



# Friends of the Kern River Preserve

Volume 11, Issue 2

 Audubon CALIFORNIA

Autumn 2007

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."

## VULTURE VOYEURS

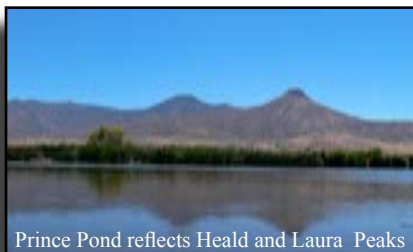
Soaring high above the brown hills of the Kern River Valley tiny black dots turn into hundreds black and silver visitors for a day or two. For thirteen years hundreds of volunteers have helped to celebrate the arrival of the vultures during their southbound migration.

Come join us at the Kern Valley Vulture Festival on September 28-30. On Friday night, Sept. 28, you can enjoy watching the vultures drop in during the first of three no-host dinners at Sierra Vista Restaurant while dining on their patio. See the full festival schedule as *see TV Fest page 2*



Thousands of vultures use the Kern River Valley as their migration corridor during fall.

## LEAVING A LEGACY FOR THE LAND



Prince Pond reflects Heald and Laura Peaks

The Kern River Preserve was recently named a beneficiary in the will of local artist, Robert Linden. Bob's bequest of over twenty-two thousand dollars is one of the largest gifts that we have ever received from an individual. He enjoyed

*see Legacy page 2*

## SEED: IT'S FOR THE BIRDS

Our bird feeding program isn't just for the birds, it really is for the humans who want an up close and personal experience when they visit the preserve. Every day, volunteers come by and fill our feeders. Birdie Foster is the coordinator and can be contacted if you would like to help buy feed or fill in for the scheduled people when emergencies or vacations call them away. call her at (760) 378-1902 or email: [1birdy@verizon.net](mailto:1birdy@verizon.net)

Sunday - Gerry Tessman



Birdie pours seed into one of the hanging feeders

*see Seed page 2*

## Calendar of Events

**Saturday - Sunday, September 28-30** - Kern Valley Turkey Vulture Festival, KRP

**Sunday - Tuesday, October 7-9:** Audubon Assembly at Asilomar - see [ca.audubon.org](http://ca.audubon.org) for details on how to sign up.

**Saturday, October 20** - 9 a.m. - Fall Clean Up - help spruce up headquarters.

**Saturday, - Sunday, October 27-28:** Annual KRP Friends Appreciation Weekend. For current members only RSVP.

**Saturday, November 10.** 9 a.m. - Fall Clean Up - Rake Leaves.

**Saturday, December 8.** 9 a.m. - Winter - Trail Maintenance.

**Sunday, December 30:** 30th Annual Kern River Valley CBC: Compiler, Alison Sheehey 760-378-2029.

**Saturday, January 5, 2008** - 17th Annual South Fork Valley Christmas Bird Count: Compiler Denise LaBerteaux. 760-378-4278

**Saturday, January 19, 2008.** 9 a.m. - Habitat Restoration - Greenhouse work.

**Saturday, February 16, 2008.** 9 a.m. - Habitat restoration

**Saturday, March 15, 2008.** 9 a.m. - Habitat restoration

**Saturday, April 19, 2008.** 8 a.m. - Spring Clean-up - spruce up headquarters.

**Wednesday - Tuesday, April 30 - May 6, 2008** Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival, Circle Park - Kernville, Kern River Preserve - Weldon

**Saturday, May 17, 2008** - 8 a.m. - Spring Cleaning. RSVP.

**Thursday-Sunday, June 26-29, 2008** North American Butterfly Association (NABA) Meeting, Kernville School, Kernville

For more information or to RSVP

See our [website: http://kern.audubon.org](http://kern.audubon.org)

email: [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org)

phone: (760) 378-3044

**Friends of the Kern River Preserve**



P.O. Box 833

Weldon, CA 93283-0833

email: [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto: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  
 OUTREACH COORDINATOR ..... ALISON SHEEHEY  
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... SANDRA WIESER  
 OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION ASST ..... DENIS DUNNING  
 MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS..... JEFF KING

**VOLUNTEERS**

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

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

BOB BARNES, BILL FOSTER, MIKE GALLAGHER, RON  
 GILLENLINE, CHARLOTTE GOODSON, BUZ LUNSFORD,  
 KERNCREST AUDUBON SOCIETY, JOHN SCHMITT, PATRICIA  
 SEAMOUNT

*Legacy cont. from page 1*

taking his beloved dog, Sophie, on walks along the Kern River while taking in the beauty of preserve's magnificent forest. As a former city person, Bob appreciated the uniqueness of our area and through his executor chose to help protect local open spaces. His legacy will live on while supporting Outreach and Education, Land Protection, Research and Land Stewardship at the Kern River Preserve. Our staff and volunteers will work to use this generous gift to the best of our ability to honor Bob and his love for wildlife and nature.

Is is easy to follow Bob's example and help the Kern River Preserve to protect this land in perpetuity. 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 at this Preserve. It is really simple to do: just add the following language 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.

If you have named Audubon Kern River Preserve as a beneficiary of a retirement account or life insurance policy,

be sure to include the following number when asked for the beneficiary's social security number or tax ID number: 13-162410. Please consult an estate planner for legal advise. All gifts are appreciated and will be used with gratitude

If you would like more information feel free to look at our webpage: [http://kern.audubon.org/KRP\\_legacy.htm](http://kern.audubon.org/KRP_legacy.htm) or if you have questions contact Alison Sheehey at: (760) 378-2029 or email: [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org) . §

*Seed cont. from page 1*



Five species of finches use the thistle feeders

- Monday - Birdie Foster
- Tuesday - Cloe Kennedy
- Wednesday - Bob Showers
- Thursday - Marya Miller & Darrell Barnes
- Friday - Chris & Gordon Hancock
- Saturday - Martine Metzenheim & Maria Garcia

Total volunteer hours per year = 730.  
 Here is the breakdown of what it cost to feed the KRP birds from 7-1-06 to 6-30-07:

- 685 pounds nyger seed \$659.25
- 119 cakes of suet \$101.51
- 850 pounds wild bird seed \$169.47
- 500 pounds chicken scratch \$78.77
- 75 pounds sugar \$32.07
- TOTAL: \$1041.07 + 100 pounds of sugar donated: \$63.76 . §

*TV Fest cont. from page 1*

of early September on page 7.

One aspect many people may notice missing this year is the vulture count. The brilliant count coordinator, Terri Gallion, has had some physical setbacks this year and is unable to coordinate the count. We would love to



Marya Miller will repeat her popular native plant workshop.

do an informal count in keeping the tradition alive, but with a twist. We would like everyone in the Kern River Valley to count their backyard roosts and send the data to us. If you notice vultures roosting in backyard trees or in public spaces in the Kern River Valley, send a note via email, with date, time, place, and number of vultures seen. The information will be posted on the Daily Vulture Summary page at: <http://kern.audubon.org/vulturewatch.htm>

For more information contact Kern Valley Festival Coordinator - Alison Sheehey at (760) 378-2029 or email: [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org) . §

## RESEARCH AROUND THE SOUTH FORK and BEYOND

Since the beginning of 2007 many researchers have been conducting studies on the Kern River Preserve or utilizing Audubon facilities as home base for investigations afield.



Southwestern Willow Flycatchers struggled this year with the drought.

Initial reports of the 2007 field season from our long-term partner the Southern Sierra Research Station on the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher have just been tabulated. As the season ended the results ended up being a mixture of good and bad news. The report from Carlie Hennemen, research associate, is that Willow Flycatcher numbers were at the lowest level since monitoring

began 17 years ago, with only 9 females and 13 males found on breeding territory. Nest parasitism and depredation rates were disturbingly high at 42% each. Even with this fact, the good news is that 8 out of 9 females were successful in fledging young, with an average of 1.44 young per female (which is not bad for a drought year). The long-term prognosis for this population remains a source of great concern for the Kern River Preserve and all of our partners.

In early spring graduate students from UC Santa Barbara conducted research on a genus of plants in the evening primrose family (*Clarkia*). They used the Sprague Ranch house as their base of operations, leaving in the wee hours of the morning and



PhD, candidate Alisa Hove measures the rate of photosynthesis in *Clarkia*.

returning well after dark. Two doctoral candidates, Alisa Hove and Brian Haggerty along with their advisor, Dr. Susan Mazer are interested in answer questions about the evolution of mating systems and the physiology of drought survival.

Another team from UC Berkeley conducted research at the Kern River Preserve on hummingbirds. PhD candidate, Chris Clark's dissertation looks to answer the question about how sound is produced by hummingbirds during territorial display flights. Some species of male hummingbirds produce a loud sound at the bottom of a dramatic dive when courting females or defending territory. The males with the most powerful dive and best sound are presumably judged to be superior choices for mates by amorous females. Meanwhile a heated debate rages in academic circles whether this sound is produced vocally or with specially modified tail feathers. Chris' initial results indicate that most of the California species do indeed produce the sound with their tail-feathers, (ed. note: unless of course they are cheating by vocally mimicking the sound from

a comfy perch until a suitable female is seen approaching and they have to get off their perch and do it the hard way).



PhD candidate, Chris Clark watches a male Black-chinned Hummer while Teresa Feo monitors the trap.



Cameras were placed in front of the cages to monitor social interaction of Lark Sparrows.

The final research team (outside of KRP Friends researchers) that benefitted from the environs of the Kern River Preserve was a behavioral experiment on Lark Sparrows

conducted by CSU Long Beach student, Ronald Treminio. He looked at the social interactions of different species of sparrows.

All research on the Kern River Preserve is important for multiple reasons. The most pressing need is to help direct habitat preservation and restoration efforts for the benefit of native species. §

## FRIENDS OF THE KERN RIVER PRESERVE MEETINGS

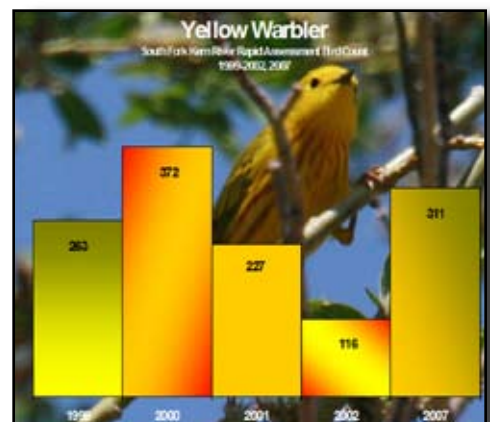
1st Friday of most months at 1 p.m.

We meet at the Sprague House to discuss projects, needs, and volunteer work assignments. Contact Birdie for information. Phone: 760-378-1902 or email: 1birdy@verizon.net. §

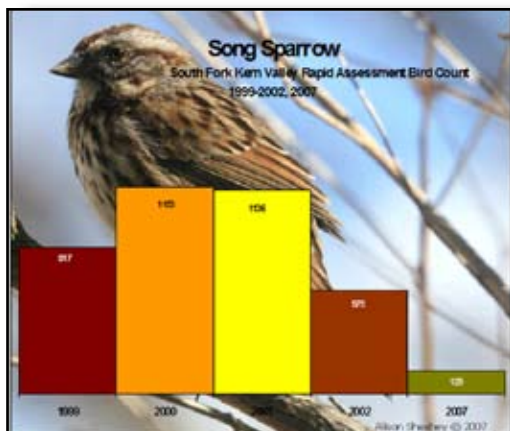
## RAPID ASSESSMENT BIRD COUNT

For four summers, from 1999 to 2002, Bob Barnes

organized a summer bird count to assess the breeding population along the South Fork Kern River. After a five year break, the bird count was held this year on July 7th. Bob's intention was to



run this survey every five years after the initial data collection period. The 8 teams of birders found 91 species and 3722 individuals within the boundaries of the preserve from the boundary with Onyx Ranch on the east and to the western boundary of the South Fork Wildlife Area by the reservoir.



This year's survey indicates that the numbers of most birds are down when compared to other years. Common bird populations throughout the nation are showing serious declines. What we wonder is if our numbers are aligned with this trend or if other factors caused the decline.

This has been one of the driest years on record in California with 50% of normal rainfall and only 26% of normal snowpack falling on Kern County and the Southern Sierra. Another factor in the low numbers of birds may have been fewer birders in the field and more limited territory covered than most years.

Overall the results show roughly a 50% downward trend in the populations of most species. Future census efforts might include two day censuses of the same territories or larger numbers of field participants. What is apparent is that this effort should be repeated next year to see if the trend is actually down and matching the downward trend of common bird numbers across the nation or if it is a statistical anomaly caused by the extreme drought. Tune in next year!

Thank you to Bob Barnes for organizing this important count and to the 14 field observers in 8 parties: Linda Anderson, Margaret Anderson, Bob Barnes, Wes Fritz, Sher Hollingsworth, Mark Holmgren, Bruce Kautz, Judy Kautz, Michael McQuerrey, David Pavlik, Roy Poucher, Alison Sheehy, John Schmitt, and Mary Whitfield. §

### AMERICA'S BIRDIEST INLAND COUNTY COMPETITION RECAP

For the fourth consecutive year, Kern County has won the America's Birdiest Inland County competition with 235 species of birds counted between April 26 and April 29th.. Kern County overall scored fourth place of the nineteen entries in species observed behind coastal counties Los Angeles, CA and Nueces County, TX and coastal city, Corpus Christi, TX.

The America's Birdiest Inland County competition has been held for five years. The rules for the first three years of the competition allowed individuals to submit their highest 24 consecutive hour species count within the scheduled 48 hour

count period. The 2003 winner of birdiest inland county was Cochise County, AZ. In 2004, Kern County won with 232 species. In 2005, Kern County won with 226 species. In 2006 the rules changed to where all species observed by any birder in the 72 consecutive hours scheduled for the effort were counted. Kern County birders observed 247 species in 2006. While the total species dropped this year, it is most likely a result of one of the driest years on record.



16 species of plovers and shorebirds were seen in Kern County during the 2007 America's Birdiest County competition.

Thanks to Bob Barnes for continuing to organize and compile this fun competition and thanks to Mike Wilson at Dauphin Island for taking over nationwide compiling duties this year.

2007 - Here are this year's California winners:

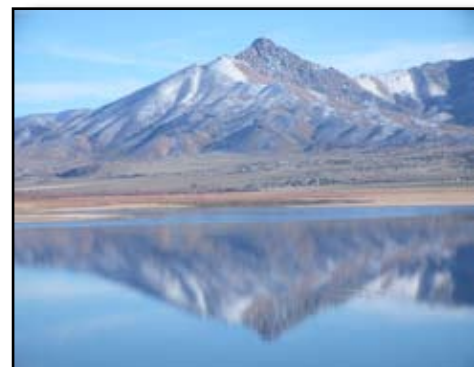
Category: Inland County West: Kern County CA- Number of species identified: 235

Category: Coastal County Pacific Coast: Los Angeles County CA- Number of species identified: 272 §

### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Can you believe another year has gone by and we are already thinking about Christmas Bird Counts? What is even more amazing is that we are celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Kern Valley Christmas Bird Count.

Come up and consider celebrating this momentous occasion with us on Sunday December 30th. Will the drought break by then? Will the Bald Eagles return like they have in



drought years past? Will it rain or be spectacular weather? Help answer these questions. Contact count compiler Alison Sheehy by email: [natureali@lightspeed.net](mailto:natureali@lightspeed.net), phone: 760-378-2029 or smoke signals "☁️". The compilation dinner will be prepared again by our chef, Ron Gillentine, but the dinner will be held at the Sprague Ranch house this year.

The following weekend the 17th Annual South Fork Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, January 5, 2008. Denise LaBerteaux compiles this count; which is always held on the last Saturday of the count period. Email: [eremico@aol.com](mailto:eremico@aol.com) or phone 760-378-4278, to RSVP for this count that covers most

of the Kern River Preserve.

For a complete listing of all California Christmas Counts, see <http://natureali.org/cbcs.htm>. §

### SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL recap

Even high gas prices and one of the worst droughts in recorded history couldn't keep hundreds of people away from enjoying the amazing biodiversity of the Kern River Valley. Bob Barnes did a yeoman's job of recruiting leaders for trips and filling them with visitors to the valley. We had so many out of state visitors and even a few out of country birders that they made up a sizable portion of the field trip quota.

The whole weekend was filled with workshops, trips, and dinners. The keynote speeches were well received with Fred Heath giving an in depth lesson on the area's butterflies and Alison Sheehey presenting the natural history of Kern County and the Southern Sierra. New volunteers helped with the dinner and throughout the festival. The 100+ volunteers are too numerous to list, but each and every one was integral to the success of our most elaborate festival of the year.

Join us next year as Bob Barnes and friends expand the field trip offerings to one full week and more fun activities are offered to bring environmental awareness and community pride to the Kern River Valley. §

### AMPHIBIAN & REPTILE CELEBRATION Recap

Buz Lunsford and his team of reptile rescuers from HerpEcology spent two days in July educating dozens of people about our native reptiles.

The non-profit organization Herp-Ecology along with its sister organization Reptile Rescue educate visitors with live native reptiles and amphibians. They also had information on exotic reptiles and how they negatively impact native wildlife.

Thanks to Buz Lunsford, Chris Lomax, and Tia Lomax for putting on another great festival. §



Jaden Lomax was thrilled to share one of his family's exotic tortoises.

### HUMMINGBIRD CELEBRATION recap

With hummingbirds whizzing around their heads, 219 people from around the world visited the Kern River Preserve on Saturday August 11th to celebrate the 9th Annual Kern Valley Hummingbird Celebration. The delighted throng learned how to photograph, feed, identify and garden for hummingbirds. A few even got to release newly banded hummingbirds after the researchers from UC Berkeley finished gathering data about the Kern River Preserve's hummingbirds.

Thanks go to Kern River Preserve volunteers: Darrell Barnes, Bob Bergeron, Chris Clark, Teresa Feo, Birdie Foster, Michael



Angela from the Marshall Islands waits for a newly banded hummingbird to fly away.

Gallagher, Chris Hancock, Gordon Hancock, Terry Harris, Marya Miller, Rob Robinson, Pat Seamount, Bob Steele, and Anand Varma. Thanks also to KRP staff: Sandra Wieser, Jeff King, Denis Dunning, Reed Tollefson, and Alison Sheehey. §

### CLEAN - U P S , PLANTINGS, etc...

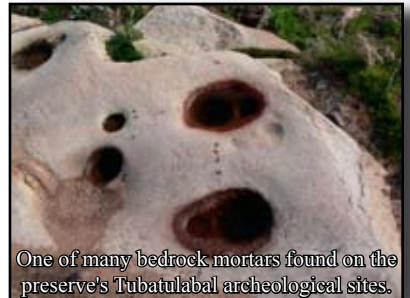
Each month we have scheduled activities for Friends of the Kern River Preserve to join. The preserve always needs help and our volunteers are critical to the success of many of our projects. Please check the calendar of events for upcoming activities and then let us know if you can help. Thanks! §

### E-ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interested in getting updates between newsletters? Please send a note to [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org). You will receive an occasional e-newsletter, festival update, or workday announcement. §

### HISTORY OF THE SOUTH FORK KERN

Although no calendars record how long the Kern Valley has been occupied, Native people have called this area home for up to 3,000 years. The South Fork Valley was historically occupied by the Pakhanapil (Tubatulabal), their relatives, the Palagawan lived along the banks of the North Fork and another related group the Bankalachi, lived around Poso Flat in the Greenhorns.



One of many bedrock mortars found on the preserve's Tubatulabal archeological sites.

There are three historic village sites on the Kern River Preserve that we monitor to protect from disturbance. The largest village site along Fay Creek was named Ytiamup and is located near the current Miranda Allotment which is the territory the government allows descendants of the original inhabitants to live on.

The Tubatulabal have an office and language school in Mountain Mesa, you can learn more about them via their website at: <http://www.tubatulabals.com>. The Nuui Cunni Cultural Center has information on Tubatulabals and other local native cultures that inhabited the area. They have a museum that is open to the public. Learn more about the center through their website: <http://www.nuucunni.org>. §

### TURTLE PROJECT update

Since our last newsletter, exciting progress has been made on establishing a headstart program for Kern Valley Southwestern

Pond Turtles. The turtle team finished building the enclosed ponds for rearing the hatchlings. After finishing



The turtle enclosure was finished in June

construction, the team immediately went to work trapping turtles, collecting data, and taking ten females to Dr. Jenkins, DVM, for x-rays to determine if they were gravid, unfortunately there were none with eggs. On July 6th, the team was surprised with a half dozen eggs laid by one of the females in the turtle enclosure.



It was a happy surprise to find these eggs carefully cradled by Chris Hancock...

Darrell Barnes took the eggs home and filled an incubator with a special mixture of vermiculite and a few drops of water. We hope to hear that he is a turtle dad any day now. The eggs take between 73-100 days to incubate. Females lay their eggs in June and July so no more eggs are expected this year.

The team continues to meet once or twice a week to work on the landscaping and maintaining the enclosure, collecting data from turtles and catching native fish to feed the turtles in the enclosure. This year they have trapped 115 turtles in the various ponds around the preserve. The ratio

of males to females is a normal 50/50 ratio. They happily report that they have also found a few juveniles in the ponds. While these juveniles appear to be several years old, it is an encouraging sign that some successful natural reproduction is still happening. The team will continue to census the turtles until November and then return in spring when the turtles come out of hibernation.

Thanks to the entire turtle team for their dedication. Co-leaders: Bill Foster and Darrell Barnes. Team members: Canyon Veterinary, Birdie Foster, Scott Frazer, Jake Heflin, Chris and Gordon Hancock, Thomas Jenkins, Jeff King, Dave Kurdeka, Marya Miller, Bob Showers and Reed Tollefson. §

### NEW BIRD BATH AT HEADQUARTERS

A few weeks ago, Chris and Gordon Hancock and Reed Tollefson installed a new bird drinking station next to the old light pole in the middle of the lawn. Lots of birds immediately took advantage of this resource. Although it only took about an hour to complete, little projects like these mean a whole lot to our furry and feathered friends. §

### UPLAND RESTORATION

Sandra Wieser and Jeff King have begun an upland restoration project on the Sprague Ranch. All summer they have been drip

irrigating a fallow ag field that has been planted with four-wing saltbush, silver cholla, Joshua tree, silver lupine and beavertail cactus. §

### CANS FOR CUCKOOS

Bring your recyclables to Thomas Recycling and donate the proceeds to the Kern River Preserve account. It can really add up and is very much appreciated. They are located at 2000 Chain Ave. in Lake Isabella (across from the fire station on Lake Isabella Blvd). They are open Tuesday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. §



Sandra Wieser weeds the new upland restoration site on the Sprague Ranch

### INVASIVE SPECIES ERADICATION

Staff of the Kern River Preserve and California Department of Fish & Game spent time every year trying to eradicate invasive weeds from the South Fork Kern River watershed.

#### GIANT CANE (*Arundo donax*)



Giant Cane looks a lot like bamboo

*Arundo donax* was introduced from the Mediterranean region of Europe to California in the 1820's for roofing material and erosion control. Additional plantings as an ornamental throughout the country have caused it to become naturalized along North America's fresh waterways.

Giant cane is in the grass family and can grow to 20 feet tall. While it superficially resembles bamboo, its stalks rarely exceed 1 inch in diameter.

The pale green leaves are 1-2 inches wide.

This plant is very invasive. It displaces native vegetation and wildlife and is highly flammable so should be removed as soon as it is found. When fires happen, giant cane acts as a "ladder" with tall flames that spread to vegetation and buildings.

Spreading by its rhizomatous roots rather than from seed, giant reed is not easy to remove or control once established. One method of control is to smother it with a tarp. Cut and remove all stems, then cover the entire area with a heavy, light excluding tarp throughout the entire year. This works by not allowing the plant to photosynthesize. Another method is to cut down tall mature plants and remove stalks. When emerging giant reed shoots reach 2-4 feet in height (shoots can grow as much as a foot a week) apply the herbicide, glyphosate, to the leaves. Depending on conditions in each area, more than one application may be necessary.

Ecologists have determined that the cut, regrow and spray technique is a cost-effective method to control and eventually eradicate giant reed. §



## 13th Annual Kern Valley Turkey Vulture Festival

Saturday and Sunday events at AUDUBON-CALIFORNIA'S Kern River Preserve, 18747 Hwy 178, Weldon, bird walks, demonstrations, workshops, exhibits, and children's activities. Visit the website for full trip description, last minute additions or changes to the schedule. [kern.audubon.org/tvfest.htm](http://kern.audubon.org/tvfest.htm)

Festival Headquarters at Audubon-California's Kern River Preserve - 18747 Highway 178 (Signed entrance on the north side of Hwy. 178 1.1 mile east of Sierra Way, 31 miles west of Hwy. 14, 57 miles east of Hwy. 99 in Bakersfield), Weldon, Kern County, California.

The festival offers many special vulture related activities plus special programs on Birding, Bird Research, Children's Activities, Kern River Preserve land preservation and restoration, Raptors, and Reptiles

### SCHEDULE OF FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES

RSVP for all fee-based birding trips to [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org) and then bring registration form and fee to give to your leader on the morning of the trip, make checks payable to KRVR-VultureFest. For reservation information for sequoia and kayaking trips - contact Mountain & River Adventures directly.

#### FRIDAY, September 28th

5pm-7pm Arrival of Vultures at Their Night Roost: Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon. The time of arrival and location varies, so plan to spend the full 2 hours. FREE.

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 5pm-8pm Vulture Drop-in and No Host Dinner at Sierra Vista Restaurant: 16575 Highway 178, Weldon, with a view of one of the premier vulture roost areas. Watch the drop-in while enjoying a great meal. Ask for their special vulture stew!

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 6 pm - 9:30 pm. Birding Field Trip - Vulture Drop In / Owling. Scheduled leader Michael McQuerrey. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon at 5:45pm for orientation and carpooling. Fee: \$20 per person. (\$15 for current Friends of KRP).

#### SATURDAY, September 29th

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 6am-3pm. Birding Field Trip - Fall Migration in the East Kern Desert. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon at 5:55am for the trek to one of Kern County's premier fall migration birding locations, Galileo Hill. Scheduled leader Michael McQuerrey. With the drought year, many natural desert oases are dry this year, so Galileo Hill should be filled with all kinds of migrants and vagrants, depending on time, the trip may include a stop at California City. Bring lunch, drinks, hat, sun screen, binoculars, 2-way radio, \$8 each for gas money to be given to your driver. Those in multi-passenger cars be prepared to drive, most driving on paved surfaces. Carpool. Trip Limit. Fee: \$45 per person. (\$40 for current Friends of KRP).

8am-9:30am. Bird Walk at the Kern River Preserve. This is a wonderful introduction to birding and bird feeding. Viewing of the Preserve's hummingbird and seed feeders. FREE.

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 8am-10am. Vulture Lift-off and No Host Breakfast at Sierra Vista Restaurant: 16575 Highway 178, Weldon... for the vultures they will be serving Road Kill Quiche and Compost Fruit Salad (humans get fresh ingredients!) Watch the Turkey Vulture Lift Off from the restaurant's patio. The vultures normally leave before 10am.

8am-9:30am. Turkey Vulture Lift Off. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon. Proceed by foot or carpool to vicinity of Friday night's roost site. The vultures normally leave before 10am. FREE.

8:30am-noon. Field Trip - Nature Observation of Lake Isabella by Kayak with Mountain & River Adventures. Minimum group size is 4: Includes snack, equipment and instruction. \$49.44 per person. Contact MRA to RSVP. (800) 861-6553. Trip leaves from MRA: 11113 Kernville Rd., Kernville.

9am-2pm. Field Trip - Trail of One Hundred Giants - trip to the Giant Sequoia National Monument with Mountain & River Adventures. \$49.44 per person, includes lunch. Contact MRA to RSVP. (800) 861-6553. Trip leaves from MRA: 11113 Kernville Rd., Kernville.

9am-4pm. Information Booths, Educational & Interactive Exhibits. Live hawks & owls, lizards & snakes!!! Displays of vultures, bird nests and eggs, condors, and local wildlife & plants. Kern River Preserve. FREE.

9am-4pm. U.S. Postal Service Turkey Vulture Cancellation: visit local Postmaster, Steve Kenton who will be on hand to sell specially stamped envelopes with Turkey Vulture Festival cancellation for collectors or personal use up to thirty days will be available at the information booth at cost.

9am-4pm. Snakes & Lizards of the Kern River Valley. Visit with Herp-Ecology as they share some of the live, native snakes & lizards of the KRV. FREE.

10am-11:30am. Bird Walk at the Kern River Preserve. This is a wonderful introduction to birding and bird feeding. Viewing of the Preserve's hummingbird and seed feeders. FREE.

10am-noon. LIVE MUSIC with Archie Logsdon, folksinger and environmental activist. FREE.

10am-4pm. Children's Activities (Nature Crafts, Story Times w. Charlotte Goodson & Friends). Kern River Preserve, Weldon. FREE. DONATION.

NOON-2pm. LIVE MUSIC from Pat Seamount, Mike Gallagher and Terry Harris with "Out of the Blue" Bring your folding chair or blanket and picnic lunch to enjoy this talented trio. FREE.

12:30pm-1pm. Gardening with Native Plants Workshop. Marya Miller, local columnist, CNPS member and Friend of the Kern River Preserve, will present a workshop on fall gardening with natives. FREE

1pm-3pm. WORKSHOPS: TBD

2pm-4pm. LIVE MUSIC Rob Robinson, Jackie Smith, & Bob Bergeron of "Rob's Pipers and Carrion Luggage." FREE.

5pm-7pm. Arrival of Turkey Vultures at Their Night Roost. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon. The time of arrival and location varies, so plan to spend the full 2 hours. FREE.

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 5pm-8pm Vulture Drop-in and No Host Dinner

at Sierra Vista Restaurant: 16575 Highway 178, Weldon, with a view of one of the premier vulture roost areas. Watch the drop-in while enjoying a great meal. Ask for their special vulture stew!

NEW IN 2007!!! 6 pm - 9:30 pm. Birding Field Trip - Vulture Drop In / Owling. Scheduled leader Michael McQuerrey. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon at 5:45pm for orientation and carpooling. Fee: \$20 per person. (\$15 for current Friends of KRP).

**SUNDAY, September 30th**

**FIELD TRIP DAY**

6am-3pm. Birding Field Trip - Fall Migration in the East Kern Desert. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon at 5:55am. Scheduled leader Michael McQuerrey. Galileo Hill should be filled with all kinds of migrants and vagrants. Bring lunch, drinks, hat, sun screen, binoculars, 2-way radio, \$8 each for gas money to be given to your driver. Those in multi-passenger cars be prepared to drive, most driving on paved surfaces. Carpool. Trip Limit. Fee: \$45 per person. (\$40 for current Friends of KRP).

7am-2pm. Birding Field Trip - Kern River Valley with Emphasis on Raptors. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon, at 6:55am. Scheduled Leader: John Schmitt, internationally known raptor expert. Study of Turkey Vultures included. Bring lunch, drinks, hat, sun screen, enthusiasm, binoculars, \$6 each for gas money to be given to your driver. Carpool. Trip Limit. Fee: \$45 per person. (\$40 for current members of Friends of KRP).

7am-3pm. Nature Field Trip - Natural History of the Kern River Valley. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon, at 6:55am. Local naturalist Alison Sheehey will introduce you to the region. Learn the about wildlife, plants, Indigenous cultures and the geological history of the region. Travel around the valley with stops at local hotspots, small hikes are part of the trip. Bring lunch, drinks, hat, sun screen, enthusiasm, binoculars, (field guides, scopes if you have them), \$6 each for gas money for drivers. Carpool. Trip Limit. Fee: \$40 per person. (\$35 for current Friends of KRP).

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 8am-10am. Turkey Vulture Lift-off and No Host Breakfast at Sierra Vista Restaurant. See Saturday's description.

8:30am-noon. Field Trip - Nature Observation of Lake Isabella by Kayak with Mountain & River Adventures. See Saturday's trip description.

9am-2pm. Field Trip - Trail of One Hundred Giants - trip to the Giant Sequoia National Monument with Mountain & River Adventures. See Saturday's trip description.

5pm-7pm. Arrival of Turkey Vultures at Their Night Roost. Meet at the Kern River Preserve, Weldon. The time of arrival and location varies, so plan to spend the full 2 hours. FREE.

**NEW IN 2007!!!** 5pm-8pm Vulture Drop-in and No Host Dinner at Sierra Vista Restaurant: see Saturday's description

**TURKEY VULTURE FESTIVAL GENERAL INFO**

This year's TURKEY VULTURE FESTIVAL features Sunday Kern River Valley and Southern Sierra Nevada birding and natural history field trips.

The Kern Valley Turkey Vulture Festival is sponsored by: Audubon-California, Friends of the Kern River Preserve, Kern River Valley Revitalization, Southern Sierra Research Station and TLH.

Friends of the Kern River Preserve: Darrell Barnes, Denis Dunning, Birdie Foster, Bill Foster, Gordon Hancock, Christine Hancock,

Jeff King, Marya Miller, Sandra Wieser

Exhibitors: Friends of the Kern River Preserve, BLM, CNPS, Charlotte Goodson's Children's Activities, FACT, Friends of the Hatchery-DFG, Herp Ecology, Kern Audubon Society, Kern River Parkway Foundation, KV Solar Supply, Lake Design, Mojave Desert Resource and Conservation District, Mountain & River Adventures, Sequoia ForestKeepers, Sequoia National Forest, US Postal Service, WindWolves Preserve

**FIELD TRIP AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITY INFORMATION**

Weather in the Kern River Valley in late September and early October is usually spectacular (sunny, 65-80 degrees F daytime highs), but it can be variable. For your comfort, we suggest bringing water, snacks, a hat, sun screen, insect repellent, jacket for cool weather, and sturdy shoes (waterproof boots may be handy in riparian areas).

Field Trip & Workshop Leaders - Charlotte Goodson, Buz Lunsford, Michael McQuerrey, John Schmitt, Alison Sheehey, Reed Tollefson.

Field Trips: Carpooling is encouraged - be sure to start the day with a full tank of gas before heading out! Participants on long field trips should pack a lunch and drinks for the day. All field trips held rain or shine.

NOTE: Be advised that field trip leaders for indicated trips may change due to Festival and volunteer leaders' needs. Please choose trips based on trip description. You will almost certainly get the field trip leader of your choice, but there is no 100% guarantee.

Fees/Registration - Although no one will be turned away, there is minimum suggested \$10.00 registration fee per adult for the Kern River Valley Turkey Vulture Festival, there is a festival donation box at the Kern River Preserve booth. There is no additional fee for the exhibit area, speakers/forums, and nature walks or workshops, but the Sunday field trips are mostly fee based and require an additional fee. All fee activities are limited to twenty or less participants...usually ten to fifteen. Fill out and then, bring the registration form below and fees to pay your leader. Please email your request for your preferred trip ASAP to hold your space. All fees go to support the Festival and are not refundable.

Make Checks Payable to: "KRVR-Vulture Fest"

**Schedule of Events:** Check the website for changes or additional events between now and the Kern Valley Turkey Vulture Festival weekend. Website: <http://kern.audubon.org/tvfest.htm>

Email: [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org)

NAME(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip +4: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEE FIELD TRIP**

First Choice Trip: # People \_\_\_\_\_  
Second Choice Trip: # People \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Trip Fees: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TV Festival T-shirt - &15 each (\$5 shipping) - please circle size - S M L XL XXL  
# t-shirts x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Festival Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## PROTECT CONDORS AND PEOPLE FROM LEAD BULLETS

by Reed Tollefson - "originally published in the Bakersfield Californian. August 26th."

The California Fish and Game Commission had the opportunity to pass a landmark regulatory action on Monday, (August 27th, ed.) to ban lead ammunition in condor habitat areas. Banning lead ammunition will have little economic



California Condor

effect on the average hunter, but will have a dramatic impact on the continued survival of California's condors and other wildlife.

The rebirth of the California Condor is one of California's most exciting species restoration success stories. Often weighing up to 20 pounds with a wingspan of more than nine feet, the California Condor is an ecological treasure worth saving.

In the mid-1980s, condors teetered on the brink of extinction largely due to lead poisoning. But thanks to the efforts of a broad coalition of people, today there are more than 270 free flying and captive Condors. However, the California Condor is far from safe.

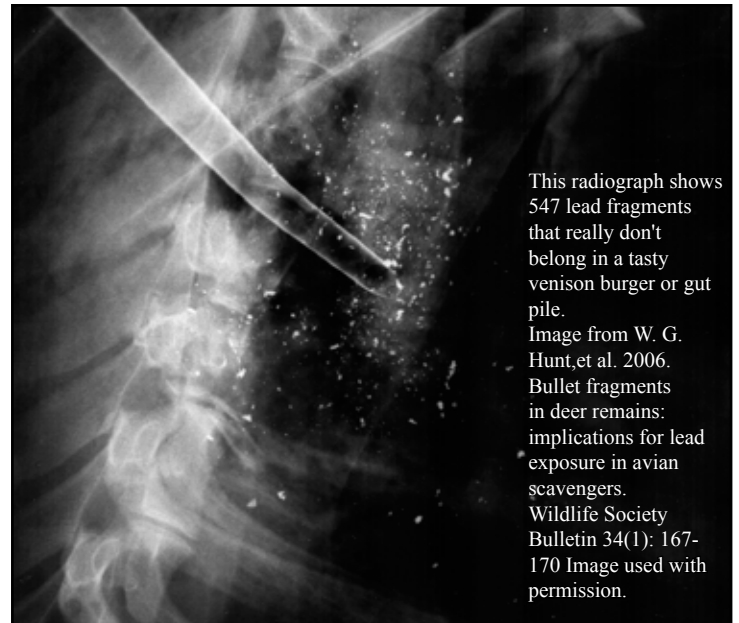
Condors are scavengers whose primary source of food is the remains of animals, often gut piles left behind by hunters. So hunters play a positive part in the survival of the condor by providing them with added food. But this is a double-edged sword because lead ammunition leaves fragments in the meat that, when ingested, can cause neurological damage and even death.

Recently, a group of academic, governmental and private sector scientists endorsed the scientific chain of evidence linking lead ammunition to lead poisoning in condors. They stated that lead ammunition is the only documented source that could cause lead exposure at the levels seen in wild condors.

Many species of wildlife scavenge carcasses including coyotes, vultures and American Bald Eagles. A small amount of lead can diminish the strength and agility of an eagle so that it can't hunt effectively. Why do we need to expose these animals when the cause is so preventable?

Lead in gasoline and paint is banned because we know it causes neurological damage and other health problems in children. Many law enforcement agencies are phasing out lead ammunition at target ranges in an effort to prevent human exposure to lead spewed from firearms and avoid the cost of cleaning up toxic lead dust and fragments.

The good news is that alternative sources of ammunition exist that are equally, if not better, performing. Currently, this ammunition is marginally more expensive but a few extra dollars may well be acceptable, especially if wildlife and human health are protected.



This radiograph shows 547 lead fragments that really don't belong in a tasty venison burger or gut pile. Image from W. G. Hunt, et al. 2006. Bullet fragments in deer remains: implications for lead exposure in avian scavengers. Wildlife Society Bulletin 34(1): 167-170 Image used with permission.

I believe that sportsmen are conservationists and good stewards of our environment. For example, here in Kern County, Tejon Ranch has voluntarily banned the use of lead ammunition on their 270,000 acres of hunting ground. Each year more than 1,800 hunters visit Tejon Ranch where, beginning in 2008, they will hunt with non-lead alternatives. This will allow condors to frequent the ranch without the threat of lead ingestion.

However, Tejon Ranch's voluntary program is not enough.

I sincerely hope that the Fish and Game Commission does the right thing and bans lead bullets. It is short-sighted for Californians to unnecessarily expose themselves and wildlife to this toxic substance when suitable alternatives are available.

Editors note: the Fish and Game Commission took no action on this legislation and will hold the next public information meeting on this subject in Concord on October 11th and 12th and during subsequent meetings in November. Public comments are still needed.

Assembly Bill 821 bans the use of lead-based ammunition in California condor habitat. This would protect the California condor population from lead poisoning, which is contracted by ingesting bullet fragments left in carcasses and gut piles. As of September 6th, the bill is on the governor's desk awaiting his decision. §

**THANK YOU DONORS & NEW MEMBERS**

Since our last newsletter 104 people and organizations have generously sent in much needed donations. As of this year the entire Kern River Preserve outreach budget comes from your donations. If your name is missing or misspelled please let us know. We enjoy providing recognition to our wonderful friends. Your privacy matters, if you prefer to remain anonymous, please check the box on your donation form.

**GOLDEN EAGLE (\$10,000+)**

Estate of Robert Linden

**FREMONT COTTONWOOD (\$1000-\$2499)**

Libbie Agran Mel & Bev Rubin

**GRAY FOX (\$500-\$999)**

Frank & Janice Delfino Chana Cortez

**WILLOW FLYCATCHER (\$250-\$499)**

Gary M. File Fred Heath  
 Michael McQuerrey Gary Potter  
 Alison Sheehey

**GREAT BLUE HERON (\$100-\$249)**

John Newman & Linda Adams	Marion & James Baird
George & Judy Beaty	Robert Brewer
Greg Campbell	Jane Cassity
Joe & Cathy Cunningham	Rod & Judy Ditzler
Tom Edell	Ernie & Nancy Flores
Lia Lent & Joseph Fox	
Sidney Tice & CleoBell Heiple-Tice	
Marilyn Jones, M.D.	Larry & Karen Lee
Susan Manguard & Barbara Likens	
Laura Lubin	Ronald & Peggy Lucas
Rex Mason	Alan & Darlene Mc Gie
Martine and Richard Metzenheim	Diane Mitchell
Peter Woodman & Susan Moore	Martha Pickering O'Neal
Michael & Alison Pollack	Jeff Seay
Sequoia Lodge	Carolyn & James Shepherd
Carlton Fiorina & Joseph Sneed	Richard Sproul

**BOBCAT (\$50-\$99)**

Dorothea & Frank Anton	Janet Cunningham & Ron Beck
N. E. Blaine	Dorothy Bolt
William Brabender	Eric & Ann Brooks
Jim & Eleanor Campbell	Jim & Shirley Davis
Johanna Dawes	Thomas Duque
Bugs & Joe Fontaine	Michael & Judith Golub
David Holman	Richard & Rose Jimenez
Eve Laeger	Arthur Langton
Mary Merriman	Bettie Montague
Patricia Moore	Frances Oliver
Donald Storm	Bernard Strandstra
Dr. Richard Svihla, DVM	Robert Sykes
Patricia J. Turner	

**CALIFORNIA QUAIL (Family) (\$40-\$49)**

Tom & Katy Allen	Kenneth & Linda Back
Barbara Berilla	George & Susan Danielson
Ellene & Noel Gravelle	Roger Luebs
Jane McEwan & Don Peterson	Lawrence Thompson

**RACCOON (\$25-\$39)**

Virginia H. Baker	Todd I. Berens
Betty Berteaux	Carol Jean Coulter
Susan & Paul Craft	Lee Dembart
Tom Politeo & Mary Fokotone	Ann Hannon
Constance Haseltine	Walt & Kay Hays
Carol Hemminger	Aaron & Angie Jungbluth
Michael Klinkenberg	Kim Kuska
Bob Lowe	Billie Mangold
Richard Moore	Donna Marie Noce
Alan & Elaine Olson	Eleanor Pearson
H.T. & Marguerite Richter	Lee Simmons
Martin & Tylene Trout	Jim White
William Wittmann	Roger Zachary

**IN KIND DONATIONS**

Bob Barnes

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

In memory of D.G. Meremeyer from Idell Weydemeyer  
 In memory of Donald Moore from Mary S. Wood  
 In memory of Donald Moore from Margaret Rogers §



Summer Tanagers frequent the HQ grape arbor in late summer

**ONLINE DONATIONS**

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. Thanks to you the Kern River Preserve continues to thrive. §



# 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 \$15 (\$12.50 members) plus \$5.00 shipping.

small ♦ medium ♦ large ♦ XL ♦ XXL

Please make checks payable to : **NAS / KRP Friends**

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

V11 12

### 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 us or see our scheduled volunteer workdays. §

### KRP WISH LIST

- Desperate NEED Medium Farm Tractor, Cat. III 3-point hitch
- Flatbed Trailer suitable for hauling a tractor or automobile
- New Economy 4x4 pick-up
- New Hybrid Multi-passenger 4x4 vehicle
- Professional Large Paper Laser Color Copier
- Sturdy Trail Benches

### KEYSTONE SPECIES

Our membership categories characterize keystone species that rely on intact ecosystems to survive. Our goal is to provide long-term sanctuary for these species through outright acquisition of habitat or conservation easements along the entire South Fork Kern River watershed. Although most of the property will not be owned by Audubon, staff of the Kern River Preserve are integral to the success of protection efforts by government agencies and other private organizations.

Supporting the Friends of the Kern River Preserve by becoming a keystone donor allows these important efforts to continue. Without you, none of this critical work can continue... Please unlock the potential of the Kern River Preserve by becoming a member at the highest monetary level you can comfortably afford. §

### KEYSTONE SPECIES

#### BOBCAT

*Lynx rufus*



This has been the year of the bobcat. Sightings of a family of bobcats at the headquarters have occurred all summer. While the frequency of sightings is unusual, spotting one of these cats near the headquarters by visitors normally occurs several times a week.

Bobcats are one of two native members of the cat family found on the Kern River Preserve. Sometimes mistaken for Mountain Lions, the bobcat tail varies in length from very short to a half its body height. Bobcats

are 30-34 inches long and can weigh up to 26 lbs. They are spotted but their background fur color can be different shades of gray, brown, or black. The bobcat is mostly solitary but females with their litter of one to eight kittens sometimes can be seen strolling through the compound in summer.

A friend in the Bobcat category helps to support many programs at the Kern River Preserve. All donations are appreciated and really make a big difference to the protection and outreach efforts along the South Fork Kern River. §



*Friends of the Kern River Preserve*

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

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

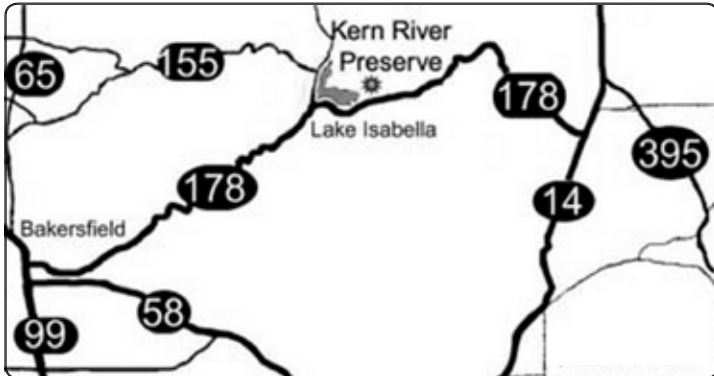
**September 29-30, 2007**  
Turkey Vulture Festival

**October 27-28, 2007**  
Friends of the Kern River Preserve  
Appreciation Day

**December 30, 2007**  
Kern Valley Christmas Bird Count

**January 5, 2008**  
South Fork Christmas Bird Count

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

Call Cal Trans for 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](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org)  
or visit our website:  
<http://kern.audubon.org>

