



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

# WESTERN MEADOWLARK

Volume 64— Number 5  
May/August 2014

Wednesday, May 21, 2014 7:30 P.M.

## MAKINGS OF A BIG YEAR

### 2013 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY BIG YEAR

*Presented By Brad Singer*

San Bernardino County Big Year Birding; Gene Cardiff set the bar in 1998 with his big year number of 318 species observed and Bill Deppe broke through that barrier ten years later with an astounding 334 species. Other folks have tried to better those marks in recent years but have come up short. Brad Singer will talk about his attempt in 2013; the methodical processes by which he planned and carried out his systematic (and not so systematic) observations. He will cover his trials and tribulations, spin a few yarns and hopefully influence other poor souls to try their luck in pursuing a big year, whether county, state, country or worldwide. Whether you're a casual backyard birder, weekly or monthly observer, or an obsessive lister, come, listen and enjoy an evening of entertaining stories and photos.

Brad Singer is an avid birder, residing in Lake Arrowhead and running a small business in San Bernardino. He is a five year member of the SBVAS board, SBVAS webmaster, and leads three to four field trips a year for SBVAS. He is also the moderator for the list serve, InlandCounty Birds. Brad was part of the team that holds the record for the number of species seen in one day in San Bernardino County and also part of another team that holds the big day record for the San Bernardino Mountains.

*Birding, after all, is just a game. Going beyond that is what is important.*

*Roger Tory Peterson*

Wednesday June 18, 2011 6:30 P.M.

## June Potluck Dinner

### Annual Meeting, Installation of Officers & Nature

### Photography Program

Help celebrate the end of our chapter 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 P.M., an hour earlier than usual at the San Bernardino County Museum. The potluck will be held in the Fisk Auditorium. SBVAS will supply a turkey and a ham as well as beverages. Please bring a dish to share— either a salad, vegetable, casserole, or dessert. If possible, plan to share with twelve or more. Please remember to bring your own table service. We will be hosting another 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. Then our members will provide the program by bringing 10-15 of their favorite nature slides to share. This is a great annual event and is fun for everyone.

*Come enjoy what is certain to be a terrific evening*



SBVAS extends heartfelt thanks to Greg and Kathy Whitmore for their generous donation in honor of Eleanor Courtney's 80th birthday.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the estate of Helen Price for including our local Audubon in her estate planning.

### SOLAR: Ivanpah Project Described as Deadly Trap for Wildlife

*By David Danielske, Reprinted from The Press Enterprise*

When hundreds of thousands of mirrors focus solar energy on the 460-foot towers at Ivanpah solar plant in northeastern San Bernardino County, butterflies, dragonflies and other winged insects are attracted to the intense white glow — like moths to a porch light.

Insect-eating birds pursue the bugs, and then come the falcons and other raptors to snag the smaller birds. And when they fly into the heat zone — as hot as 800 degrees — around the towers, they are maimed and die. Investigators from the National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory, in a report kept confidential until this week, describe the power towers as a “mega trap” that claims layers of species in the same food chain. The lab is part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “There were hundreds upon hundreds of butterflies (including monarchs, *Danaus plexippus*) and dragonfly carcasses,” the investigators said. “Some showed singeing, and many appeared to have just fallen from the sky. ... Birds were also observed feeding on the insects. At times birds flew into the solar flux and ignited.”

Ivanpah's developer, BrightSource Energy, wants permission to build a similar plant north of Interstate 10 near Desert Center in Riverside County. State officials have not approved the application, in part because of concern about bird mortality. BrightSource officials did not respond to a request for comment.

*(continued, Solar, page 2)*

## Bird of the Month: Say's Phoebe

### By Steve Myers

Thomas Say was an American entomologist and naturalist who lived in the late 16th & early 17th centuries. Although he made his mark mostly through the study of insects, birders are most familiar with him because of a flycatcher named for him, the Say's Phoebe.

The Say's Phoebe nests farther north than any other North American tyrant flycatcher. They breed on the north slope of Alaska, bordering the Arctic Ocean. They are widespread as nesters across the western half of North America, and winter as far south as Veracruz and southern Baja California. In our region, it nests fairly commonly in the deserts, and less commonly on the coastal slope. It is infrequently found in southern California's mountains.

Habitat for Say's Phoebes is arid, open or semi-open land such as farmland, grasslands, open desert scrub, and prairie. Unlike the other North American phoebes, they have no particular attachment to water. They are often seen perching on low plant stems, fence posts, or small shrubs. Nests are open cups placed on natural sheltered ledges such as rock crevices and holes in dirt banks. Some nests are located under the eaves of buildings. Nests are constructed of weed stems, dry grasses, plant fibers, mosses, and animal hair, and are lined with hair. Black and Eastern phoebes use mud in construction of their nests, but mud is used rarely in the nests of Say's Phoebes.

Clutch size is usually 4-5, but can include as many as 7 eggs. Incubation, which is done by the female, is 12 to 14 days. The nestlings fledge in 14-16 days. Two clutches are common, and the adult male feeds fledglings from the first brood while the female re-nests.

As is the case with most flycatchers, the diet of Say's Phoebes is made up almost entirely of insects. Bees, wasps, and winged ants are preferred, but they also eat beetles, moths, grasshoppers, and other insects. Insects are captured while darting out from perches, and sometimes while hovering over an open field, dropping to the ground for the prey. As with many other flycatchers, they cough up indigestible parts of prey as pellets, much like those of owls.

During winter in southern California, numbers of Say's Phoebes increase as individuals from more northerly latitudes join birds that are year round residents. The numbers particularly increase in the coastal region, possibly due to the fact that some breeding birds of the colder interior portions of the west move to the coast during winter.

Identification of Say's Phoebes is generally straightforward. The most common misidentification probably is with female Vermilion Flycatchers, which are smaller, shorter-tailed, and have faint streaking on the breast. The buffy belly of the Say's Phoebe extends farther up, just reaching the lower breast. The "peachy" belly of the female Vermilion is confined to the lower belly and undertail coverts.

To me, one of the most endearing things about Say's Phoebes is their somewhat sad-sounding call, which is a low, plaintive whistle. They are also one of the more approachable of our songbirds, often letting birders get to within 10 or 15 feet.

#### Want to learn more?

Schukman, John M. and Blair O. Wolf. 1998. Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online:



*(Solar, continued)*

Jeff Holland, spokesman for plant operator NRG, was critical of the report. "Given that Ivanpah has only been operational for a short period of time, it is premature to determine the significance and extent of impacts to insects, birds, or bats," he said in an email. Ivanpah went online in late December last year after months of testing. He also said the report presents "conclusions regarding the severity of impacts and proposed recommendations which are not supported by scientific literature."

The company already is monitoring bird deaths in cooperation with state and federal agencies, he said. The Ivanpah plant is expected to generate enough carbon-free electricity for 140,000 homes when running at peak capacity. "Climate change is by far the biggest concern for all forms of wildlife on the planet, and we have spent millions of dollars on projects like Ivanpah in our quest to find ways to provide clean, sustainable and renewable energy," Holland said.

The federal analysis says the number of birds killed around the towers could be far higher than the tallies being reported to state and federal agencies. Data compiled by BrightSource says that in 2013, 135 dead birds were found at Ivanpah. At two plants that use different technologies — Genesis, west of Blythe, and Desert Sunlight, north of Desert Center— the numbers were 140 and 105, respectively, according to the

*(continued, Solar, page 4)*

## Birds of Joshua Tree National Park

### Information

Date/ Time: Friday, May 2, 6 pm – 8 pm

Saturday, May 3, 7:30 am – 4 pm

Sunday, May 4, 7 am – 1 pm

Meet at: Black Rock Visitor Center

9800 Black Rock Canyon, Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Instructor: Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology, Professor of Natural Resources at College of the Desert in Palm Desert, CA

### Overview

The deceptively barren Mojave Desert landscape is home and resting grounds for numerous endemic and migratory bird species. Joshua trees do not make a typical forest, the landscape is open, the climate dry and vegetation relatively sparse. Despite this, over 240 species of birds have been recorded in Joshua Tree National Park! Kurt Leuschner, Professor of College of the Desert, Palm Desert, will guide this three-day field class through the Mojave and Colorado Deserts to identify common and rare birds. Leuschner's focus will be on identifying individual species and separating summer and winter residents from true migrants. He will discuss nesting and feeding habits, interactions with plant life, and adaptive strategies. Participants will have the thrill of identifying the park's common spring bird species, better understand the role each plays in the high desert ecosystem, and have the chance of sighting rare species like the Pinyon Jay, Prairie Falcon, or Lawrence's Goldfinch.

### Itinerary

Friday, May 2, 6 pm – 8 pm

*Black Rock Visitor Center*

\*Arriving early is recommended to bird the Black Rock Campground area – birds to look for include: Scott's Oriole, Pinyon Jay, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Cactus Wren, Black-throated sparrow, Bushtit, and Oak Titmouse.

6 pm, Introduction to ornithology, identification skills, field guides, and songs

7 pm, Resident species versus migrants: an overview of the birds JTNP

Saturday, May 3, 7 am – 1 pm

*Luckie Park*

Field class at Luckie Park, focus on migrants

Roaming field class in Joshua Tree National Park, focus on migrants

Lunch/snack break, **bring your own food**

Turn in field notes and take home quiz for students taking class for college credit

### What to Bring to the Course

#### Required Class Materials

Binoculars

#### Optional Class Materials

Bird guide, *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America* by Jon Dunn recommended

#### The 10 Essentials: Every day in the Desert

Day pack

4 quarts of water

Closed toe hiking shoes

Lunch and snacks

Clothing layers

Hat

Sun glasses

Sunscreen

Notebook and pencil/pen

Whistle

#### Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

#### Hike Level

Easy to Moderate

## Chapter Membership Renewal Information

We are changing our chapter membership billing procedures to simplify the process and get everyone on the same billing cycle. For the last several years we have not sent bills for chapter members, expecting members to pay on the honor system. This has not been effective, primarily because people expect a bill for their membership. As a result we have collected only a nominal amount of chapter dues.

The annual chapter membership dues are now \$24. Everyone will be converted to calendar year membership for this renewal. This is a billing notification for calendar 2014 chapter dues. If you paid a chapter membership in 2013 that extended into 2014, you may adjust your payment in 2014 to pay the unpaid 2014 months at \$2 per month. For example, if you paid your chapter membership in September 2013 through August 2014, you would pay \$8 ( four months unpaid in 2014) for your 2014 chapter dues.

Why do we have chapter dues? It's necessary to run our chapter activities, including the *Western Meadowlark* newsletter, quality speakers for monthly programs, and advocacy for conservation issues. If you pay dues to National Audubon, they provide the chapter with about \$2 per member for the entire year, which is woefully inadequate to run our chapter. While we encourage you to be a member of National Audubon, it is not mandatory.

We are taking steps to reduce costs, such as eliminating one issue of the newsletter, changing the paper and binding of the printed copy to save bulk rate postage, and keeping our administrative expenses to a bare minimum. We continue to ask members if they are willing to receive the Meadowlark online, rather than a printed copy. If you are willing to receive the newsletter online rather than in printed form, please indicate that on your chapter membership renewal.

**Chau-  
What?**

Chautauqua is an institution that began in the late 19th century to provide higher education opportunities through the combination of lectures, concerts, and public events. The institution grew from the early-American thirst for self-improvement and education and later evolved into a traveling movement or circuit that became most popular in the rural Midwest.

Chautauqua is an Iroquois word meaning either “two moccasins tied together” or “jumping fish.” Chautauqua is also a lake, a county, and a town in southwestern New York—home of the Chautauqua Institution.

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**Why a Bird Chautauqua in the Mono Basin?**

The Mono Basin is one of the most intensively studied natural areas in California. Research includes early surveys by Joseph Grinnell in 1915, the pioneering birding/conservation work of David Gaines and David Winkler in the late 1970s, and continues today with biologists from PRBO Conservation Science. Deep personal concern for the plight of birds sparked a legal struggle that resulted in the California Supreme Court’s 1983 Public Trust decision, which reaffirmed the state’s duty to balance the public trust with water allocations and thereby protect the people’s common heritage resources. Guided by this new direction, the state Water Resources Control Board modified the water diversion licenses of the City of Los Angeles in 1994. The decision is still in effect today, and science played a critical role in shaping the outcome..

This year marks the 23rd Anniversary of California Gull research at Mono Lake. Our understanding of these birds—and the roughly 1000 other species that depend on Mono Lake—has grown from the first ecological study of Mono Lake initiated in 1976. Because of the Mono Basin’s rich bird life, dramatic natural setting, scientific importance, and historical significance, it is an ideal location for a bird Chautauqua.



***Bird Chautauqua Mission:***

To enhance appreciation and understanding of the Mono Basin's diverse and abundant bird life and to educate the public about this area's value to birds and people.

**For more information or to register, please see [Chautauqua@monolake.org](mailto:Chautauqua@monolake.org)**

*Solar Continued*

**Western Meadowlark**

BrightSource data. According to the federal report, smaller birds may be burning up completely; injured ones may be dying off site; and those that fall to the ground may be carried away by scavengers.

Forensics lab staff observed a falcon or falcon-like bird with a plume of smoke streaming from its tail as it passed through the heat zone. The bird lost stability and descended, but the team could not locate it. The investigators could not identify many burning objects, which they call streamers.

“We observed many streamer events,” the report said. “It is claimed that these events represent the combustion of loose debris, or insects. Although some of the events are likely that, there were instances in which the amount of smoke produced by the ignition could only be explained by a larger flammable biomass such as a bird. Indeed, OLE (office of law enforcement) staff observed birds entering the solar flux and igniting, consequently becoming a streamer.

“OLE staff observed an average of one streamer event every two minutes.”

The report recommends a much more intensive study of what is happening to the wildlife. “There has to be more robust monitoring than we are asking the solar companies to undertake,” said Jill Birchell, a special agent in charge of law enforcement for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Pacific Southwest Region. The report, completed in January, was made public this week in response to a Freedom of Information Act request The Press-Enterprise filed in February. Investigators also examined bird deaths at Genesis, which uses curved mirrors to heat fluid in pipes, and Desert Sunlight, which relies on photovoltaic panels. At Ivanpah, three giant fields of mirrors — 160,000 panels in all — focus heat upward to the towers to make steam and generate power. The report did not identify which technology is more harmful, but Birchell said the operators of all three plants need to find ways to reduce the number of deaths. The authors of the report recommend that Ivanpah’s operators install video cameras to track birds entering and leaving heat zones. They also want two years of daily surveys for bird carcasses at the three plants and ask for strategies to discourage scavengers from carrying bird carcasses from the solar sites. The 28-page report further recommends that Ivanpah suspend operations during peak migration times for certain species. In February, David Crane, chief executive officer of NRG, told reporters at a plant dedication ceremony that he wants to get the number of bird deaths at Ivanpah down to zero. Officials representing the Genesis and Desert Sunlight have said earlier this year they that are working with federal and state officials to reduce bird deaths.



**Feed Your Yard Birds and Help SBVAS**

Wild birdseed will be sold at all general meetings of SBVAS as a regular fundraiser for the organization. The seed is a good blend for the area and will be available in 25 pound bags for \$20. To get your seed and help SBVAS maintain a regular monthly fundraiser, please pay at the sales table and get a receipt. Then see Kirk Stitt in the parking lot to load your seed. If possible, you should preorder seed by phoning Kirk at (909) 886-5513. Leave a message about the type of seed you want (thistle, black-oil sunflower, or general purpose mix) and your seed will be ready for pickup at the next general meeting.



### Saturday-Sunday, July 12-13, 2014 Greenhorn Mountains & the Southern Sierra

**Steve Myers (951) 634-9767**

We will meet at 7:00 am (for breakfast), or 7:45 am (if you don't want breakfast) at Cheryl's Diner in Kernville (11030 Kernville Rd, Kernville, CA 93238-9765; [map](#)). From Kernville we will head up into the 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 Pacific Wren. On Saturday night we will be camping at the Long Meadow group campground (toilets, but no water), just north of the Trail of 100 Giants (Sequoias!). We will visit nearby Holey Meadow, which is a great place for Flammulated Owl. Among the other localities visited on this trip will be the Trail of 100 Giants, Portuguese Pass, Tiger Flat, Sherman Pass, and possibly Kennedy Meadows. Be sure to have adequate food and water to last from Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon. We usually plan to stop at a restaurant for an early dinner before heading back to the Inland Empire on Sunday. This trip can be terrific for montane birds, butterflies, small mammals, and herps, and the scenery is unsurpassed!

### Saturday, July 26, 2014

#### Insane Jaunt to the Salton Sea

**Tom Benson (909) 648-0899**

How would you like to see birds like Wood Stork, Stilt Sandpiper, Laughing and Yellow-footed Gulls, Gull-billed and Black Terns, Burrowing Owl, Gila Woodpecker, 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?). **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 (top off in Indio). Meeting place will be at the Salton Sea NWR Headquarters (map). Going south on Hwy 111 along the east shore of the Salton Sea, turn right at Sinclair Road which is signed for the Sonny Bono Salton Sea Nat'l Wildlife Refuge and Red Hill. Salton Sea NWR Headquarters is at the end of Sinclair Road 5.5 miles from Hwy 111. If you reach the town of Calipatria on Hwy 111 you have gone 3 miles too far. We'll meet at 6:00 am, just before sunrise to beat the heat as much as we can, and we'll bird until we've had enough. 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 Calipatria and Brawley for those wishing to spend Friday night in the area..

### SBVAS Officers 2013/2014

[www.sbvass.org](http://www.sbvass.org) &  
[www.inlandplanet.org](http://www.inlandplanet.org)

President: Kirk Stitt	(909) 886-5513
First Vice-President, Program Chair: Dori Myers	(714) 779-2201
Second Vice President: Dave Woodward	(909) 783-2417
Treasurer: Nancy Higbee	(951) 780-9236
Secretary, Meadowlark Editor: Linda Stitt	(909) 886-5513

### Directors

Field Trips: Gene Cardiff	(909) 875-5358
Mountain Conservation Issues: Peter Jorris	(909) 867-3536
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Dave Woodward	(909) 783-2417
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Seth Shtier	(760) 332-9776
Steve Myers	(951) 634-9767
Deb Bennett	(951) 544-2650
Cin Greyraven	(909) 720-0138
Nancy Manning	(909) 337-9401

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

MEMBERSHIP:	
FIELD TRIPS: Gene Cardiff	(909) 875-5358
CONSERVATION: Drew Feldmann	(909) 881-6081

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[greyraven@wildmail.com](mailto:greyraven@wildmail.com)

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

SBVAS BOOKSTORE AND GIFT SHOP:

Nancy Manning (909) 337-9401

### CALENDAR

**Board Meetings:** May 7 and June 4, 2014

**General Meetings:** May 21 and June 18, 2014

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. Meetings, except potlucks, start at 7:30 and doors open at 7. Potlucks begin at 6:30.

### 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 turn-off. 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 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 now on Facebook. 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.



**Saturday, May 3, 2014 - 7:00 am  
Big Morongo Preserve**

**Chet McGaugh (951) 781-3699**

The first week in May is about the best time for observing migrant land birds in Southern California and Big Morongo is one of the best places for it. In addition to migrant warblers, vireos and flycatchers, we expect to see the breeding specialties including Vermilion Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole and Hooded Oriole. Join us for a morning birdwalk on the trails and roads of the preserve and surrounding areas. We will meet at the preserve parking lot at 7:00 am ([map](#)). To get there, take I-10 to Highway 62, go north ten miles to Morongo Valley, then turn right on Park Avenue to Covington Park. Turn left at Covington Park, then do a quick right-left-right into the preserve. Weather is typically good this time of year. Bring water, snacks and lunch if you plan to make a day of it. Some of us will probably stay out all day. Who knows where the afternoon will lead us?

**Sunday, May 4, 2014 - 8:00-10:00 am**

**Beginning Bird Walk**

**Leader to be announced**

**Sunday, May 4, 2014 - 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 figure eight loop hike through the fragmented chaparral and sage scrub and past several springs. A few of the other resident and/or breeding birds to be expected on the trip include Greater Roadrunner, Black-chinned and Costa's Hummingbirds, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Wrentit, Rock and Canyon Wrens, California Thrasher, and Bullock's and Hooded Orioles. We will, of course, also be hoping for a nice crop of migrants including flycatchers, vireos, warblers, buntings, grosbeaks, and ??? Over 170 species of birds have been recorded in the Box Springs, but 40 species is a more

**Calendar for Field Trips 2013 to 2014**

**May 3, 2013 - 7:00 am, Big Morongo Chet McGaugh (951) 781-36**

**May 4, 2014 - 8:00-10:00 am, Beginning Bird Walk location and, leader TBA**

**May 4, 2014 - 8:00 am, Box Springs Mountain John Green (951) 686-2956**

**May 10, 2014 - 8:00 am, Whitewater Canyon Steve Myers (951) 634-9767**

**May 17, 2014 - 9:00 am, Baby Birds at Bearpaw Ranch Cin Greyraven (909) 794-0509**

**May 18, 2014, Dos Palmas-NESS, John Green (951)686-2956**

**June 7, 2014 - 7:30 am, Wrightwood & Blue Ridge Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358**

**June 15, 2014, San Bernardino Mountains Brad Singer (909) 838-7951**

**July 12-13, 2014, Greenhorn Mountains & the Southern Sierra Steve Myers (951) 634-9767**

**July or August, 2014 - 6:00 am, Insane Jaunt to the Salton Sea Tom Benson (909) 648-0899**

**!!!Special Notice Regarding Field Trips!!!**

**High School students and other underage minors will not be allowed on field trips without a parent or a teacher/advisor with a parent permission slip accompanying them.**

**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... ☺

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. THIS INCLUDES RATTLESNAKES, which have been encountered on the trip in recent years. Other concerns include ticks, poison oak, and stinging nettle. None of these are abundant, and can be avoided with reasonable care. The walk is all on official trails, but some are narrow. The full hike is about 3.5 miles, with a couple of climbs, and a maximum elevation gain of about 650 feet. Those not wanting eight (that first loop is about 1.25 miles and 450 foot elevation gain). Expect to arrive back at the parking lot by lunchtime. We will meet at 8:00 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 10, 2014 - 8:00 am  
Whitewater Canyon****Steve Myers (951) 634-9767**

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 Conservancy. 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 ([map](#)). 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 17, 2014 - 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 ([map](#)). 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.

**Sunday, May 18, 2014****Dos Palmas- NESS****John Green (951) 686-2956**

If you've never been to Dos Palmas Oasis, it is a fascinating place to see. Large freshwater ponds and marshes are fed by artesian wells associated with the San Andreas Fault, all surrounded by desert. Thousands of fan palms (not just dos) are scattered in groves throughout. The oasis supports Clapper Rails, Black Rails, Least Bitterns and other marsh birds. Our chances of seeing those skulkers are slim, but we can always dream! We'll hope for a good migrant day, and for views of other local birds such as Phainopeplas, Abert's Towhees, Verdins, and maybe even a Crissal Thrasher. The rare Flat-tailed Horned Lizard is reputed to live here as are endangered Desert Pupfish. We will spend the morning walking, so wear comfortable shoes and be prepared for possible heat. There is often shade available, but not always. Have plenty of water,

snacks, and your lunch. We may do additional birding after lunch if there is interest. Meet at the Giant AM PM in Mecca (insert map link or address: 90480 66th Ave, Mecca, CA 92254) at 6AM. I will be parked in the southeast corner of the complex unless that area is full. Wherever I am, I will set up a scope to help make my location apparent.

**Saturday, May 31, 2014****San Bernardino Mountains****Brad Singer (909) 838-7951**

The San Bernardino Mountains trip will meet outside the Starbucks 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 14, 2014 - 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. Please don't forget: you will need an Adventure Pass (we will stop at the ranger station).



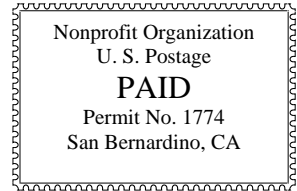
Rufous Hummingbird photo courtesy of Kirk Stitt



May/August 2014

Western Meadowlark

**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 Wed.  
General meetings are the 3rd Wed.  
SBVAS Membership currently at 2,393

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 @ \$24 a/year (includes subscription to *The Western Meadowlark*)

\_\_\_I wish to receive the *Western Meadowlark* **only** electronically

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Please enclose a check payable to SBVAS



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\_\_\_NAS New Member/ Gift Membership \$20 (renewal will be \$35, includes 1 year of *Audubon* magazine, 1 year Chapter membership, 1 year subscription to *Western Meadowlark* if in SBVAS area)

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Please make check payable to National Audubon Society

SBVAS Chapter  
C4ZC110Z

Please clip and mail all memberships to: SBVAS Membership Chair  
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