



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

WESTERN MEADOWLARK

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California eBird

Unites Birders, Citizens, and Scientists for Conservation

A premier online bird observation program has been developed for birders and citizens in California! Audubon California, PRBO Conservation Science, and Cornell Lab of Ornithology have partnered to create **California eBird**, www.ebird.org/California, a real-time online bird observation checklist program tailored for use by Californians. eBird has revolutionized the way that people can report and access information about birds. California eBird provides a quick and easy way for birders, citizens, and scientists to enter their bird observations into a common database accessible to those working to protect and restore habitats for birds in California.

Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the eBird program provides scientists with rich data sources for basic information on the number and distribution of birds across large geo-

(e-bird....Continued on page 6)

Research Finds That Breakdown Products of Widely Used Pesticides are Acutely Lethal to Amphibians

The breakdown products (oxons) of the three most commonly used organophosphorus pesticides in California's agricultural Central Valley – chlorpyrifos, malathion and diazinon – are 10 - 100 times more toxic to amphibians than their parent compounds, which are already highly toxic to amphibians, according to experiments conducted by scientists of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Western Ecological Research Center.

The results of the laboratory experiments on the toxicity of three breakdown products were just published in the journal *Environmental Pollution*.

"Since some of the parent pesticide compounds are already at concentrations sufficient to cause significant amphibian mortality in the Sierra Nevada, the higher toxicity of the breakdown products poses a serious problem," said Dr. Gary Fellers, coauthor of the study.

Dr. Donald Sparling, a research biologist and contami-



(Amphibians... Continued on page 3)

Exotic Hydrilla Benefits Chesapeake Bay's Ecosystem

Editors: "Long-term changes in abundance and diversity of macrophyte and waterfowl populations in an estuary with exotic macrophytes and improving water quality," is available online in the May issue of [ASLO: Limnology and Oceanography](#), v 52, pages 1195-1207.

An exotic species of aquatic vegetation that was deemed a severe nuisance when it began rapidly colonizing the Potomac River, has instead benefited the watershed's ecosystem, according to a study by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) pub-

lished in the journal *Limnology and Oceanography*. The robust exotic hydrilla first appeared

and began to flourish in the fresh water reaches of the tidal Potomac River just as management investments to reduce nutrient loads from sewage treatment plants were beginning to take effect. Submerged aquatic vegetation is an important eco-

In addition, hydrilla is a good winter food source for waterfowl communities

(Hydrilla...Continued on page 2)

(Hydrilla... Continued from page 1)

system resource for fish and waterfowl and it was feared that the expansion of hydrilla would impair the reemergence of native species, but this has not proven to be the case.

"Before and during the seventeen-year period of the study, restoration of the Potomac has focused on reducing nitrogen loads entering the river system and the Chesapeake Bay," said USGS scientist Nancy Rybicki, who with colleague Jurate Landwehr were curious how the emergence of hydrilla would affect the benefits sought for by management investments.

Shortly after it first appeared in the Potomac in 1983, hydrilla produced dense vegetation masses and, in some areas, impeded boat traffic and water sports." More significantly, it was feared that hydrilla would interfere with native vegetation, which is important for waterfowl, such as black duck, a signature species in this area.

Using information from annual field surveys and aerial photographs, Rybicki and Landwehr created a data base to document bed-by-bed which species of vegetation were found in different sections of the Potomac River system. They recorded the percentage of total coverage and biomass each species attained annually. In comparing species coverage with water quality composition, they discovered that, with the reduction of nitrogen concentration in Potomac River, hydrilla coverage expanded but so did the diversity of plant species found in the

River. Hydrilla did not crowd out native species; indeed, native species increased. In addition, hydrilla is a good winter food source for waterfowl communities, which have increased significantly over this period.

"This research is the only long-term, quantitative study of aquatic plant biodiversity following the colonization of an exotic species in an estuary where millions of dollars are spent annually to reduce nutrient input and it

demonstrates that exotics are not always harmful to an ecosystem," said Rybicki. "Furthermore," Landwehr pointed out, "the methods developed for this study are transferable to any ecological assessments that need to



Hydrilla
Hydrilla verticillata
Photo by Vic Ramey
Copyright 2000 Univ. Florida

merge remotely-sensed spatial coverage with field observations."

The findings support current federal and state management strategies to improve water clarity and reduce nutrient loads to: enhance aquatic vegetation coverage; increase waterfowl habitat; and protect biodiversity of the existing native community.

The study was conducted as part of the USGS Chesapeake Bay studies, which is providing integrated science to for effective conservation and restoration of the Bay ecosystem. The USGS is a federal partner in the Chesapeake Bay Program, the federal-state partnership to restore the Bay ecosystem.

More information can be found at <http://chesapeake.usgs.gov> USGS provides science for a changing world.

For more information, visit www.usgs.gov.

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Hydrilla
Hydrilla verticillata
Photo by Vic Ramey
Copyright 2000 Univ. Florida

(Amphibians...Continued from page 1)

nants specialist at Southern Illinois University, and Fell-ers, a research biologist and amphibian specialist at the USGS Western Ecological Research Center in California, conducted laboratory tests to determine the acute toxicity – the lethal dosage causing death in 96 hours or less – of chlorpyrifos, malathion and diazinon, and their oxon derivatives on tadpoles of the foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*).

Organophosphorus pesticides have been implicated in the declines of several amphibian species in the California Central Valley and in downwind montane areas, including the Cascades frog, California red-legged frog, mountain yellow-legged frog and the foothill yellow-legged frog, which inhabit foothill or montane regions east of the Central Valley.

More than 6 1/2 million pounds of active ingredient organophosphorus pesticides were used in California during 2004, the most recent year for which data are available. Researchers estimate that this accounts for about 25 percent of organophosphorus pesticide use nationwide. Organophosphorus pesticides suppress an enzyme called acetylcholinesterase, which is essential for the proper functioning of the nervous system. Reduced levels of acetylcholinesterase cause neurological synapses to fire repeatedly and uncontrollably, leading to death, usually by asphyxiation as the animal loses respiratory control. Most pesticides of this group reach their greatest potencies when metabolized internally and converted to an oxon form in the liver. However, oxons can also be found in the environment, formed by bacterial decay of the parent pesticide.

For the laboratory experiments, tadpoles were raised from eggs collected from a stream in the California Coast Range, upwind of agricultural activities in the Central Valley and away from areas where significant quantities of pesticides are used. Test results indicated that chloroxon killed all tadpoles and was at least 100 times more toxic than the lowest concentration of the parent compound chlorpyrifos, which resulted in no mortality. Maloxon was nearly 100 times more toxic than malathion, and diazoxon was about 10 times more toxic than diazinon.

“Other data published in 2001 and new unpublished data show that these pesticides are widespread, even in pris-

(Amphibians... Continued on page 7)

Speaking with One Voice for Reproductive Health and the Environment

On April 20th, the Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program invited Elvis Tillett, a community health educator and activist from Belmopan City, Belize, to speak at an event called “Empowering Youth & Protecting the Environment in Belize” held at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC. Elvis discussed the reproductive health and environmental challenges facing Belize, and why it is critical—on Earth Day, and everyday—to recognize the intersections among poverty, global health, reproductive health and environmental protection. Elvis was also among the first cohort of Belizean youth to be selected to participate in a Youth Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health Program, called GOJoven. Implemented by International Health Programs (IHP) of the Public Health Institute (PHI), GOJoven works to foster the next generation of leaders in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Elvis's presentation was the kick-off event for the second annual One Voice: Reproductive Health and Population Summit in Washington, D.C. that took place from April 20th-23rd. Cosponsors of the Summit were Sierra Club, Advocates for Youth, SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States), and Population Connection. The Summit attracted over 120 youth and adult activists from across the U.S.

Educational workshops and seminars included topics such as the links between population and the environment, politics of sex education, international family planning, how climate change is affected by population growth, and global water challenges. Participants gained organizing and advocacy skills necessary to be effective leaders on their campuses and in their communities.

Energized and well versed on the issues, participants charged up to Capitol Hill the following Monday morning to talk with decision-makers about why increasing funding for international family planning programs is critical to ensuring healthy communities and a healthy environment. They also advocated in support of the Responsible Education About Life (REAL) Act and the Global Democracy Promotion Act.

Take Action!

Tell your members of Congress that by increasing funding for international family planning programs they are helping to ensure healthier communities around the world and a healthier environment. Find out who your Representative is at www.house.gov. Find out who your Senators are at www.senate.gov. Encourage their support of the REAL Act and the Global Democracy Promotion Act!

(population... Continued on page 7)

Summer Fieldtrips

WEEKEND TRIP SOUTH FORK KERN RIVER & THE GREENHORN MOUNTAINS

*****DATE CHANGE*****

Saturday-Sunday, July 14-15, 2007

Steve Myers (951) 369-8060 -

Fax (951) 369-8035 - Cell (951) 634-9767

This is a joint trip with the Mojave Desert Bird Club. Meet at 5 AM at the Victorville Park & Ride at I-15 and Bear Valley Road for carpooling. Exit I-15 at Bear Valley Road, turn left, and left again onto the frontage road

(Amargosa Road). The park and ride is another left, almost immediately.

We will arrive at the South Fork Kern River Preserve around 7 AM, and will look for spe-



cialties such as the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Summer Tanager, Brown-crested Flycatcher, and the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. As the day heats up, we will head up into the relatively cool Greenhorn Mountains. The Greenhorns are at the southern end of the Sierra Nevada, and offer extensive coniferous forests, wet meadows, and spectacular views. We expect to see many of the typical high mountain birds, and the Greenhorns are the southern range limit of birds such as the Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Goshawk, and Winter Wren (note that these are not guaranteed!).

On Saturday night we will be camping at a primitive campground (no water or toilets of any kind) in the Greenhorns. This trip can be terrific for both birds and butterflies.



INSANE JAUNT TO THE SALTON SEA

Sunday, August 26, 2007 - 5:30 A.M.

Leader: John Green (951) 686-2956

How would you like to see birds like Wood Stork, Laughing and Yellow-footed Gulls, Gull-billed and Black Terns, Ruddy Ground-dove, Burrowing Owl, and Bronzed Cowbird? All those and more may be yours at the mere price of 110 degree average daily highs in the pungent glory and spectacle of the Salton Sea in summertime. With luck, perhaps something like an Anhinga, Tricolored Heron, Roseate Spoonbill, or Magnificent Frigatebird will appear (or is it just the heat?). Last year's highlights included Piping Plover and, for the diehards, stunning views of a Blue-footed Booby to finish the day.

DO NOT

COME ON THE TRIP

WITHOUT: LOTS OF WATER,

a large ice chest, lots of ice, lunch, and snacks, a hat and sunscreen, a working air conditioner, and a full tank of gas (top off in Indio).

Meeting place will be at the Wister Unit of the Imperial Wildlife Area. Going south on Hwy 111 along the east shore of the Sea, turn right at Davis Road which is signed for the Wister Unit. Proceed to the parking lot on your left. If you reach the town of Niland on Hwy 111 you have gone 5 miles too far. We'll meet at 5:30 am, just before sunrise to beat the heat as much as we can, and we'll bird until we've had enough. Our route will be determined by where the Wood Storks are and where other birds of interest are being seen. Motels are available in Calipatria, Brawley, and Indio for those wishing to spend Saturday night in the area.



A LOCAL PLAN TO FIGHT GLOBAL WARMING

*Below is a sample letter to send to your
Supervisor in the San Bernardino County...
Please let them know about your concerns...*

Dear Supervisor _____

As a community member of San Bernardino County, I recognize the urgent need for action to address global climate change. I promise to be part of the solution to create a healthy future for our children and economy. I encourage San Bernardino to adopt a Climate Change Action Plan to immediately begin to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and personally commit to the community to reduce my personal greenhouse gas emissions.

San Bernardino has the opportunity to become a leader in the Country in the fight against global warming. I urge the Board of Supervisors to adopt a resolution committing the County to a Climate Change Action Plan that does the following:

- * Conducts a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast to determine the source and quantity of greenhouse gas emissions in the jurisdiction;*
- * Establishes a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target;*
- * Develops an action plan with both existing and future actions that, when implemented, will meet the AB32 greenhouse gas reduction target;*
- * Implements the action plan with specific mitigation measures; and * Monitors and reports progress.*

Mayors in Riverside, San Bernardino, Yucaipa and Chino have all signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and pledged to make similar plans to fight climate change. I urge you to make a similar commitment to fight global warming at the County level.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Address

Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt

1st District

385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Fl.

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110

Supervisor Paul Biane

2nd District

385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, Fifth Floor

San Bernardino, CA 92415

Supervisor Dennis Hansberger

3rd District

385 North Arrowhead Avenue, Fifth Floor

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110

Supervisor Gary Ovitt

4th District

385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Fl.

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110

Supervisor Josie Gonzales

5th District

385 North Arrowhead Ave, 5th Fl

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110 ♀

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graphic scales and throughout time. For citizens and birders, eBird provides on-line birding checklists to keep track of your observations at multiple sites, accessible at any time from your home computer. Bird sightings are safely stored in Cornell Lab of Ornithology's database. California eBird takes the standard eBird site and brings the user information specific to California. With this site, we hope to encourage more birders, students, citizens, and scientists to contribute bird sightings through eBird. This will help us learn more about bird distribution and abundance throughout the state. If you are looking for a place to make bird observations, we encourage you to select one of the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in California, learn more about the site, keep track of your sightings, and enter your records (for a list of IBAs go to www.ca.audubon.org/iba). Or, you can choose your own favorite birding site or "hot spot" using the interactive Google maps provided. We have added California habitat types so that you can provide information on the kinds of habitats you are birding in. You can also select any IBA site and learn about the birds others have seen at the site, times of year, abundances, and more. With your help, we can begin to paint a complete picture of how birds are distributed across the diverse California landscape and track what changes may be occurring in the future.



Visit the California eBird website (www.ebird.org/California) to read timely information on birds

and birding news in California and try entering some bird data!

Contact Information: Andrea Jones, Audubon California: 805-772-1991, ajones@audubon.org

Melissa Pitkin, PRBO Conservation Science: 707-781-2555 ext. 307, mpitkin@prbo.org

A Field Study of Birds: Fall Course: BIO X405

An introduction to the local birds in relation to their communities. Emphasis is placed on identification in the field and museum. Field trips include local mountains and valleys, San Diego Bay, High Desert, Salton Sea and Imperial Valley.

Note: Visitors not permitted. Class meets at San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands for first meeting only. All other dates are field trips. **Instructor:** Eugene A. Cardiff, B.A., Retired Curator of Natural History, San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands. Cardiff is Extension's longest-standing instructor. He has taught over 100 ornithology classes since 1968. **Credit:** 2 units **Date/Time:** Tues., 7:30-9:30 p.m. & Sat., 6:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Sept. 18 & 22, Oct. 6 & 20 & Nov. 3 & 17 (6 meeting/s) **Location:** SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM, REDLANDS **Text:** "A Field Study of Birds of North America, 4th edition," J. W. Fitzpatrick (07922-6877-6) **Fee:** \$206 / \$185 each for couples and family members / \$165 each with PINE discount **Reg #:** 072-SCF-F23



Murres, Auklets, and Puffins Washing up on Pacific Shores

From: <http://ebird.org/content/ca/>

For the third year in a row, seabirds are washing up on the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington in larger than normal numbers. Common Murres, Rhinoceros and Cassin's auklets, and Tufted Puffins are all found dead along the shoreline, many with little to no food in their stomachs. Though the cause is still being investigated, it appears to be related to changes in the California Current. The current delivers cold, nutrient rich water from the Gulf of Alaska to the west coast. Recent fluctuations in the current seem to result in zones of warmer water that support less plankton. Less plankton means less food for all marine vertebrates, including birds, since it forms the foundation of the marine food chain.

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The Responsible Education About Life Act (REAL) Act (S. 972, H.R. 1653) would dedicate federal funding, to be administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, for comprehensive sexuality education that is age-appropriate, medically accurate, and stresses abstinence, while also educating young people about contraception. Programs by the REAL Act would also stress family communication, responsible decision-making, and negotiation skills. The REAL Act was introduced in Congress by Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA) and in the Senate by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ).

The Global Democracy Promotion Act ("GDPA"; H.R. 619) would essentially repeal the Mexico City Policy (a.k.a. the "Global Gag Rule"), which was imposed in January 2001. If they refuse on free speech or medical-ethics grounds, they lose all of their U.S. funding. Congress should repeal the gag rule for the following reasons: it forces organizations to choose between vital U.S. support and their right to advocate and provide for the reproductive health care of the women and men they serve with their own private funds. Such a restriction would be illegal and unconstitutional if imposed on health providers here in the United States. The GDPA Act was introduced in Congress by Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY).

If you are interested in attending the One Voice Summit next spring, contact Cassie Gardener at cassie.gardener@sierraclub.org. To learn more about the Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program, visit www.sierraclub.org/population.

(Amphibians...Continued from page 3)

tine areas of the Sierra Nevada Mountains," Sparling said. "The combination of field and laboratory studies is revealing that organophosphorus pesticides are posing serious hazards to the welfare and survival of native amphibians in California." The authors noted that amphibians inhabiting ponds in the Central Valley of California could be simultaneously exposed to two or all three of these pesticides and their oxons. "Because of this," said Sparling, "the potential for interactive effects of these chemicals needs to be explored." Organophosphorus pesticides form the largest group of chemicals used in the control of pests, including invertebrates, vertebrates and, to a lesser extent, plants. Some 200 organophosphorus pesticides available in this class have been formulated into thousands of different products for use in agriculture, forests, gardens, homes and industrial sites.

The title of the article in Environmental Pollution is "Comparative toxicity of chlorpyrifos, diazinon, malathion and their oxon derivatives to larval Rana boylei."

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www.sbvas.org & www.inlandplanet.org

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greyraven@wildmail.com

RARE BIRD ALERT: Kirk and Linda Stitt
at secalrba@earthlink.net ✍

Field Trip Checklist

Comfortable shoes or hiking boots, hat, sunscreen, insect repellent..A good Road Map, Full fuel tank, drinking water, snacks and lunch, binoculars and or a scope, field guide Come and Enjoy
Call Field Trip Leader for last minute cancellations, questions or changes...✍

Bearpaw Ranch is SBVAS's 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 only a few car lengths on Valley of the Falls Dr. and look for our small wooden sign on the right. We have a new paved road, the entry is easy for almost all normal passenger cars. There is a electronically operated entry gate. Members who wish to visit the Sanctuary should call ahead for the security code.



Access to the code may be had by calling—

Bearpaw at (909) 794-0509.

Bearpaw Sanctuary, 38801 Valley of the Falls Drive
P.O. Box 88; Forest Falls, CA 92339



Faster More Colorful Western Meadowlark

Please email Membership Chair Crispin Rendon at crisrendon@earthlink.net and let him know what you think. Add your photos to our newsletter. Include your name as it appears on you Western Meadowlark newsletter Thanks



SBVAS Calendar

No July Board Meeting

No July/August General Meeting

Aug 1, 5:30 Fieldtrip Planning at Marie Calendars ..

call Gene for more details...

Aug 1, 7:00 Board Meeting

CHECK THIS OUT IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY

Jennifer Bowles

http://www.beloblog.com/Pe_Blogs/environment/



Jennifer has covered environmental issues for the Press-Enterprise since 1999, and often travels across the vast Inland region to get her stories. Before coming to the I.E., she was one of five journalists selected nationwide to attend a year-long fellowship at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where she studied natural resources law, policy and science. Born in Canada, she began her journalism career at the Associated Press in Los Angeles. There, she worked for 10 years as a general assignment reporter, TV columnist and editor.

National Audubon Society (NAS):

- ☐ NAS Introductory Membership* \$20
- ☐ NAS Regular Membership* \$35
- ☐ NAS Gift Membership \$20.
- ☐ Senior/Student (with id) Membership \$15

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Includes chapter membership & Meadowlark if in SBVAS area

Also includes the National issue of Audubon magazine

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- ☐ SBVAS Membership & WESTERN MEADOWLARK only \$16
- ☐ Subscription to WESTERN MEADOWLARK only \$16
- ☐ First class subscription to WESTERN MEADOWLARK \$21.00
- ☐ SBVAS Donation _____

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SBVAS Chapter
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July 2007

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