

Birds of the Mojave Desert: Natural History & Conservation

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 21, 22, 23, 2011 beginning Friday at 8:00 P.M. and ending Sunday at 3:00 P.M.

INSTRUCTOR: Kurt Leuschner

Oases in the Mojave Desert are used by a wide variety of bird species every fall as stopping points during their southward migration. You will be amazed by the numbers and kinds of species we will encounter at this time of year. Beginning on Friday evening we will examine the important role of these stopover areas in the conservation of neotropical migrant birds and learn the techniques used to identify the common families of birds found in the vicinity of the Desert Studies Center. As we observe both migrant and resident birds in their natural habitats, we will learn about their ecology, natural history and special adaptations to the harsh desert environment.

Natural and Cultural History of the Mojave National Preserve Part2: Clark Mountain to Mitchell Caverns – The High Country

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 28, 29, 30, 2011 beginning Friday at 8:00 P.M. and ending Sunday at 3:00 P.M.

INSTRUCTOR: Robert Fulton

The Mojave National Preserve encompasses a region of remarkable landscape diversity. This class will explore those areas of the Preserve between 3,500 and 5,000 feet.

Our home base will be the oasis at Soda Springs, where the California State University operates a field station on the site of the former Zzyzx Mineral Springs Resort. Class begins Friday evening with an introductory lecture and slide presentation on the Preserve's diversity. Saturday we will begin our exploration in Shadow Valley (4,000 feet), visiting the Valley Wells mill and smelter site, where some of the workers lived underground in "miner's condos." We will then travel to the Copper World Mine in Clark Mountain, which supplied the mill and smelter, exploring the plant and animal communities along the way. After lunch at the mine, we will travel through a portion of the world's largest Joshua Tree forest flanking the famous Cima Dome, en route to the Cow Cove petroglyph site, one of the richest cultural sites in the eastern Mojave (an easy 2 mile round trip hike).