. Kern River Preserve Headquarters. FREE (Donations welcome).
 10:30 am - 11 am. Bird Feeding Workshop. FREE
 11 am - noon. Native Plant Gardening Workshop. FREE
 11:30 am-1 pm. Musical Entertainment. DONATION
 Noon - 1 pm. Native American use of Native Plants. FREE
 1 pm - noon Basic Bird Identification. FREE
 1 pm-2:30 pm. Musical Entertainment. DONATION
 2 pm – 3 pm. Nature Walk. FREE
 2:30 pm-closing. Musical Entertainment. DONATION
 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm. - Ice Cream Social. Highlights of the 2010 Nature Festival: Bird Sightings
 PROGRAM: David Lukas - Author/Naturalist. \$10 for program only.

SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL FIELD TRIPS

Thursday April 29th through Tuesday May 1st – not all trips offered all days – check festival website for details. Most fee trips \$40 unless otherwise noted

THANK YOU DONORS & NEW MEMBERS

Since our last newsletter 204 people and organizations have generously sent in much needed donations. If your name is missing or misspelled please let us know. Your privacy matters, please let us know if you prefer to remain anonymous. Please notice your expiration date and renew so that the progress on the preserve can continue.

GOLDEN EAGLE (\$10,000+)
 The Estate of Colette Thorndike

SUMMER TANAGER (\$5000-\$9999)
 Renewable Resources Group

BLACK BEAR (\$2500-\$4999)
 Bob Barnes

FREMONT COTTONWOOD (\$1000-\$2499)
 Pomona Valley Audubon Society
 Lucy Clark in Memory of Johnny Clark
 Dan Walker & JoAnn Conard Estate of Robert Linden
 Margery Nicolson Daniel Portway
 Mel & Beverly Rubin Bob & Susan Steele

GRAY FOX (\$500-\$999)
 Kerncrest Audubon Society Aletha Benson
 Sarah & David Bottjer Frank Delfino
 Ernie & Nancy Flores Dave Kurdeka
 Candice Rogers Scott Rosenlieb
 Steve & Mary Ellen Spradlin Robert & Donna Tollefson

WILLOW FLYCATCHER (\$250-\$499)
 John Newman & Linda Adams
 Judy Colson & Richard Bruns Chana Cortez
 Bruce Terzes & Suzanne Eiseman Cal & Letty French
 Carol & Joseph Halterman
 Sid Tice & CleoBell Heiple-Tice Jane Hicks
 John Johnson

Bruce Garlinger & Denise LaBerteaux
 Martine & Richard Metzenheim Alden & Joan Nash
 Regina Phelps Erin Portway
 Gary Potter Maggie Seely
 Alan & Joan Woodman

GREAT BLUE HERON (\$100-\$249)
 Irene Adam Dana Adams
 Tom & Jeanne Anderson Atchison Propane
 Elizabeth Babcock Kathleen Barry
 Joyce Bartlett George & Judy Beaty
 Janet Beeler William Bouton
 Mimi Brown Geraldine Brown
 Howie Newman & Susan Cameron Camp James

Deane Campbell Debra Campbell-
 Wingerden Greg Campbell Eric
 Carson Jane Cassity
 Jim & Karen Clarke James & Judith Collier
 W. R. & Judith Ditzler Thomas Duque
 Gary M. File Bill & Birdie Foster
 Eleanor Fraser Jim & Sylvia Gallagher
 Catherine Gamble Tullio Giudici
 John McLeod Griffiss Chris Hargrove
 John Harris John & Hermi Hiatt
 Andy and Sasha Honig Susan Jayne Hotchkiss

Elgian Hurley in memory of Dona L. Hurley
 Howard King & Paul Klahr Arthur Langton
 Jack & Joan Lowe Alan McGie
 Michael McQuerrey Warren & Marge Minner
 Arthur & Jean Morley Linda Oberholtzer
 Dave Ogden Richard O'Neil
 Jeannette Papp Carol Paquette
 Chuck Peck Maria Polite

Michael & Alison Pollack	Catherine Rose	Mary Klinkel & Fred Heath	Blair & Katherine Jarrett
Ed Royce	Jim Royer	Ken & Brenda Kyle	Rex & Mary Mason
Thelma T. Royer	Jason & Zorka Saleeby	Darrell Barnes & Marya Miller	
Ross Schaefer		Jacqueline Morgan & Don Morrison	
Bob Lowe & Ellen Schafhauser		Debra & Kenneth Newton	Neil Nutter
Edward Valdez & Lynda Schafhauser		Martha Pickering O'Neal	Colleen Philips
Robert Schlising	Jeff Seay	Teresa & Gordon Pusser	Michael & Joanna Rindt
Sequoia Lodge	Carolyn & Jim Shepherd	John Scott	Melvin Sigman
Vern & Beaujourn Shull	Sarita Simone	Brenda Larison & Tom Smith	Barry & Lynne Thompson
James Smith		Lawrence Thompson	Marie Vester
Bob Gross & Holly Spohn-Gross	Richard Sproul	Roger Zachary	
Tehachapi Mountains Birding Club			
Geraldine Tessman	Cherry Trumbull	RACCOON (\$25-\$39)	
Peter Watkins	Bill & Juliette Wheeler	Michael Alda	Newton Bernstein
Elaine & Doug White	Phylene Wiggins	Betty Berteaux	Gordon Black
Deb & John Wilson	Rachel Woodard	Rebecca Jo Morales & Peter Bloom	
Cori Ong & Dawit Zeleke		Colleen Brun	Phil Heavin & Emily Cohen
		Jennie Cox	Mary Craig
		Bina Crowe	Uzi Daniel
BOBCAT (\$50-\$99)		Dave Fafarman	
Dorothea & Frank Anton	Lance Benner	Barbara J. Ferges in memory of Janet R. Fergus	
Todd & Betty Berens	Roy Bernhardt	Allen Franz	Marcella Freerks
Norfleet & Yvonne Blaine	Dorothy Bolt	Robert Frescura	Don & Janet Gallup
Ron & Ginnie Bottorff	Gene & Judy Breitenstein	Frank Gibson	Gordon & Chris Hancock
CNPS Bristlecone Chapter	Jim & Eleanor Campbell	Nancy Harris	Elizabeth Ann Heflin
Mark, Charlotte & Grant Campbell		John Hobson	Chloe Kennedy
Michael Carey	James Cehand	Michael Klinkenberg	
Cindy Jane Cobb	Robert Larkin Coon	Tom & Loretta Kolerich in memory of Janet R. Fergus	
Eunice Corn	Don & Jill Davis	Kim Kuska	David Kyser
Jim & Shirley Davis	Johanna Dawes	Carol Lair	Barbara Likens
Margo DeGrosse	Melissa DeGrosse	Jerry Ludeke	Carl Lundblad
Eileen Dietz	Eleanore Fahey	Billie Mangold	Alix Mayhew
Lisa Fimiani	Pauline Fong	Christine McGuire	Rod & Vicki Middleworth
Bugs & Joe Fontaine	Michael & Judith Golub	Richard & Grace Moore	Annette Morgan
Ron Harton	Alfred & Kitty Hill	Ellen Nichols	Carole J. Oliver
Jan Hintermeister	Kirsten Holmquist	Carol Painter in memory of Janet R. Fergus	
Herbert & Debra Holt	Susan Hunt	Gail Porter	Mary Prisson
Paul Johanson	Marilyn Jones, M.D.	Donna Rodriguez	Jeanette Rogers
Scott & Julia Jorgenson	Roy Kautz	Nicholas Roth	David Rutz
Linda Lancaster	Larry & Karen Lee	Ralph Sherman	Robin Shirley
Barbara Mansfield	Robert Meade	Bill Stacy	Theresa Stump
Mary Merriman	Jan Montgomery	Mark & Leila Sutherland	Georgette Theotig
Don Peterson	Jack & Cecilia Quinn	Megan Thomas	Patricia J. Turner
Bill & Barbara Reifel	Rochester Birding Assn.	Larry & Loris Van Hooser in memory of Janet R. Fergus	
Henry Selinger	Jack Shaw	V.T. Walhood	
Bob Showers	Tom & Kathy Stephens	Lawrence & Richard Wedeen	Janet Westbrook
Laura Stockton	Pamela Stones	Crispin Whittell	William & Jane Wittmann
Donald Storm	Richard Svihla	James & Jewelie Wolfe §	
Robert Sykes	Stephen & Michele Ting		
Art & Lorraine Unger	J. Giles Waines		
David & Deborah Warren	Peter White		
Gregg Wilkerson	Ann Williams		
Monica Wyatt			
CALIFORNIA QUAIL (Family) (\$40-\$49)			
Penelope & Arturo Andrade	Kenneth & Linda Back		
Viola Saima-Barklow & Ronald Barklow			
Michael Coltrin	George & Susan Danielson		
Claus & Connie Engelhardt			
Rick Kattelmann & Sally Gaines	Ellene & Noel Gravelle		

Let Your Legacy Live on at KRP - Endow the Long-term Protection of the Kern

A recent gift from the estate of Colette Thorndike was partially put into the long-term endowment fund with some of the funds helping to pay for long deferred maintenance. The buildings at the Kern River Preserve have been given a new lease on life by her generous gift.

What better place to leave a legacy for our planet than on the Kern River Preserve? A simple note in your will allow long-term



Friends of the Kern River Preserve
Membership / Renewal Application



Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Address: _____ Fax: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Email: _____ Check for change of address / email / information

Application for: New Member Renewal Gift In Memory
 _____ \$ 5,000 Summer Tanager _____ \$100 Great Blue Heron
 _____ \$ 2,500 Black Bear _____ \$50 Bobcat
 _____ \$ 1,000 Fremont Cottonwood _____ \$40 California Quail (Family)
 _____ \$ 500 Gray Fox _____ \$25 Raccoon
 _____ \$ 250 Willow Flycatcher _____ Total \$ _____

Anonymous Donation
 Web Newsletter Only
 Please Send Information on:
 Planned Giving / Bequests
 Volunteer Opportunities

All members in the Raccoon and above categories receive our newsletter. New members in the \$100 Great Blue Heron and above level are eligible to receive a KRP Friends T-shirt. Donations in the Gray Fox and above categories receive lifetime membership. Please be sure to indicate size if you WISH to receive a t-shirt. Extra T-shirts available for \$20 (\$15 members) plus \$5.00 shipping.

small ♦ medium ♦ large ♦ XL ♦ XXL (\$22 each)

Please make checks payable to : **NAS / KRP Friends**
 or donate online: <https://loon.audubon.org/payment/donate/CAKERN.html>

Mail to: *Friends of the Kern River Preserve* • P. O. Box 833 • Weldon, CA 93283-0833

V14 11

support for Outreach and Education, Land Protection, Research and Land Stewardship. It's easy! To help the Kern River Preserve protect this land in perpetuity, just have the following language added to your will:

"I bequeath \$ _____ (or _____% of my residuary estate) to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit environmental conservation organization, located at 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. This bequest shall be applied to Audubon's programs at the Kern River Preserve in the State of California."

Please consult an estate planner for legal advice. Planned giving is one of the most powerful ways for an individual or family to help create a lasting benefit for the wildlife, the land and the people who love this Preserve. §

ONLINE DONATIONS

Last year was an amazing year with many friends giving above and beyond their normal donations, this really helped as many friends missed the opportunity to support the preserve last year. We really thank all of our donors and hope those of you receiving this newsletter for the last time will renew. Did you know you can donate to the Kern River Preserve without using a stamp or writing a check? Our online donation page is found at: <https://loon.audubon.org/payment/donate/CAKERN.html>

Donations made online not only save time and paper; the funds are immediately credited to the Kern River Preserve's account. §

KRP WISH LIST - Volunteer Opportunities

Do you live in or visit the Kern River Valley? Would you like to help feed the birds, help plant and maintain the hummingbird garden, do special construction projects, or help with the trail projects?

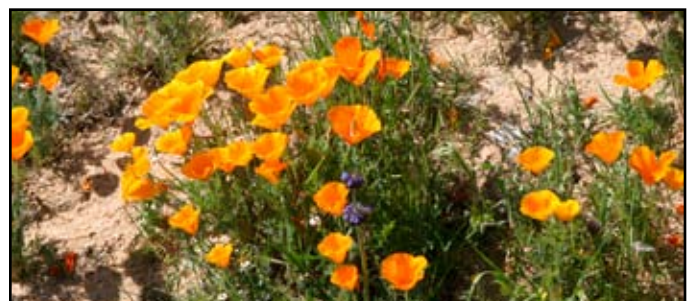
Contact Sean to volunteer - srowe@audubon.org §

CAN YOU HELP US?

We NEED a new tractor so we can mow our trail without threat of breakdowns and parts that cannot be found.

What we need is a Medium Farm Tractor, Category III with a 3-point hitch. We also need a flatbed Trailer suitable for hauling a tractor or automobile.

The staff is requested to attend many out of town meetings and needs an economy car for these travels. §





Audubon CALIFORNIA

Friends of the Kern River Preserve

P.O. Box 833
Weldon, CA 93283-0833

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BAKERSFIELD, CA
PERMIT NO. 110

**UPCOMING EVENTS...
DON'T MISS!**

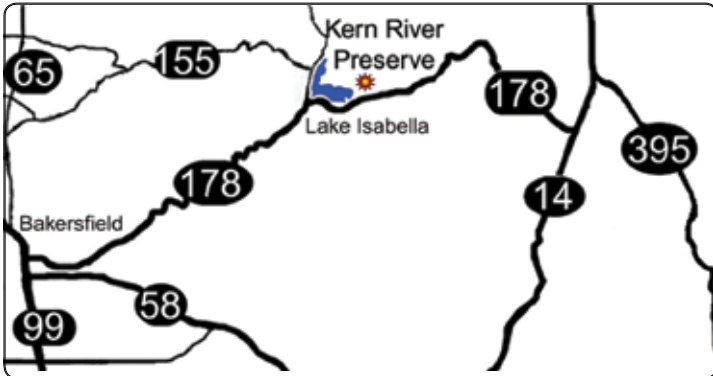
Every third Saturday work parties

April 3, 2010
Stewardship Stroll

April 24-25, 2010
South Fork/Kelso Valley Butterfly
Counts

May 1, 2010
Kern River Valley Spring
Nature Festival

Please note the date of expiration on your mailing label. If it says "exp" then this will be your last issue (if this is in error please contact us right away). We appreciate your support in the past and hope you consider renewing your membership soon. Thank you.



The Kern River Preserve is located 1.1 miles east of the intersection of State Highway 178 and Sierra Way in Weldon, Kern County, California.

Driving time from:

- Los Angeles 3.5 hours
- San Diego 5.5 hours
- San Francisco 6.5 hours
- Reno 7.5 hours

Current road conditions: 1 (800) 427-7623 [1 (800) gas-road]

For further information about the



Friends of the Kern River Preserve

Email: krpfriends@audubon.org
or visit our website:
<http://kern.audubon.org>

