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Now on the Web!

After this last paper issue, all of our newsletters will be sent to your email address in a printable form. (If you have no email, we will print and mail you a newsletter). This paperless switch serves many good purposes:

1. We save money on paper and postage
2. We can send newsletters more often than twice a year
3. We can send you timely reminders about walks and court dates you might want to attend
4. You will be able to make one-time and eventually monthly donations online, using your credit card.

Please take a moment and send us an email so you will be sure to receive the next newsletter! Send your email to:
northfriends@northfriends.org



Rosedith Marx teaches Alissa Murphy (second from right) about birding during a spring walk in the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. *Photo by Jim Crandall*

Ninth Grade Biology Students

By Rosedith Marx

Walks of March 26, 2011 and May 14, 2011 were attended by people of different backgrounds, but especially by two high school students. They came out for a high school biology project in bird identification. The walks do seem all worthwhile when a new birder is born. Birding is not just a passion; it's also about the environment.

The March Bird Walk was lead by Joyce Schwartz, Rosedith Marx and Sue Nash. The first student was able to see fifty bird species to meet the requirement of her biology class project. Dave Furseth added his expert eye in the location of several bird species.

The May walk was lead by Gordon Pratt and Sue Nash. Joyce Schwartz and I were also there to aid in bird identifications. The group was joined by the Murphy family. Alissa Murphy also needed to identify fifty birds for her biology project. Before we finished the walk, Miss Murphy was able to get her required fifty birds and more.

Here is a wonderful letter that Joyce and I received in thanks for our help

See Students, page 2

Students

Continued from page 1

in Miss Murphy completing her project. I hope others that go birding will be as enriched as this student was. It does appear that a new birder is born.

Dear Joyce and Rosedith,

This note is long overdue, but I wanted to send our thanks all the same. Back in mid-May, my daughter Alissa had a bird identification project due in her 9th-grade biology class. We came to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, where both of you assisted her for hours in identifying birds. She saw so many that she far surpassed the project's requirement of identifying 50 birds. I think her final total number was 77! She was also able to get a lot of terrific photos to use in her project.

Her teacher was very impressed with her project. It earned Alissa the full number of points possible, and she received a grade of A and her teacher's comment, "Awesome project!" I was proud of her & all the hard work she had put in, but she (we) couldn't have done it without your patient and expert guidance. Thank you both, so much, for helping to turn my daughter into an enthusiastic birder! I've noticed since that project that she pays attention to birds she sees now, and often points out the unusual ones to me. I think you've given her skills she'll enjoy for a lifetime.

Thank you again for the good work you do! I hope the SJWA remains protected space for a long time to come.

—Best, Donna J. Murphy

I have found that birding is contagious. I will never look at birds the same way nor the environments they live in and how their presence affects our world. One of the purpose of the bird walks and other nature walks are to encourage awareness of our plants, animals, etc. and important they are plus the pure enjoyment of still being able to see them. Roger Tory Peterson summed it up by his observations of bird arrivals and departures as a biological clock and litmus test as to how well the environment is doing.—*Rosedith Marx*



A Tricolored Blackbird directs tour goes to the starting point, while a Snowy Egret goes out on a limb during a nature walk last spring. Photos by Donna Murphy

Bird Checklist for Beginning Birders

Rosedith Marx has shortened the exhaustive list of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area for beginning birders which shows 175 of the over 350 birds on the exhaustive list prepared by Doug Morton and others. This is the list we are now distributing on our birding walks. Both list can be downloaded at www.northfriends.org before you come on our walks.

On our website you can also find more about the SJWA and Friends; nature walks, take action, membership, contacts; past newsletters; online donations and signing up for email delivery of newsletters and bulletins.

The petition we filed in 2007 is now at the CA Supreme Court

This is not as exciting as it sounds. Friends lost our appeal based on a new issue which was never heard of before and which neither party had an opportunity to brief, which effectively nullified the judgment in the Friends' favor, requiring the DFG to prepare a CEQA document before completing the San Jacinto Wetlands Restoration Project on the SJWA. We have filed a petition with the Supreme Court asking them to order the court of appeal to grant our petition for rehearing, vacate what we believe is a legally inadequate opinion and to allow us to file a new brief on our appeal. The chances of obtaining review by the Supreme Court are extremely slim, but we are guardedly hopeful of a good outcome for the environment.



Hearing set for January 27 on Villages of Lakeview housing project

The Friends and Sierra Club (joined in separate suits by Center for Biodiversity, San Bernardino Valley Audubon, and the City of Riverside) filed lawsuits to vacate the approval of this 11,000 unit housing project on the southern boundary of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area and adjacent to the community of Nuevo/Lakeview. The hearing, open to the public of course, will be held in downtown Riverside on Friday, January 27, at 9:30 a.m. in Dept. 10, Judge Sharon J. Waters. The main issues in the lawsuits are the problems associated with the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Extraordinary General Plan Amendment.

- The fundamentally inadequate greenhouse gas analysis
- The cursory analysis of the project impacts on air quality and related health effects.
- The lack of analysis of the project impacts on regional traffic
- The faulty noise analysis
- The inadequate analysis of the project impacts on the MSHCP (multi-species habitat conservation plan)
- The failure to analyze the Project's growth-inducing impacts
- The failure to include the required off-site alternative to the project
- The massive New Town of Lakeview is inconsistent with fundamental provisions of the County General Plan
- The County's findings regarding the "Extraordinary Amendment" to the General Plan are not legally adequate.

Watching the experienced attorneys from Shute, Mihaly, Weinberger, (hired by Friends with your help) as they argue each of these issues before the judge will be an exciting experience. More information about the lawsuit and updates or changes to this and any future hearing dates are available at www.northfriends.org

We thank each and every one of you for your financial and moral support through this long legal process, which will be probably be appealed, no matter who prevails at the trial court. Your attendance at the hearing will encourage the Friends and our attorneys!

T-shirt logo contest for the San Jacinto Wildlife Area

We are asking for a new design for the Friends T-shirt... submit your work of art which can be made into a t-shirt... the design should somehow let people know just by looking that this is a special part of the SJWA. It should include the name Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley and our website www.northfriends.org. The Board will take all submittals by email to our webpage and will either make a selection or post all the submissions and let our members vote. We do not have any preconceived notions at this time but want it to be an advertisement for the SJWA and to portray your favorite experiences at SJWA.



Extinction Jeopardy

By Tom Paulek

On the Friend's May, 2011 nature walk on the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, we were fortunate to locate, observe and photograph all three of the federally listed plant species occurring on the wildlife area.

The San Jacinto Valley crownscale (saltbush) is a federal endangered species (October, 1998) while the spreading navarretia and the threadleaf brodiaea are listed as threatened species.

The San Jacinto crownscale has a very narrow range and is only found in western Riverside County. The crownscale is restricted to highly alkaline and silty-clay soils characteristic to the Mystic Lakebed and the downstream San Jacinto River floodplain.

Essentially, all the habitat for the San Jacinto crownscale identified by the U S Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) as essential for its survival lies within the boundaries of the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) approved in 2004.

Recently, the Service declined to designate these lands "Critical Habitat" under the Endangered Species Act, citing implementation of the MSHCP as superior conservation.

Unfortunately, ongoing poor implementation and outright disregard for the terms and conditions of the MSHCP and its Implementation Agreement (IA) by the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), the Riverside County Environmental Programs Department (EPD), and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) have once again squarely placed the San Jacinto Valley crownscale on the path to extinction.



San Jacinto Crownscale



Threadleaf Brodiaea



Spreading Navarretia



Nature walks and field trips at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area

We invite people to the SJWA so they grow to love it as much as we do. We believe you take care of what you love and you love what you take care of. In addition, just being on the SJWA is an awesome educational and recreational experience, whether you are birding, botanizing, bugging or just enjoying a walk or (mechanical) bike ride. The gate is open daylight hours 365 days a year [see hunting season closures below], you can walk anywhere you want and drive on five miles of well-maintained roads. We hope you come back to this National Treasure over and over again! For more information call Sue Nash 909-228-6710 or Tom Paulek (951-659-2718). All Friends walks are free and open to all. Children are welcome! Binoculars and bird books can be borrowed for the day.

Bug Walk

Sun., Oct. 9, 2011, 1-4 p.m.

Bugs, we love them, loathe them, and they are our friends. Join us while we learn about the importance of bugs and how valuable they are in the cycle of life. This walk is excellent for kids and adults who are curious and want a hands on experience. Butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies, beetles, ants and many others will be seen. Bring a hand lens and butterfly net, if you have one. Leaders: Gordon Pratt and Sue Nash (909-228-6710)

Beginning Birding Walks (Audubon)

Sundays, 8-10 a.m.

Nov. 6, 2011, Jan. 1 & Mar. 4, 2012

These are slow-paced walks to introduce participants to basic birding techniques and identification skills so you will feel comfortable birding on your own or joining Audubon's lon-

Schedule of Nature Walks at SJWA October 2011 – March 2012

(Schedule is subject to change.)

Subject/Host	Date
Bugs w/Gordon (Friends)	Sun., Oct. 9, 1-4 p.m.
Beginning Birding (Audubon)	Sun., Nov. 6, 8-10 a.m.
Birds with Rosedith and Joyce	Sun., Nov. 13, 9-11 a.m.
100 Birds (Audubon)	Sun., Nov. 20, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.
Birds with Rosedith and Joyce	Sun., Dec. 11, 9-11 a.m.
Beginning Birding (Audubon)	Sun., Jan. 1, 8-10 a.m.
Birds with Rosedith and Joyce	Sun., Jan. 8, 9-11 a.m.
Birds with Rosedith and Joyce	Sun., Feb. 12, 9-11 a.m.
Beginning Birding (Audubon)	Sun., Mar. 4, 8-10 a.m.
Birds with Rosedith and Joyce	Sun., Mar. 11, 9-11 a.m.

ger birding trips. In addition to these walks on the wildlife area, San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society organizes and sponsors Beginning Birding and all day bird walks throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and beyond. Please check their website at www.sbvas.org for all of their walks and for their NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT POLICY. Doug Karalun, 909-425-5355

Bird Walks

With Rosedith and Joyce

Sundays, 9-11 a.m., Dec. 11, 2011,

Jan. 8, Feb. 12 & March 11, 2012

The open fields, ponds and five miles of riparian habitat are great places to see birds of prey, waterfowl and songbirds. Come and join Rose and Joyce on the best places on the 10,000 acre Davis Road unit of the wildlife area to observe birds feeding, mating, nesting and watching us watching them. The second Sunday of every month (except summer). Leaders: Rosedith Marx (951-321-9812) and Joyce Schwartz.

100 Birds (Audubon)

Sun., Nov. 20, 2011, 7 a.m.-dark Northern San Jacinto Valley

The San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society has two goals for this field trip: to have fun and to see 100 birds. The northern San Jacinto Valley is known for its high species diversity; it has ranked highest in number of bird species seen for inland area in North America for Audubon's Christmas Bird Counts; and are usually in the top 1-2% for all counts. Leaders: Tony Metcalf (951-242-7038) and Dave Woodward (909-783-2417).

Hunting Season Closures at SJWA

The wildlife area on the east side of Davis Road is closed to the non-hunting public during the waterfowl season every Wednesday and Saturday from October 23rd to January 28th and February 4th. The east side is also closed for pheasant hunting on Monday November 14th, 21st, 28th; December 5th, 12th, 19th and Sunday

Continued on next page

Nature Walks

Continued from previous page

November 13th and Dec. 18th, 2011. Call the area office to confirm these dates (951-928-0580)

Lake Perris Bird Walks

Lake Perris hosts two monthly bird walks. On the 2nd Saturday of every month, meet at Bernasconi Beach at 8 a.m. On the 4th Sunday of every month, meet at Lot 12 at 9 a.m. There is an entrance fee per vehicle. You can obtain information about park fees and annual passes at <http://>

Directions

All walks begin in the SJWA headquarters parking lot, 17050 Davis Road, Nuevo CA. Tel. (951-928-0580) Because Davis (Theodore) Road is closed from Moreno Valley the only access is north off the Ramona Expressway — despite what your GPS may tell you. There is now a traffic light on Davis Rd.

From Moreno Valley: go south on Perris Blvd; east on

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23887.

You can email leader Rosedith Marx for more information at rocking-wren@hotmail.com (951-940-5647; 951-940-5600).

Christmas Bird Count at SJWA, Dec. 2011

San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

Check www.sbvas.org and www.northfriends.org for dates to be determined. The National Audubon Christmas Bird Counts will take place in various locations throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties from December 14, 2011- January 5, 2012.

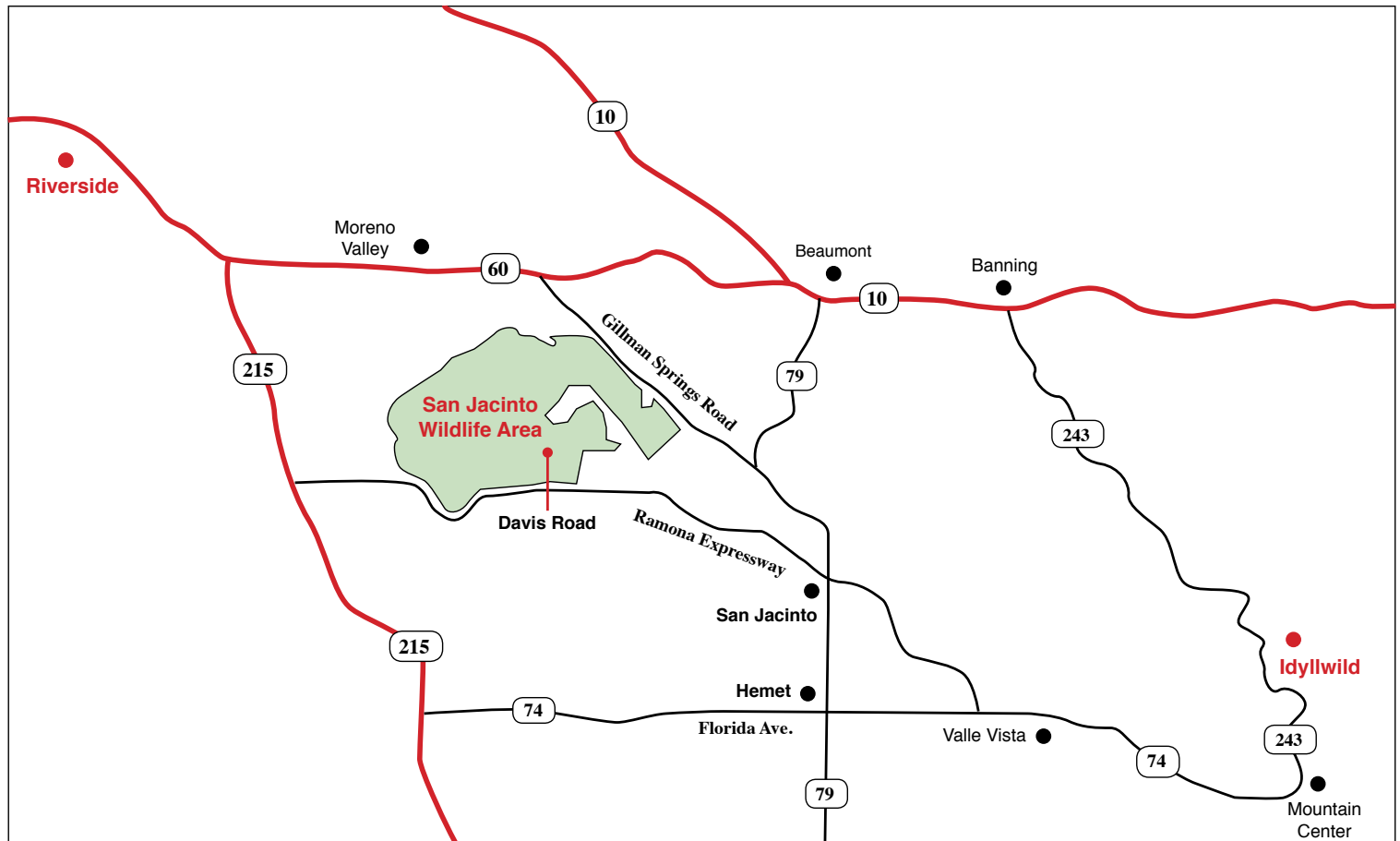
The CBC on the SJWA usually takes place on a Tues. and begins at 6 a.m. These are dawn to past dusk events and all levels of birders are welcome for all or part of the day. Help collect scientific information on the presence and number of birds, needed to preserve the SJWA and all areas of importance to birds and other wildlife. The northern San Jacinto Valley is known for its high species diversity; it has ranked highest in number of bird species seen for inland areas in North America for Audubon's Christmas Bird Counts; and is usually in the top 1-2% for all counts.

Ramona Expressway; north 2.3 miles on Davis Rd.

From San Jacinto/Hemet: go west on Ramona Expressway; north 2.3 miles on Davis Rd.

From Interstate 215: go east on Ramona Expressway; 2.3 miles north on Davis Road.

USE EXTREME CAUTION. If raining, call area office for road conditions: (951) 928-0580.



New board members

This spring, long time Board members Ann McKibben, George Hague, Paul Prado and Doug Morton all resigned from the Board. We appreciate all the work they have done for up to the last 20 years for Friends and wish them all well in their ongoing work to protect the environment. Sue Nash, Tom Paulek, Greg Ballmer and Jane Block remain on the Board. Nanette Pratini, Susannah Buchandt and Rosedth Marx are our new Board Members. Go to northfriends.org for contact information.

With all the work that needs to be done to protect the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, we really really need the help of more Board members—especially if you are skilled [or interested in becoming skilled] in leading walks of all kinds; balancing books and preparing tax returns; reviewing and commenting on CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) documents — including attending meetings with and before elected officials; tabling environmental events; handling correspondence; writing articles for the newsletter; leading walks for students [the San Jacinto Center for Environmental Education duties and bank account has now been combined with Friends]; and other duties as assigned or created. The Board has been in existence for 20 years and in addition to adding environmental education responsibilities, needs to revisit our mission and vision statements to discuss adding, among other concerns, Global Warming and Environmental Justice.

If you are interested, please call or email Sue Nash and we will let you know when and where the next Board meeting will be held (usually a Tuesday 6 p.m. dinner at a restaurant in Hemet or Moreno Valley). You are welcome to join us, get more information and see if you have the time for one meeting every other month, plus other duties of several hours each month.



The Western Forktail damselfly may be seen buzzing around at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. Photo by Greg Ballmer

Some common insects observed at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Greg Ballmer, retired UCR Entomologist)

The San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA) is crawling with arthropods. They are also swimming in the water, flying in the air, and burrowing in the soil. While California's natural communities of plants and animals are in serious decline in many other places, the SJWA encompasses healthy examples of several habitats, each with its own distinct complement of plants and animals, the most numerous of which are arthropods (chiefly insects, mites, and spiders). Unlike vertebrate organisms, which have internal bony skeletons, arthropods have a chitinous [a tough semitransparent substance that forms part of the protective outer casing cuticle of some insects and other arthropods] exoskeleton, which must be shed periodically as they grow; this physiological imperative is the key to their unsurpassed diversity and abundance. The rest of this fascinating article, along with pictures, can be found at www.northfriends.org Check it out and look for future additions on the website and in our newsletter.

Wanted: Submissions For Future Newsletters

The Friends welcome articles for the newsletter, subject to the Board's review and approval, regarding any and all issues relating to the SJWA. We want to know about any issue of concern to you, a great birding day, book or movie reviews about the environment, poems, photos, etc. Submit your contributions to northfriends@northfriends.org and will include as many as possible in future issues.

FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN
SAN JACINTO VALLEY
P.O. Box 4266
Idyllwild, CA 92549

NEWSLETTER
October, 2011

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Membership/Donation Form

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Idyllwild, CA 92549
e-mail: northfriends@northfriends.org

The Friends is a 501(c)(3) organization.
 I would like to volunteer for the Friends

Make sure we have your email address.

This is the last issue of the newsletter that will be mailed to the general membership. From now on the newsletter will be emailed, and also available for viewing and downloading online.

IMPORTANT!

Email us asking to be included on the email list.
Send the email to:

northfriends@northfriends.org