

Kite Tales

NOVEMBER

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Volume 21, Number 3 Sonoma County

1986

COMING ATTRACTIONS

November 13, Thursday, 7:30 PM - General Meeting

"The Cordell Banks: History, Geology and Invertebrate Life" will be presented as a slide-lecture by Dr. Robert Schmieder, an atomic physicist. Dr. Schmieder is the founder of Cordell Banks Expeditions, a non-profit organization established to explore underwater life and formations of the Cordell Banks. Dr. Schmieder has marvelous slides of activity along the Banks.

November 16, Sunday, 4:30 or 8 AM - Field Trip to Willow Creek Road

Those who want owling experience will meet Doug Ellis at 4:30 AM at the Occidental parking lot near Negri's Restaurant. Willow Creek Road is famous owling territory. Northern Pygmy, Spotted, Screech, Great Horned and Saw-whet have been seen or heard here. This is an opportunity for Breeding Bird Atlas observers to sharpen their skills with owl calls.

Those who prefer a later hour will meet at 8 AM at the same Occidental parking lot. The trip will end at Jenner. This whole route is prime winter bird habitat and should produce thrushes, wrens, woodpeckers, a few warblers, and water-birds at the mouth of the Russian River.

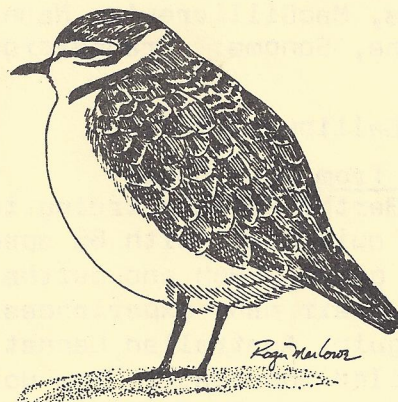
December 21, Sunday - RROS Santa Rosa Christmas Count

People who wish to sign up should see Doug Ellis at the November or December General Meetings; or they might write him at PO Box 155, Eldridge 95431.

December 28, Sunday - Madrone Audubon's Western Sonoma County Christmas Count

Betty Burrige is in charge of this one. Please let her know if you will participate, either at the RROS meetings or at 963 Crest Drive, Santa Rosa 95404; phone 527-0225.

Snowy Plovers nest
at Mono Lake.



OBSERVATIONS

Dick Ashford 996-7508
731 Austin St, Sonoma 95476

Marin Coast/Point Reyes National Seashore

9/27 - Drake's Beach Willows: Blackpoll Warbler (RR); Nunes Ranch: Blackpoll Warbler, Palm Warbler (BDP, HM, LH, GK); Abandoned Ranch: Tropical Kingbird (BDP, et al); Lighthouse quarters: Least Flycatcher (BDP, et al); Spaletta ponds: Pectoral Sandpiper, Common Snipe (BDP, et al); Abbott's Lagoon: Lesser Golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Ruff (BDP, et al).

10/4 - Following observations by BDP, LH:

Nunes Ranch: White-breasted Nuthatch, Solitary Vireo (plumbeus), Palm Warbler; Mendoza Ranch: Evening Grosbeak, Pectoral Sandpiper, Black-throated Gray Warbler; Spaletta ponds: Pectoral Sandpiper; Road-fork ponds: Hammond's Flycatcher, Bobolink, Hermit Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler; Fish Docks: Black-throated Gray Warbler.
In addition, this trip yielded many western migrants, including Hermit Thrush, Western Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Western Tanager, Western Bluebird.

10/5 - Limantour Estero: Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper (BDP).

10/6 - Spaletta Plateau: Lapland Longspur, Chestnut-collared Longspur (BDP).

10/11 - Spaletta Plateau: Red-throated Pipit (JH).

10/13 - Nunes Ranch: White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finches, White-breasted Nuthatch (DA); Mendoza Ranch: Greater Yellowlegs (DA).

Sonoma Coast

10/12- Pelagic trip out of Bodega Harbor to Cordell Banks. Observers: BDP, RS, EH, DS, DW.

Pacific Loon, Common Loon, Northern Fulmar, Pink-footed Shearwater, Buller's Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, Short-tailed Shearwater, Fork-tailed Storm Petrel, Red-necked Phalarope, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Parasitic Jaeger, South Polar Skua, Sabine's Gull, Arctic Tern, Common Murre, Xantus' Murrelet, Cassin's Auklet, Rhinoceros Auklet, Tufted Puffins. In addition, the following birds were seen offshore: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, Ruddy Duck and American Coot.

Highway 37 area

10/10- Skaggs Island: Winter roosting colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons is reestablished at Skaggs turnoff. Also there: Black-necked Stilt, Long-billed Curlew, American Avocet, Northern Pintail (DA).

10/16- Tubbs Island: Peregrine Falcon (M & BI)

Sonoma

9/26 - Residence, Vineburg: 6 warbler species, including Orange-crowned, Yellow, Wilson's, MacGillivray's, Nashville and Hermit (BM).

10/10- Residence, Sonoma: Orange-crowned, Yellow and Wilson's Warblers (DA).

Fremont

10/18- Purple Gallinule (RL)

Special Report from Down Under!

Bob and Bertha Rains' birding trip to the southern hemisphere appears to be going quite well with 86 species observed prior to joining their birding tour group. Bob and Bertha plan to be with us at the November meeting to share their many experiences. Some of their early observations are: Blue Penguin, Australian Gannet, Pacific Gulls, White-breasted Sea Eagle, Short-tailed Shearwater, New Holland Honeyeater, Gray Fantails, Blue Wren, Crimson Rosella, Orange-bellied Parrot, Purple-capped Lorikeet, Diamond Firetail, Owllet Nightjar and Laughing Kookaburra. We look forward to welcoming back Bob and Bertha at our next meeting.

Observers: Dick Ashford, Ed Harper, Joel Hornstein, Les Hood, Marge & Bruce Irwin, Guy Kay, Robin Leong, Bob McLean, Herb McGrew, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Bob & Bertha Rains, Ruth Rudesill, Debbie Shearwater, Rich Stallcup, Dave Wimpfheimer.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Bodega Bay produced 68 species for the six birders who joined Dr. Jack Arnold there on October 11. They were Dick Ashford, Robert Hagstrom, June C. Persson, Ruth Rudesill, and Jim and Jean Tonascia.

Most unexpected bird of the day was a single Snow Goose flying with a flock of Surf Scoters! Both White and Brown Pelicans put in an appearance. The complete list follows:

Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, American White Pelican, Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Brandt's Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Snow Goose, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, California Quail, Virginia Rail, American Coot, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, American Black Oystercatcher, Willet, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Black Turnstone, Surfbird, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Heermann's Gull, Mew Gull, Western Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Forster's Tern, Common Murre, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Scrub Jay, Common Raven, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Marsh Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch.

MONO LAKE UPDATE

Point Reyes Bird Observatory Biologist David Shuford has declared a banner year for Mono Lake's California Gulls. "Productivity could be the greatest since our California Gull studies began," said he. Shuford and his research team on July 7 tallied almost 26,000 chicks, about 6,000 more than last year.

At least part of this success is due to the increased flow of water into Mono Lake, which has once more made an island of Negit, prime breeding habitat for the gulls. Heavy rains in the last few years have allowed Mono Lake to rise 9 feet since 1982, restoring Negit to island status.

But the plug has now been pulled!

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power resumed diversions from Mono Lake's tributary streams August 6. Diversions stopped in February when torrential storms filled the aqueduct and reservoirs to capacity, forcing DWP to give the lake a drink. For the past six months, torrents of water have roared down Rush Creek and, intermittently, Lee Vining Creek. As a result, Mono Lake has risen to approximately 6,381 feet, its highest elevation since 1974.

When Lee Vining Creek became a live stream for the first time in years of diversion, trout found their way up it, as they did up Rush Creek two years ago. Suddenly the flow of water was cut off on Lee Vining when DWP resumed diversions, and the trout floundered in the rapidly drying stream.

Soon afterward, on August 12, the Mono Lake Committee brought suit and won the stream a reprieve. Mono County Superior Court Judge Edward Denton ordered DWP to release enough water to keep trout alive, at least until the case is tried. Denton has scheduled a January 15 trial date.

(continued next page)

(Mono Lake Update, continued)

For the next few months a minimum of 10 cubic feet per second will flow down Lee Vining Creek into Mono Lake. That's only a trickle, but, combined with the 19 cfs court-ordered minimum flow in Rush Creek, it's enough to slow the lake's decline.

The Lee Vining Creek case is based largely on the same laws which prevented DWP from drying up Rush Creek two years ago: violation of Fish and Game codes which require dam owners to release enough water to keep "in good condition" downstream fisheries. The Lee Vining Creek suit is the latest salvo in a raging legal battle to keep water flowing down all of Mono Lake's tributary streams to protect not only fish, but riparian vegetation, wildlife, recreation and other values as well.

...excerpted from MONO LAKE NEWSLETTER, Autumn, 1986; Vol. 9, No. 2

If you are not already a member of The Mono Lake Committee, you can join for \$20 and receive their quarterly NEWSLETTER. Your contribution will help in the fierce and costly legal fight with LADWP to keep the streams flowing into Mono Lake. Checks should be made to The Mono Lake Committee and sent to PO Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY was organized in 1962, to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife and their habitat. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, September through May, at 7:30 PM, in Room 221 of Darwin Hall, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

OFFICERS

- President - Janet Bosshard, 434 Hendley St, Santa Rosa 95404 526-5883
- Vice-President - Kurt Campbell, PO Box 268, Cotati 94928 664-0104
- Secretary - Ruth Rudesill, PO Box 371, Kenwood 95452 833-6026
- Treasurer - Wini Nelson, 400 Sunnyslope Ave, Petaluma 94952 762-6152
- Field Trips - Bob Rains, 450-A Las Casitas, Santa Rosa 95401 528-6785
- Observations - Dick Ashford, Jr, 731 Austin St, Sonoma 95476 996-7508
- Social - Shirley Myers, 4815 Valley Quail Lane, Santa Rosa 95401 823-9512
- Christmas Count - Doug Ellis, PO Box 155, Eldridge 95431 (work) 539-3443
- KITE TALES - Jean Smith, 519 Sunnyvale Dr, Healdsburg 95448 433-2542

Jean C. Smith
519 Sunnyvale Drive
Healdsburg, CA 95448

