



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

WESTERN MEADOWLARK

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POPULATION

It's considered one of the most pressing environment problems facing the U.S. and the world: human population growth. Population expansion over the last 50 years has exacerbated many environmental problems, including air and water pollution, loss of wildlife habitat, fisheries depletion, climate change, to mention a **few of the main**. These are global problems that transcend national **boundaries**. **Congress** believe it or not can help.

Learn more about these issues and take action!

JULY 11, 2006 is WORLD POPULATION DAY

POPULATION AND GLOBAL WARMING

by Drew Feldman

Al Gore's new film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, has been a real boost to the environmental movement, in that at least for the moment, it has brought the issue of global warming to the center of discussion. While I have not yet seen the film (it was just being released at press time), all of the references to it that I have seen or heard have dealt with the class of pollutants known as "greenhouse gases," and the consequences of their increases. There have been discussions of how to conserve carbon-based fuels, and the pursuit of alternative energy sources, to reduce the extent to which greenhouse gases will be produced.

Missing from this discussion has been the issue of global population increase. The 300+ page book that is the companion to *An Inconvenient Truth* devotes just a few pages to population. Similarly, the May issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine published a list of fifty things you can do to help save the planet, and amazingly, neither having smaller families nor helping others to have smaller families was on the list. It's puzzling why there should be this oversight. The world reached a population of 1 billion people for the first time just a century or two ago but

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AUDUBON REACHES AGREEMENT TO SAVE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S TRI-COLORED BLACKBIRDS COLONY

"Audubon Came to the Rescue"

San Jacinto, CA, May 23, 2006 -

Audubon California and the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society announced today that they had reached an agreement with a farmer in Riverside County to help protect southern California's largest colony of rare Tri-colored Blackbirds.

Audubon will pay a San Jacinto area dairy an undisclosed amount to delay the harvest of 13 acres of wheat where the blackbirds have set up a dense nesting colony. In return, the landowner has voluntarily agreed to not harvest until June 12. The one-month delay in harvesting will provide enough time for the young blackbirds to mature and leave the nest.

"Audubon is pleased that the agricultural community is working with us to make this buyout possible," said Graham Chisholm, Audubon California's Director of Conservation. "The Tri-colored Blackbird has evolved in California over the past 3 million years, and this agreement, combined with other conservation measures, is essential to make sure it has a

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healthy future.”

It is estimated that this Tri-colored Blackbird colony holds at least 4,000 adults, and that each nest in the colony will produce an average of 1.5 chicks. While in most years the Tri-colored Blackbirds nest in restored wetlands on California's San Jacinto Wildlife Area (WA), this year the blackbirds set up their colony nearby in a wheat field three miles from the wildlife area.

Recognizing the risk to southern California's largest remaining Tri-colored Blackbird breeding colony, Tom Paulek of the California Department of Fish and Game, Area Manager of the San Jacinto WA, alerted Audubon to the need to negotiate an agreement with the dairy farmer to delay the harvest in a portion of the farmer's wheat field.

“I was fearful that we were going to lose this year's entire reproductive effort and was much relieved when Audubon came to the rescue,” said Tom Paulek, California Department of Fish and Game Area Manager.

Tri-colored Blackbirds have declined dramatically in the past century as native habitat has been lost in California. With the loss of wetlands and surrounding feeding habitats, Tri-colored Blackbirds often nest in agricultural fields, making them vulnerable to nest failure when the fields are harvested before the young birds fledge. Public and private land managers are working to manage habitat for Tri-colored Blackbirds in order to encourage the birds to nest in wetlands and other secure habitats as opposed to agricultural fields.

The estimated global population of Tri-colored Blackbirds is approximately 250,000-300,000 birds with 99% of these birds occurring in California. The southern California portion of the population, which is geographically and may be genetically distinct from the Central Valley population, has dwindled to perhaps as few as 12,000 birds.

Dr. Robert Meese, a Tri-colored Blackbird researcher from U.C. Davis, noted the importance of this buyout for the conservation of the blackbirds in southern California by stating that “it is essential to conserve the largest remaining breeding colony in southern California, as the young birds produced here will help to sustain the species in the San Jacinto area in the future.”

The 19,000-acre San Jacinto Wildlife Area, managed by the State of California's Department of Fish and Game, and surrounding agricultural lands are home to the largest remaining southern California population of Tri-colored Blackbirds. With rare exception, the birds have historically nested on the San Jacinto Wildlife Area.

Audubon will work with Paulek and Dr. Meese to monitor the colony, estimate its reproductive success, and more precisely estimate the number of birds that bred here.

The area around the San Jacinto WA is undergoing rapid conversion from agricultural use to residential development in one of California's fastest growing counties.

Dori Myers, President of the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society, said, “This purchase is a stop-gap measure. We have to preserve the open space around the San Jacinto Wildlife Area and similar open space elsewhere in California or this bird is doomed.”

Audubon is part of a statewide working group, including public agencies, farmer and rancher organizations, conservation organizations, researchers from UC Davis and others to develop a comprehensive strategy to protect Tri-colored Blackbirds.

“Audubon was pleased to be able to help save the most important Tri-colored Blackbird colony in southern California,” said Chisholm. “Audubon recognizes that the bird's future in California will require agriculture, public agencies and private conservation organizations working together, and we are committed to doing our part.”

For more information, please contact:

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gchisholm@audubon.org

Dori Myers, President, San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society, at 714-779-2201 or ouzelm@aol.com

Dave Woodward, Conservation Chair, San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society, at 909-783-2417 or
davegoodward@earthlink.net

Nancy Higbee, Board Member, San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society, at 951-780-9236 or
nlhigbee@earthlink.net.

Tom Paulek, Area Manager, California Department of Fish and Game, at 951-928-0580 or tpaulek@dfg.ca.gov

Dr. Robert J. Meese, University of California, Davis at
rjmeese@ucdavis.edu.

Audubon is dedicated to protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitat that supports them. Our national network of community-based nature centers and chapters, scientific and educational programs, and advocacy on behalf of areas sustaining important bird populations, engage millions of people of all ages and backgrounds in conservation. ✍

(UNFPA—Continued from page 1)

world population is now at 6.5 billion people. That's 5 billion more people now than 100-150 years ago, an increase several times over what it once was. Or, to put it another way, there are several billion more people driving greenhouse-gas-producing vehicles and putting demands on greenhouse-gas-producing industries than would otherwise be the case if somehow there had not been such an increase in population. But for this exponential growth in global population, the amount of greenhouse gases produced would be a fraction of the amount currently being produced, and global warming would be a problem looming in the future instead of a present crisis.

Unfortunately, population is continuing to increase along with greenhouse gasses. Current projections put population growth by the year 2050 at between 2.5 and 4.5 billion *more* people, meaning that the total population of the Earth in the year 2050 will be between 9 and 11 billion people, after which population is expected to begin to level off. The environmental damage that this additional population will bring about is not limited to greenhouse gases. There will be continued destruction of forests and strains on the finite supply of fresh water, as people legitimately seek ways to survive.

One cannot of course turn back the calendar. One can however, take measures for the future. There are many things that need to be done to reduce the growth of greenhouse gases, but the simplest, cheapest, and easiest of these is to provide aid for voluntary family planning around the world. And the good news is that the rate of growth has slowed down. Had population growth continued at the level expected a few decades ago, world population would already be about 9 billion, perhaps more. But beginning in the 1970's, there was a concerted international effort to provide education about and the means for voluntary family planning to peoples most in need of it. (It may surprise people to learn that one of the leading advocates of these programs was George Bush Sr., the future President and father of the current President, in his role as U. S. ambassador to the United Nations. How times have changed!) Over the decades, these programs have worked, and worked well, helping to reduce the growth of population.

The United States' role has been mixed. After taking the lead in the 1970's, the United States cut back on its contributions during the Reagan administration, revived them somewhat under the Clinton Administration, and cut them back significantly under the current administration. There were two basic

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34 MILLION FRIENDS

by Jane Roberts

On the front page of the Los Angeles Times, Monday, May 15, the headline was "In Austria, Way of Life is Clipped by Bird Flu." And it told of how many older people who used to spend their afternoons feeding and watching the ducks and swans and chatting among themselves, were now prevented from doing so by fenced in ponds and lakes. This story reminded me of how birds and people have a special connection. This story reminded me of sharing a room with bird adoring Melissa Culley in Washington DC in 2001 at a "Population Activist Weekend" sponsored by the National Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation and Population Connection.

Mexico City was the site in March of this year of a World Water Conference. One of every six people on earth lack access to adequate clean water. Droughts partially due to man-made global warming are causing crop failures over wide swaths of the earth resulting in hunger, disease, and misery to many. Imagine the effects on flora and fauna.

And women who gather wood for cooking (thereby destroying habitat) are dying prematurely from the daily breathing in of smoke from cooking fires. Shouldn't Africa for example be electrified through solar energy?

And people and birds and trees and crops and water must be in balance one with the other for people and the planet to survive. To help reestablish this balance was a great motivation for me to co-found 34 Million Friends of the United Nations Population Fund (www.34millionfriends.org). My other motivation was to make the statement that the human rights of women and girls, and their access to education and health care including reproductive health care and family planning need solid worldwide commitment.

So please, if you've not done so,

send at least one dollar to

34 Million Friends,

PO BOX 681,

Toms River NJ 08754-9922

or give at our web site.

You'll be helping people, the planet, the birds,
and America's reputation in the world.

Jane Roberts

julianrob@aol.com

**One of every six
people on earth lack access to
adequate clean water**

PALM SPRINGS TRAM EXPEDITION

Saturday, July 15, 8AM
Leader: Tim Krantz (909)794-5819

Join us on this new field trip offering for a birding adventure up the Palm Springs Aerial Tram! The abrupt ascent scales Mt. San Jacinto from its base at 2,600 feet to the tramway summit at 8,500 feet in just 15 minutes—from the Sonoran Desert to Boreal forest, representing the ecological equivalent of traveling 40° in Latitude in just a few kilometers as the Clark's nutcracker flies!

We will meet at the Lower Parking Lot looking for birds of the desert and riparian woodlands, before boarding the revolving tram cars, offering spectacular 360° views. From the top, we will take a leisurely 1.5mi hike to Hidden Lake, a montane vernal pool, dry in recent years, but it will be full this year. We'll look for white-headed woodpeckers, Williamson sapsuckers, yellow warblers, and other mountain inhabitants; and on hands and knees, search for the endemic Hidden Lake blue curls known only from this location.

We will have lunch at the lake, before returning to the tram. There are facilities at the Tram Station.

Group rates for the Tram are \$18.70 for adults, and \$11.65 for children ages 3-12. Fares will be collected by the leader and paid as a lump sum.

For more information on the Palm Springs Tram, weather conditions, etc., check out their web site at:

<http://www.palmsprings.com/active/tramway.html>. ♣

LOS RIOS RANCHO in OAK GLEN

A Summer Retreat from the heat in the Valley ...

The Wildlands Conservancy built a children's nature trail at Los Rios Rancho for its outdoor education program. This trail meanders through an evergreen forest, past several ponds that have migration ducks in winter, and under the canopy of a deciduous black oak forest that opens onto a south-facing chaparral hillside. The return trail follows a willow-shaded stream onto a boardwalk that is replete with butterflies when the wetlands are in bloom. The Conservancy sponsors field trips for more than 10,000 underserved children each year who get their first experience in nature using this trail as an outdoor classroom. The trail is open to the public, without charge, Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., along with 50 picnic tables at Blue Sky Park and the Oak Knoll picnic area.

The Wildlands Conservancy
39611 Oak Glen Road, #12
Oak Glen, CA 92399
(909) 797-8507

To preserve the beauty and biodiversity of the earth, and to fund programs so that every child may know the wonder and joy of nature.



“Au Naturel”

An exhibit by members of
Plein Air Artists of Riverside”

Plein Air (French for open air) painting involves artists working in nature, directly translating their impressions onto their canvas or paper. This exciting exhibit has been organized through a joint partnership between

the Riverside Art Museum and Riverside Community Arts Association.

It features works by over 40 artists from around the Southern California area.

Exhibit Dates: July 13 to August 12, 2006

Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday 11:00 am to 2:00 pm Or by appointment

Reception: Saturday July 22, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

The exhibits will be open for Riverside Arts Walk on First Thursdays on August 3, 6:00 to 9:00pm

Free admission to the exhibit and reception

For more information contact RCAA Director Mark Schooley at (951) 682-6737

SUMMER FIELDTRIPS

BIRDING TRIP TO THE SOUTH FORK OF THE KERN RIVER & THE GREENHORN MOUNTAINS.

Saturday & Sunday, July 22 & 23, 5:00 AM:

Leader: Steve Myers.

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 specialties 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. *For more information,*

call Steve at (760) 843-4009 (evenings),

(951) 634-9767 (days), or email stephenmyers@earthlink.net.

SALTON SEA/WOOD STORK FIELD TRIP (INSANE JAUNT)

Sunday, August 27, 5:30 AM

Leader: John Green (951) 686-2956

or e-mail bewickwren@earthlink.net

How would you like to see birds like

Wood Stork, Laughing Gull, Yellow-footed Gull,

Gull-billed Tern, 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 that is the Salton Sea in summertime. With luck, perhaps something like an Anhinga, Tricolored Heron, 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, lunch, snacks, a hat,
- ▶ 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 Highway 111 along the east shore of the Sea, you will 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 Highway 111, you have gone 5 miles too far.

We'll meet at 5:30 AM, just before sunrise, to beat as much of the heat as we can. We'll head out and 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. ♪





**The Vivian Null Education Fund proudly supports
Oscar Clarke's, an Inland Plant Guide
"The Flora of the Santa Ana River"**

We are proud to announce that at our June meeting your SBVAS board voted to donate \$1000.00 from the Vivian Null Education Fund to help publish Oscar Clarke's, "The Flora of the Santa Ana River." This comprehensive field guide will help educate and make any who read it more aware of the wonders of our natural world especially the environment in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.

Dori Myers, President

(UNFPA...Continued from page 3)

paths for this aid: through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and through the United Nations' Fund for Population Action (UNFPA). One of the very first actions of the Bush administration, on the afternoon of the inauguration, was to issue an executive order forbidding USAID funds to agencies that so much as mentioned abortion as a family planning alternative, even if they did not advocate such an option. Since then, the Bush administration has pushed many of the remaining dollars into abstinence-only programs, in spite of much scientific data that shows such programs to be at best only marginally effective. In 2002, President Bush issued another executive order forbidding the US government from spending the money appropriated by Congress for the UNFPA, on the fallacious grounds that UN money was supporting forced abortions in China. (The U.S. State Department has since found, more than once, the UN dollars did not go to abortions in China, but that has not made any difference to the President.)

Audubon has supported international family planning efforts for decades, because of the impact that a growing population has had on the environment, even before the issue of global warming came to the fore. For example, the numbers of neotropical migrant birds that come to the US has gone down by about 50% in recent decades, primarily because the growing population in Latin American has been cutting down the forests to which these birds migrated. SBVAS members, including this writer and the editor of The Western Meadowlark, have gone to

Washington DC, as have other National Audubon Society members, to lobby Congress to continue to appropriate funds for international family planning and to pressure the Bush Administration to change its policies.

Last month, the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee in the House of Representatives appropriated \$432 million for bilateral U.S. international family planning programs- The Subcommittee decided not to adhere to the President's 18% CUT in funding (\$357 million for FY07) - the lowest request yet for these programs. The Subcommittee also allocated \$34 million for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

While \$432 million is the same amount allocated by the subcommittee last year, this level funding reflects the support of Congressional members for these important programs. Funding these programs is critical for improving the health of people and the planet. For the last 4 years, the President asked Congress to fund U.S. international family planning at \$425 million dollars. For three of those years, that request was granted, but last year, the House appropriated the higher level of \$432 million.

**Connection between
GLOBAL WARMING, HABITAT LOSS
&
POPULATION GROWTH
has given an added
urgency to these efforts.**

World Population STATICS from unfpa.org

1. Half of the world's people are under the age of 25. Some three billion children and young people are, or will soon be, of reproductive age.
2. In 57 developing countries, over 40 per cent of the population is under 15.
3. Universal access to reproductive health, including family planning, is the starting point for a better future for the 1.5 billion young people (ages 10 to 24) who live in developing countries.
4. The number of youth in the world surviving on less than a dollar a day in 2000 was an estimated 238 million, almost a quarter (22.5 per cent) of the world's total youth population.
5. Despite a shift toward later marriage in many parts of the world, 82 million girls in developing countries who are now aged 10 to 17 will be married before their 18th birthday.

Below is a sample letter you can send to your congressman to help with International Family Planning Assistance...

Dear [elected official's name]

As a constituent, concerned citizen and a dedicated conservationist, I am writing to urge your support for the Focus on Family Health Worldwide Act of 2005 (HR 4188) - a bill that bolsters U.S. international family planning assistance, which is vital to the health of the environment, families and our children's future. Rapid population growth affects all natural resources - soil, forests, water and birds and wildlife - as well as the health of women and children. Half of all migratory songbird species in the U.S. are in decline, due in part to human population growth and activities that cause significant loss of habitat along migratory routes in the U.S., Latin America and the Caribbean.

International family planning is one of the most cost-effective ways to help countries reduce population pressures that cause environmental destruction such as loss of habitat and wildlife. Voluntary family planning saves the lives of women and children, helps keep families healthy and is crucial to resource conservation and wildlife protection.

By increasing support for USAID's voluntary family planning programs, HR 4188 is a common sense way to help people and the planet. Please cosponsor HR 4188 and help improve the health of families, birds and wildlife, and the planet. Sincerely,

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www.sbvas.org &
www.inlandplanet.org

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Kirk and Linda Stitt

at secalrba@earthlink.net or call (909) 793-5599 option 3
to leave a report on the RBA phone machine. ✍

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 an 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.

Include your name as it appears on you Western Meadowlark newsletter Thanks

San Bernardino County Museum
2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands
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...

All meetings in
the San Bernardino County Mu-
seum
2024 Orange Tree Lane, Red-
lands
Board Meetings are the 1st



SBVAS Calendar

July 5 7:00..... BOARD MEETING

Aug 2 7:00..... BOARD MEETING

Aug 2 6:00 FIELDTRIP MEETING

NO GENERAL MEETINGS in July or August....

If you have questions please call or go on line to check current detail. www.sbvass.org Thanks

Youth and the Millennium Development Goals

UNFPA has a vision of a world fit for young people. It is a world that promotes and protects their rights, provides opportunities to develop their full potential, welcomes and respects their voices and views, and where they live free of poverty, discrimination and violence.

In such a world, young people need to possess the knowledge and skills required to make informed, voluntary and responsible life choices.

National Audubon Society (NAS):

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

Please make check payable to **National Audubon Society**

Includes chapter membership & Meadowlark if in SBVAS area

Also includes the National issue of Audubon magazine

San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society (SBVAS):

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

Please make check payable to **SBVAS**

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CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

SBVAS Chapter
C117XCH
APRIL 2006

MAKES A GREAT GIFT

THE WESTERN MEADOWLARK

c/o San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

P. O. Box 10973

San Bernardino, CA 92423-0973

