



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

WESTERN MEADOWLARK

Volume 66— Number 5



Dave Goodward

SBVAS General Meeting May 18, 2016

Tricolored Blackbird: The next endangered Californian? Presented by Dave Goodward

The Tricolored Blackbird, a native Californian species and colonial cousin to the Red-winged Blackbird has been declining statewide for many years. Many interrelated factors have been at play, from habitat loss to global warming to conflicts with farming. Legal protection may be on the way, bringing this birds uneasy relationship with agriculture into the political limelight. Dave will present an overview of the biology of this intriguing bird, discussion of the many possible reasons for its decline, and measures being taken for protection.

Dave will show photos of the joint SBVAS-Audubon California project in Newberry Springs in conjunction with Foundations for Future Generations, a faith-based non-profit facility. Other photos of Tricolors and their marsh bird neighbors come from the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, taken by several of the SBVAS cadre of excellent bird photographers. Tricolored Blackbirds are ramping up their breeding activity as this notice goes to press, so we should get an update on the Newberry Springs colony as well as other local and more far-flung breeding colonies.

Dave is a long time board member of SBVAS. He taught environmental education at Kimbark Elementary School for 20 years, and now spends his time studying desert land snails, working on

selected conservation efforts for SBVAS, sleeping late, and working part-time as a biological consultant. He has overseen the Newberry Springs Tricolored Blackbird Initiative since its inception.



Dave Goodward

SBVAS General Meeting June 15, 2016 6:30 pm

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Help us celebrate the end of our chapter's year, the beginning of summer, and the joy of nature at our June potluck dinner. We will begin our evening of camaraderie at 6:30 pm, an hour earlier than usual. SBVAS will supply a turkey and a ham as well as beverages. Please bring a dish to share - a salad, vegetable, casserole, or dessert. If possible, plan to share with 12 or more. Please remember to bring your own table service.

We will also be hosting a silent auction, so bring your bird and nature related books and items you would like to donate for sale. Officers will be installed. This usually takes only a few minutes and then our members will provide the program by bringing 10-15 of their favorite nature slides to share. Will we see pictures of the Purple/Rock Sandpiper? This is a great annual event and is fun for everyone. Come enjoy good friends, good food, and what is certain to be a terrific evening.

Everyone is always welcome.
Dori Myers Program Chair

DOES THIS BABY BIRD NEED RESCUE?

submitted by Ruth Greyraven

Do everything you can to reunite an uninjured baby bird with its parents.

If the chick is a cotton-ball on legs, you have a quail, killdeer, or other precocial species. These tiny fluffballs open their eyes and start running after their parents on Day One after hatching. If needed, move the chick from a dangerous location to a safer nearby location.

If the chick is feathered, with a short tail and short wings, but it is fluttering and hopping around rather than flying, then you have a fledgling of an altricial species. It isn't injured. It is normal for altricial chicks to pop out of the nest before they are ready to fly. This awkward stage will pass in a few days. The fledgling's parents are nearby, feeding it regularly. The fledgling needs its parents to teach it the ropes of birdness for weeks or even months to come. Move the chick only when needed to get it to a safer nearby location.

If the chick is extremely naked and its eyes aren't open, you have a hatchling. It is only a day or two old. After its eyes open and tube-like sheaths (pinfeathers) begin growing on the wings and back, we call it a nestling. In either case, the best resolution is to get the baby back in its nest, if you can find the nest and if the nest is within reach. When a nest has fallen, support the nest appropriately and affix it up as close to its original location as possible. You can create an

artificial nest cup, lined with dry grass, and put it somewhere safe or as close to the real nest as possible. Most birds are great parents, if given a little help.

If there is an obvious injury or no way to reconnect the baby bird with its parents, contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Some veterinarians or humane societies may be able to help, but only a licensed wildlife rehabilitator can legally provide long-term care. Rehabilitators are likely to be unpaid volunteers. Don't expect that somebody will be available to answer your phone call 24/7 and rush to your home. In most instances, you'll need to bring the baby bird to the rehabilitator. Some of these groups will take every type of injured or orphaned wildlife. Others have specialties.

If you need to provide short-term care to a baby bird ... the internet offers many excellent sites with advice on how to care for various species of birds. Hummingbirds need different care than finches. Crows need different care than pigeons.

Wister Wildlife Area Drought Surveys Written by David Rankin

When Brad asked me if I wanted to do some shorebird surveys for Audubon California, I jumped at the chance. The Drought Monitoring Partnership, started in 2014, is a project in which local Audubon chapters work with refuge managers to monitor and report on drought impacts. The monitoring consists of twice monthly surveys of target species in wetlands on California's wildlife refuges. Those species are Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Dunlin, Dowitcher, Black-necked Stilt, Long-billed Curlew and Snow Goose. The site they wanted me survey was the Wister Unit of the Imperial Wildlife Area, a series of freshwater impoundments managed for waterfowl at the southeast end of the Salton Sea. It's a place I'd never been to before, so it was a great chance to explore a new area and contribute to monitoring the effect of this historic drought on our wintering birds. At 6000 acres, it's a huge expanse of freshwater wetlands, flooded fields and salt scrub, heavily utilized by wintering waterfowl and shorebirds.

With the record strength El Nino and predicted rainy winter I wasn't sure if I'd be able to access the soft dirt roads for very long, but it looks like even this El Nino year won't be enough to break the drought. Wister received less than an inch of rain all winter, and I only missed one survey due to a storm. Even in November the effects of water shortages were obvious.
Continued on page 5



Cin Greyraven

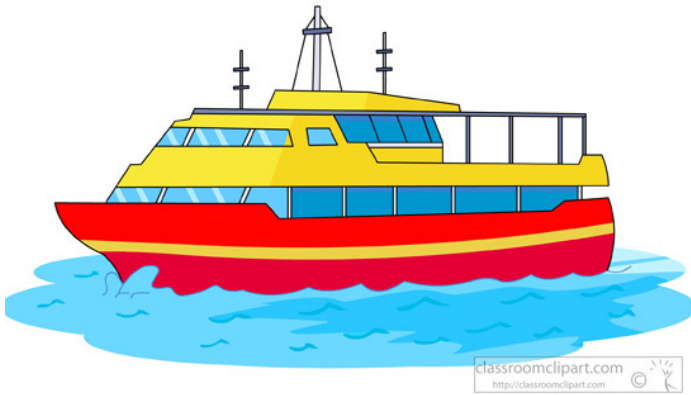
May 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Box Springs Mountain Field Trip	2	3 SBVAS Board Meeting	4	5	6	7 Whitewater Canyon Field Trip
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 Baby Birds At Bearpaw Ranch
	16	17	18 SBVAS General Meeting	19	20	21
22 Palm Springs Aerial Tramway/San Jacinto Mountains	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 San Bernardino Mountains Field Trip
5	6	7 SBVAS Board Meeting	8	9	10	11 Wrightwood and Blue Ridge Field Trip
12	13	14	15 SBVAS Potluck and Slide Show at 6:30	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Dates are subject to changes for weather and unforeseen circumstances. Please check our website - SBVAS.net for updates.



SBVAS Pelagic Trip

Saturday, August 20, 2016
7:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Join SBVAS for our first pelagic trip in recent memory. We will be birding aboard the Ocean Institute's (Dana Point) R/V Sea Explorer in search of pelagic birds, marine mammals, and other oceanic wildlife as we cruise through the Santa Catalina Channel. We expect to see Pink-footed, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters, Black Storm-Petrel, Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers, and Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. We have a reasonable chance of seeing Brown Booby and Craveri's Murrelet, and additional species of alcids, storm-petrels, shearwaters, and boobies are not out of the question. The trip leaders include Tom Benson, Jon Feenstra, Jimmy McMorran, Brad Singer,



Tom Benson

4

Western Meadowlark

and Matt Grube. Meet at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point (24200 Dana Point Harbor Drive) at 6:30 AM. The trip departs promptly at 7:00 AM and will not be held for late arrivals. Half of the 40 spaces available will be reserved for SBVAS members, while the remaining spaces will be available to anyone on a first come, first served basis. To reserve a space on the trip, email Tom Benson (thomasabenson@aol.com) with your name and phone number, and indicate whether you are an SBVAS member. Upon



Tom Benson

receiving confirmation from Tom, mail your \$60 check made out to SBVAS: Pelagic Trip c/o SBVAS PO Box 10973 San Bernardino, CA 92423

The Sea Explorer is a 70-foot research vessel with plenty of standing room, bench seating on both the upper and lower decks, and an interior salon with limited seating. There is no galley on board (though there is usually coffee and hot water), so you should bring your own lunch and snacks for this 8-hour excursion. Weather at sea is often cool relative to the mainland, and can be unpredictable. It is recommended that you dress in layers including a light rain jacket for potential sea spray (or even rain). Bring your binoculars and cameras, but leave your spotting scopes at home.

There are a number of preventative sea sickness treatments available; consult with your doctor if you think you will need them. They are most effective when taken before you get on the boat; do not wait until you are sick. If you have any questions regarding the trip, please contact Tom Benson: thomasabenson@aol.com. Alternatively, you may scan the waivers as pdf files and email them to Tom at the address above.

Drought monitoring .. Continued from page 2

-ous, with many impoundments dry and overgrown with tamarisk, waiting for water that never came. But the impoundments that did have water were filled with birds. A combination of deep reservoirs, shallow open pools and marshes with dense vegetation provided a range of habitats for a variety of birds wintering on the refuge.

Double-crested Cormorants crowded the deeper reservoirs, where diving ducks like Canvasbacks and Lesser Scaup congregated. Great Blue Herons and Snowy Egrets stalked the edges of the marsh, while Northern Harriers and the occasional Peregrine Falcon patrolled the skies. In the water, Northern Shovelers, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal and American Wigeons fed, taking flight whenever a Northern Harrier flew took close. American Coots and Ruddy Ducks were less impressed, simply diving under water if threatened. In the shallower impoundments American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts and Long-billed Dowitchers plied the mudflats. Passerines were attracted to the lush growth as well. Hundreds of Yellow-rumped Warblers wintered on the refuge, and Black-tailed Gnatcatchers, Abert's Towhees and Verdin were my constant companions on the surveys. A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers was a pleasant surprise, as were two Neotropical Cormorants that visited the refuge in March.

In total, I recorded 126 species during the surveys, including 20 species of waterfowl and 12 species of shorebirds. The data will be analyzed by Audubon California for patterns, and compared to the 2014-2015 season.



Bearpaw Ranch

Bearpaw Ranch is a 70 acre nature sanctuary, operated by the San Bernardino Audubon Society and may be visited 7 days a week from dawn 'til dusk by members of Audubon and their guests. Bearpaw Ranch is nestled on the north slope of scenic Mill Creek Canyon at 4,500 feet elevation, surrounded by the towering peaks of the San Bernardino National Forest. To reach Bearpaw Ranch, take Highway 38 to the Forest Falls turnoff. Go several car lengths on Valley of the Falls Dr. and look for our small wooden sign on the right. Our driveway is on the right, marked 38801. The driveway is paved and unpaved road that meanders across Mill Creek wash and up the bluff to an electronically operated entry gate. Members who wish to visit the Sanctuary should call any board member in advance to get the gate code. It is not a requirement that the caretaker is at home for you to visit. If the gate does not open because of mechanical failure, you are welcome to walk in or stop for birding along the creek bed.



Bearpaw Sanctuary,
38801 Valley of the Falls Drive
P.O. Box 88; Forest Falls, CA 923396

Bearpaw Sanctuary is on Facebook; message us with questions and comments. If you type "Bearpaw Sanctuary" into the SEARCH function, you'll find us. Bearpaw visitors are encouraged to report interesting wildlife sightings and share their favorite nature photos from their Bearpaw visits.

SBVAS Officers 2015/2016 www.sbvas.org

President: Brad Singer (909) 838-7951
First Vice-President, Program Chair: Dori Myers (714) 779-2201
Second Vice President: Dave Goodward (909) 783-2417
Treasurer: Nancy Higbee (951) 780-9236
Secretary, Meadowlark Editor: Pam Quittmeyer (951) 212-2211

Directors

Conservation Chair: Drew Feldmann (951) 212-2467
Field Trips: Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358
Mountain Conservation Issues: Peter Jorris (909) 867-3536
Desert Conservation Issues: Seth Shtier (760) 332-9776
Membership: Pete Clark (951) 212-2467
Anthony Metcalf (951) 242-7038
Cin Greyraven (909) 327-8795
Pat Cawunder (951) 687-9486

WESTERN MEADOWLARK: Editor:
Pam Quittmeyer duckypam@gmail.com (951)212-2211

SBVAS WEBMASTER: Brad Singer bcsinger@gmail.com

BEARPAW RANCH: Cin Greyraven (909) 794-0509
truthraven@verizon.net

RARE BIRD ALERT: Tom Benson (909)-648-0899
or (909)-537-3309 or tbenson@csusb.edu

SBVAS BOOKSTORE AND GIFT SHOP:

CALENDAR

Board Meetings: First Tuesday of the Month, May 3, 2016 and June 7, 2016, 7 pm

General Meetings: Third Wednesday of the Month, May 18, 2016 and June 15, 2016

All meetings are in the San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands. Board meetings are the first Wednesday of the month, and General Membership meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month. To reach the museum, take the California St. exit off I-10, go north one block to Orange Tree Lane and turn right. The museum will be on your left. General meetings, except potlucks, start at 7:30 and doors open at 7. Potlucks begin at 6:30.

UPCOMING SBVAS FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, May 1, 2016 - 8:00 am

Box Springs Mountain

John Green (951) 686-2956

Our main target birds here will be Black-chinned, Rufous-crowned, and Bell's (Sage) Sparrows, which should be present and singing. We'll look for them and more while going on a hike through grassland, chaparral, and sage scrub and past a spring or two. A few of the other resident and/or breeding birds to be expected on the trip include Rock and Canyon Wrens, California Thrasher, and Phainopepla. We will, of course, also be hoping for a nice crop of migrants including flycatchers, vireos, warblers, buntings, grosbeaks, orioles, and ??? Over 180 species of birds have been recorded in the Box Springs, but 40 species is a more realistic goal for this trip. We should also see some wildflowers and shrubs in bloom, and a variety of butterflies, reptiles, mammals, etc. as well. The walk is all on official trails, but some are narrow. The usual hike is about 3.5 miles, with a couple of climbs, and a maximum elevation gain of about 650 feet. It is possible that we will cut the hike short if Bell's Sparrows are not present. They have become undependable in recent years. If so, the hike is about 1.5 miles and 450 foot elevation gain. This shortened hike is also an option for those wanting to leave early. Either way, expect to arrive back at the parking lot by lunchtime. If the hike has been cut short due to lack of Bell's Sparrows, those who are interested can follow me on a drive to another spot in the Box Springs where they are currently being found.

We will meet at 7:30 am at the upper parking lot of Box Springs Mountain Reserve (map). From Highway 60 in Moreno Valley take the Pigeon Pass Road / Frederick Street exit. Take Pigeon Pass north and continue for about 4.2 miles. When Pigeon Pass makes a sharp turn to the right, you will continue straight on Box Springs Mountain Road for about 1.3 miles to the parking area. There is a \$2 per person parking fee box. We will do a lot of walking, so wear appropriate shoes and dress comfortably in layers. Some trails may be overgrown, long pants are advised. Carry water and snacks. There are picnic tables at the parking area, so bring a lunch if you'd like to eat after the hike. See you there!

Saturday, May 7, 2016 - 8:00 am

Whitewater Canyon

Steve Myers (951) 616-7578

Portions of Whitewater Canyon have long been more or less closed to public access, but the former trout farm is now the "Whitewater Canyon Preserve," managed by The Wildlands Conserv-

ancy. If you visited the trout farm in the past, you will not know the place now. Most of the facilities have been removed, and habitat restoration is under way. There are still a few ponds with trout, but riparian and desert scrub habitat should be teeming with birds on this trip. The canyon hosts nesting Summer Tanagers and Brown-crested Flycatchers, and migrants should be easy to find. In addition to the Preserve, we will visit Bonnie Bell, a small community in the canyon that contains excellent cottonwood and willow forest and woodland, somewhat reminiscent of Big Morongo. Meet at the Whitewater Canyon Preserve at 8:00 am. To reach the Preserve, go east on I-10, past the turn-off for Highway 111, and take the Whitewater exit. Turn left, pass over I-10, and watch for Whitewater Canyon Road on your left. The Preserve is at the end of Whitewater Canyon Road, approximately 5 miles north of I-10. Bring sturdy footwear, water, lunch, and the usual essentials.

Saturday, May 14, 2016 - 9:00 am

Baby Birds at Bearpaw Ranch

Cin Greyraven (909) 794-0509

Join us for a trip into the hidden world of nesting birds at Bearpaw Nature Sanctuary in Forest Falls. Biologist Cin Greyraven will lead the group in its search for evidence of breeding behavior in the common birds of the chaparral and forest. Since 1994, Bearpaw Sanctuary has been part of the National Nest Box Trail system, offering homes to Western Bluebirds, Oak Titmice, House Wrens, Mountain Chickadees, and Ash-throated Flycatchers. Learn what types of nest boxes work best and how monitoring data by average citizens across the continent can contribute to scientific research. Learn how to monitor a nest box without disturbing the nesting effort. Enjoy a peek inside the usually inaccessible world of cavity nesters, and learn to recognize different species by their nests, eggs, and chicks. Bring binoculars for long-distance viewing and cameras for close-up snapshots. Children are welcome. For additional information, call (909) 794-0509.

Directions: To reach Bearpaw Ranch, take Highway 38 to the Forest Falls turnoff. Go several car lengths on Valley of the Falls Dr. and look for our small wooden sign on the right. Our driveway is on the right, marked 38801. The driveway is paved and unpaved road that meanders across Mill Creek wash and up the bluff to an electronically operated entry gate, which will be open.

Sunday, May 22, 2016, 8:00AM

Palm Springs Aerial Tramway/San Jacinto Mountains

John Green (951) 686-2956

We will be taking a rapid ride from the desert

to the mountains. We climb on to the tram at 2,643 feet elevation and get off at 8,516 twelve minutes later. From there we will soon enter Mount San Jacinto State Park. We will do some hiking, looking for montane specialties such as White-headed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Clark's Nutcracker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Crossbill, and Cassin's Finch. Depending on the speed of the group and the numbers of birds, we may make it to Round Valley Meadow, an approximately 4.5 mile round trip from the station, with an elevation gain of about 500 feet.

Group size is limited to 15 by the state park, so it is imperative that you tell me in advance if you plan to go. If possible, please don't call. Email bewickwren@earthlink.net to ask questions or get on the trip list. **After confirming that you are on the trip, be at the ticket office when it opens at 7:30AM in order for us all to get on the first tram up (8AM). The tramway no longer sells online tickets for the 8AM tram.** The tram won't be far away, but we will be in the wilderness. Bring a day-pack with plenty of food and water and other hiking supplies (I suggest the ten essentials: tinyurl.com/ldx2xwk). Wear sturdy hiking shoes and sensible clothing, including layers. Stay with the group. Don't come on this trip if you doubt your fitness to walk, sometimes uphill, for up to five miles at high elevation. We will stay on the mountain until early afternoon at a minimum, but if birding is great or the group is slow, it may be longer. Hope to see you in the mountains!

Saturday, June 4, 2016 San Bernardino Mountains Brad Singer (909) 838-7951

The San Bernardino Mountains trip will meet outside the Starbuck's located in the Von's shopping center on Big Bear Blvd. and Sandalwood Drive (map) at 6:30 am. We will spend the morning at Arrastre Creek and environs where expected species include Black-chinned Sparrow, Green-tailed Towhee, Lazuli Bunting, Scott's Oriole, and Mountain Quail. We will also search for Hepatic Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Calliope Hummingbird, Plumbeous Vireo, Gray Vireo, and Pinyon Jay. About midday we'll bird around Big Bear Lake in search of any lingering shorebirds, terns, and raptors, and then spend the afternoon up at Wildhorse Meadows in search of Williamson's Sapsucker, Dusky Flycatcher, Cassin's Finch, Townsend's Solitaire, and Clark's Nutcracker. For those wanting to continue on, we will stop in Big Bear for an early dinner, and then head to Green Canyon in search of Mexican Whip-poor-wills and owls. Expect a long day, bring plenty of

water, lunch, and sturdy hiking shoes. A vehicle with high clearance is recommended but not required. Please don't forget that you will need a National Forest Adventure Pass. For more information, contact Brad Singer at (909) 838-7951.

Saturday, June 11, 2016 - 7:30 am Wrightwood & Blue Ridge Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358

The San Gabriel Mountains trip will start at the California Department of Forestry Mormon Rocks Station on Highway 138 at 7:30 am (map). Take I-15 north from San Bernardino or south from the Victor Valley and turn toward Palmdale on Highway 138. The CDF Station is located 1.5 miles up Hwy 138 on the left side of the road, opposite the large sandstone formation called the Mormon Rocks. (There are no restrooms at the CDF Station, use the restrooms at the gas stations near the off ramp.) After birding that area for 30-45 minutes, we will proceed up Lone Pine Canyon Rd into Wrightwood to Big Pines and eventually wind up at 8000 feet and Blue Ridge Campground for lunch. Bring a lunch, liquids and a good pair of shoes. We will look for mountain birds such as the Fox Sparrow, Green-tailed Towhee, Dusky Flycatcher, and Williamson's Sapsucker. It should be a beautiful day in the mountains and we hope to see you there.

Saturday, June 25, 2016, 5:30 AM Insane Jaunt to the Salton Sea Tom Benson (909) 648-0899

How would you like to see birds like Neotropic Cormorant, Laughing and Yellow-footed Gulls, Black and Gull-billed Terns, Burrowing Owl, Gila Woodpecker, and Bronzed Cowbird? All those and more may be yours at the mere price of 100+ degree average daily highs in the pungent glory and spectacle of the Salton Sea in summertime. With luck, perhaps something like a Wood Stork, Glossy Ibis, or Magnificent Frigatebird will appear (or is it just the heat?).

DO NOT COME ON THE TRIP WITHOUT: LOTS OF WATER, a large ice chest, lots of ice and snacks, a hat and sunscreen, a working air conditioner, and a full tank of gas.

Meet at the overlook at the south end of Fig Lagoon at the ridiculous hour of 5:30 AM. The easiest way to reach this location is to go south on Drew Road from I-8, turn west onto Diehl Road, and then north onto Derrick Road. We will stop for lunch in Brawley at some place with air conditioning. Our route will be determined by where the birds of interest are being seen. Motels are available in El Centro for those wishing to spend Friday night in the area.



THE WESTERN MEADOWLARK

c/o San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society
 P. O. Box 10973
 San Bernardino, CA 92423-0973

Everyone is always welcome!

All meetings in the San Bernardino County Museum 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands
Board Meetings are the 1st Tuesday
General meetings are the 3rd Wednesday



SBVAS Membership currently at 1900

To reach the Museum, take the California Street exit off the 10 Freeway and go north 1 block to Orange Tree Lane—turn right. The museum will be on your left...

Chapter Only Membership Application
 San Bernardino Valley Audubon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

____ SBVAS Membership @ \$20 a/year (includes subscription to *The Western Meadowlark*)

Email Address _____

Please enclose a check payable to SBVAS



Membership Application
 National Audubon Society (NAS)

____ NAS Gift/New/Regular/Renewal Membership \$20 (includes 1 year of *Audubon* magazine)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to National Audubon Society

SBVAS Chapter
 C2ZC140Z

Please clip and mail all memberships to: SBVAS Membership Chair

P.O. Box 10973

San Bernardino, Ca. 92423-0973