

KITE TALES

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 1970

"THEN CAME BRONSON"

The October meeting of the Redwood Region Ornithological Society will be held on Thursday, October 8 in Room 221 of the Charles Darwin Hall of Science at Sonoma State College. The program will start at 8:00 p.m. and features Dr. Ronald Bronson, a pediatrician from Monterey. Dr. Bronson was, incidentally, a classmate of our own Dr. Parmeter in the 1957 Class of the U.C. Medical School. He served as the physician for an expedition to the Galapagos Islands and he will relate some of his experiences there and show slides of the area to us.

You are invited to remain after the program for a fellowship period at which refreshments will be available thanks to the kindness of Mrs. Irma Schallert. We also offer our thanks to the McLeans for those provided at the September meeting.

FIRST PRESIDENT HONORED

Our first president, Gordon L. Bolander, will be honored at this meeting. Gordon was one of the original "starters" of the R.R.O.S. along with the Tituses and Mike Parmeter. His term of office was in 1962-63.

He has been an active member in the Oakland Ornithological Club since its inception during his high school days. A big factor in the formation of that group in 1931 was the highly regarded Boy Scout Naturalist, "Bugs" Cain. Gordon also maintained active memberships in the Golden Gate Audubon Society and the Cooper Ornithological Club for many years.

His educational background includes summer work at Fresno State College at its Huntington Lake School, an AB in Zoology from the University of California, Berkeley, and an MA in Education from San Francisco State College. A term with the U.S. Army in the European Theater of Operations interrupted his education temporarily. During his college days he was employed as a Student-Biologist through the summers by the California Division of Fish and Game. Following his graduation, he worked eight years with that organization in game management. Not wishing to leave the Santa Rosa area, he resigned to take up his present teaching career. He has now been employed in the Santa Rosa Public Schools for the past nineteen years.

Always an avid birder, Gordon has amassed a California list of 364 species. According to the American Birding Association list of May 1970, this places him among the top 29 birders of the state with a listing of some 71% of those possible.

He has been an interested and helpful member of the RROS since its founding, is once again serving as editor of the KITE TALES, leads occasional field trips, and did NOT write this story. Credit Arnold and McLean for that,

OCTOBER TRIPS AFIELD

October 11. Offshore from Bodega. All reservations filled.

October 24. Tomales Bay, et al. Note set-back of the originally stated date of Oct. 17. Leader; Bolander. Meeting place; center of Pt. Reyes Station (you can't miss us!). Time; 9 AM. "Early birds" try the Nicasio Reservoir on the road from Petaluma. Look the sandpipers over carefully.

The Olema marsh, Tomales Bay, and Inverness Ridge are a sure bet to turn up something of interest. Come along with a lunch and a friend.

Keep in mind the week-end trip to Gray Lodge Refuge next month, 21st & 22nd. Plan to come on either day, or both. A great birding spot. Leader; Parmeter.

SEPTEMBER TRIP TO TUBB'S ISLAND

A group of fifteen observers were on hand for the RROS tour of this facility which has been taken over by the Nature Conservancy in anticipation of its becoming part of a more extensive National refuge. (Get those Sonoma County supervisors moving on this!). Under the leadership of Frank Beyer from Vallejo, the group observed a total of 40 species. The highlight of the day were a couple of highly obliging Baird Sandpipers which held their ground before a considerable battery of binoculars and 'scopes trained on them from a very close range. Of interest also were the large numbers of swallows, mostly Violet-greens, and Vaux Swifts in a migratory movement over the area. Well over a hundred White-tailed Kites were observed within the refuge boundaries. An attempted head-count was abandoned because of the confusing overlapping movements of the birds.

Species observed: (Refuge Area Only)

Western Grebe	Semipalmated Plover	Say Phoebe
Pied-billed Grebe	Killdeer	? Flycatcher (Empidonax)
Great Blue Heron	Black-bellied Plover	Violet-green Swallow
Common Egret	Long-billed Curlew	Tree Swallow
Snowy Egret	Willet	Barn Swallow
Black-cr. Night Heron	Greater Yellowlegs	Common Raven
Pintail	Least Sandpiper	Common Crow
Green-winged Teal	Baird Sandpiper	Common Bushtit
Shoveler	Short-billed ? Dowitcher	Long-billed Marsh Wren
Lesser ? Scaup	Western Sandpiper	Loggerhead Shrike
Turkey Vulture	Marbled Godwit	Yellowthroat
White-tailed Kite	American Avocet	Red-winged Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Ring-billed Gull	House Finch
Marsh Hawk	Forster Tern	Savannah Sparrow
Sparrow Hawk	Burrowing Owl	White-crowned Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Vaux Swift	Song Sparrow

also Western Meadowlark (overlooked)

We should like to issue a new membership list soon. Please be sure that your dues and all pertinent information regarding addresses and 'phone numbers are up to date. Help us to gather up the 'loose ends'. Remind others that "now is the time." Our dues are nominal; encourage others to attend our meetings and trips. We feel that all will gain.

"WHERE YA BEEN?"....."WHA' CHA SEE?".....

Our good president, Baron, has been gadding about a bit this summer and it has certainly paid off for him birdwise. At the Detert Reservoir on the Butts Canyon Road in Lake County he found five early returned White-fronted Geese on July 30 and had another sighting of the Roadrunner which seems to have established itself in the area just south of the reservoir. He added a Prairie Falcon and Yellow-billed Magpie to his year list while heading south through the San Joaquin Valley in July. Baron had the rather unique experience in that same month of having a Blue Grosbeak, two Rock Wrens, and three Cassin Kingbirds all in the field of his binoculars AT THE SAME TIME in Orange County. Other species sighted in the vicinity (Santiago Canyon Road) included: Roadrunner, Lawrence Goldfinch, Phainopepla, Ash-throated Flycatcher, California Thrasher, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, Hooded Oriole, Spotted Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Anna Hummingbird, Costa Hummingbird, Yellow-billed Magpie, and Cactus Wren.

The month of August found Baron on an offshore trip out of Monterey which yielded many New Zealand Shearwaters, a single Pale-footed Shearwater, Ashy and Black Petrels, Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers, a couple of Skua, many Sabine Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, Cassin and Rhinoceros Auklets, and an immature Pigeon Guillemot in its mottled garb. At Moss Landing, always a 'must' side jaunt to any Monterey excursion, he had both Ancient and Marbled Murrelets as well as Elegant Terns. The old faithful Flamingo was still there and apparently 'going strong'.

Going even farther afield, he participated in another offshore trip out from San Diego on September 12. Here he had a real ball with the sightings of two Red-billed Tropic-birds, Manx Shearwater, Xantus Murrelet, Black Petrel, Least Petrel, and many Arctic Terns. They found the Sooty Shearwaters to be out-numbered by the Pink-footed, and found all three species of Jaegers. Not letting down in the least, he spent the next day birding near San Diego and was rewarded with such gems as Royal Tern, Bobolink, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Dusky Flycatcher, California Thrasher, Sage and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, and the uncommon (there) Bullock Oriole. He also added Sage Thrasher and Brewer Sparrow on that date in Borrego Valley. There he paced a Roadrunner at 22 mph for quite a distance. (No wonder they show up in Lake County. He chases them there!) On the 14th he was at the Salton Sea where sightings of two groups of our only stork, the Wood Ibis, were welcome sights. 26 were found near the refuge headquarters and 16 along the east side. Eight Fulvous Tree Ducks were noted and single Brown Pelicans were seen at two different points. It was an early date but five Baird Sandpipers and six Dunlin were already on hand. He mildly complains that he did NOT see Boobies or Lesser Night-hawks nor the Laughing Gull that Wayne Tillay reported. (Cheer up, Baron, nobody sees them all. As it is, your listings include eight species I've never seen in the state at all, and I've been at it for quite a while!)

Closer to home, Baron notes that he found an American Redstart with some Townsend Warblers in the cypress grove in the north-east corner of Bodega Lagoon on September 29

It really is a shame to reduce Natalie Mestechin's charming account of her 'stand-out' birding episode of the summer. It seems she was abusing herself for getting some field guidance from a local birder near Farmington, New Mexico. She thought he'd be "wasting his time" showing her about amid his familiar local species. But, let her tell it:

"However, I must have brought him luck. As he stopped his truck in the first parking place we got to in that city park on San Juan River and we jumped out to start to walk, he froze: right in front of us, in a large cottonwood(?) that somehow was spared by the fire, sat a SCARLET Tanager ♂. No glasses or fumbling in the book were needed for that. I had seen them in their proper habitat back east, but this was a life bird for my guide*(Alan Nelson who reports counts to Field Notes).

"*and the last Tanager for him.

He has the full set now."

She also points out that Mr. Nelson organized the San Juan Bird Club. A good resource person should you be in that area, it would seem.

Bodega Lagoon holds an irresistable attraction for "Mike" Parmeter and he is often to be found there. On July 25 he and yours truly found Sooty Shearwaters in goodly numbers offshore from Bodega Head, spotted Black-legged Kittiwakes in the river at Jenner, had no less than eleven Marbled Murrelets in breeding plumage just outside the bar there (The sandbar, of course!), and recorded a group of eight Common Mergansers at Bridgehaven.

September 6 found Mike at the lagoon again and he noted two Red-necked Grebes, two Arctic Loons, and found that the Forster Terns had some most interesting company in the form of one Common and six Elegant Terns. He also located three Avocets and five Knots on that date.

Your editor can't compete with the likes of that but he did eke out the sighting of two Pectoral Sandpipers in the little stock pond just above the town of Bodega on September 12. He also had an 'almost certain' Summer Tanager at Timber Hill. Two Ruddy Turnstones were seen on August 29 at the unlikely site of Washoe Lake north of Carson City in Nevada.

Notes of this nature are always of interest to others. So let's hear from more of you. Sometimes it's a big help to people who are going into the areas that are reported on.

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