

Kite Tales



Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 33 Number VI

February 1999

Coming Attractions

February 11th, Thursday, 7:30 PM - General Meeting
Darwin Hall, Room 221 - Sonoma State University, Cotati

Wilson's Weird & Wonderful Birds of New Zealand:

Ken Wilson, a native New Zealander, will share with us, some of the weird and wonderful New Zealand birds. Ken leads trips to New Zealand, Costa Rica, and other interesting bird oriented spots. With his camera always at hand, Ken has taken many pictures of his native land. This promises to be a treat for those of us that are arm-chair travelers.

February 12th to February 15th - Salton Sea International Bird Festival

The Salton Sea is one of the best birding spots in Western North America. Take this opportunity to add to your California list. Keynote speaker Ken Rosenberg will present "Birding Adventures in the Neotropical Rainforest".

For information call 760 344-5FLY or visit the website at www.imperial_county.com/birdfest

February 13th, Saturday, 8:00 AM - Field Trip to South Sonoma Valley

We will visit the Southern end of Sonoma County near San Pablo Bay - Tubbs Island, Skaggs Island, Ramal Road. There are large numbers of wintering waterfowl and raptors in this area. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Park & Ride at the intersection of Hwy 116 and 121 south of Sonoma. Bring scopes, lunch and all weather clothes. Leader: Ruth Rudesill 707 833-6026. Call for information or directions.

NOTE: There are currently no official plans for a Klamath Basin trip this year; however if someone is interested in making the trip on their own or organizing a group trip please call Ruth for information and advice.

February 20th, Saturday - Observations Deadline

The 20th is the deadline for Kite Tales observations. Please forward sightings to Ned Wynn 129-B Powell Ave. Healdsburg, Ca 95448 707 431-8412 or via email: ekwynn@sonic.net

February 25th, Thursday - Kite Tales deadline

Send announcements, articles, letters to the editor and such to Gerry Mugele
PO Box 813 Glen Ellen, Ca 95442 or via email: mewgull@ix.netcom.com

Good Birding Spots #5**Spring Lake Park**
by Mike Nelligan

Located in east Santa Rosa, Spring Lake was developed during the 1960s by the Sonoma County Water Agency as a flood control project. Created by a diversion of Santa Rosa Creek, the lake is about 20 acres while the park itself, including the lake, is approximately 314 acres.

Spring Lake Park is now operated as one of Sonoma County's Regional Parks and is open sunrise to sunset every day. Vehicular access is from Channel Drive just off Montgomery Drive or from Newanga Avenue, just off Summerfield Road. A visitor center is located inside the Channel Drive entry. A parking fee is charged at each entrance. Free access is provided by a 15 minute walk from the main parking lot for Howarth Park (lot next to Lake Ralphine) to Spring Lake. Besides the many trails, there are paved roads for driving, walking or bicycling over most of the park area.

Because of the varied topography, the bird sightings can be quite varied. The upland western portion is primarily oak woodland, and contains some stunted "pygmy" oaks. This area is home to 4 species of woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Western Bluebirds, American and Lesser Goldfinches, along with other less frequently seen species. The opposite side of Spring Lake Park (east side) meets the hills of Annadel State Park and contains some conifers. Here, you may see Pileated Woodpeckers, various warblers and sparrows, and owls (more likely to be heard than seen). The lake itself hosts many water birds, both migratory and resident.

Spring Lake Park, like other "Good Birding Spots" changes over the years, so those birders familiar with how it is now may find interesting the following recapitulation of how it was December 18, 1983. This list is taken from the RROS Christmas Bird Count done by Hal Corey - Spring Lake, Lake Ralphine and environs:

Red-throated loon, Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue

Heron, Green Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Mallard, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Black-shouldered Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, California Quail, Virginia Rail, American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker, Acorn Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Scrub Jay, Common Crow, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Plain Titmouse, Bushtit, Marsh Wren, Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, American Robin, Varied Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Western Bluebird, Golden-and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Brewer's Blackbird, Pine Siskin, Brown Towhee, Rufous-sided Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

So try birding Spring Lake Park yourself and see how the list has changed over 15 years.

Sad News

John McDonagh died Thursday morning after taking a sharp turn for the worse about two weeks ago.

Virginia says that he did not want a funeral or memorial service. She suggests memorial contributions might be made to Madrone Audubon Society Education Committee or to the Welfare League.

John became very active in Sonoma county birding from the 1980s, principally with Madrone Audubon. When Faye Beeman became ill, John quickly and enthusiastically filled in to lead the Wednesday Walks series. John spent many hours in the field each year and was a friend to birders. He will be missed.

Virginia can be reached at 1507 Hallmark Ct., Santa Rosa, Ca 95401 or by phone at 707 527-9115.

1998

3x5
Completed
1/16/99
E. Bovee

Kite Tales

February 1999

Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count *by Doug Ellis*

On December 20th 1998, a dusting of snow greeted the 34 participants of the 39th Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count. Despite the cold, the counters found 144 species and tallied a total of 28,717 birds. Highlights included a Common Loon, 88 White Pelicans, Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Ross' Goose, two Eurasian Wigeon, an immature Bald Eagle, three Ferruginous Hawks, four Thayer's Gulls, 98 Tree Swallows, two Violet-green Swallows and two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| ✓ Common Loon | 1 | Wild Turkey | 25 | Bushtit | 270 |
| ✓ Pied-billed Grebe | 84 | California Quail | 249 | Red-breasted Nuthatch | 2 |
| ✓ Eared Grebe | 33 | Virginia Rail | 4 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 38 |
| Western Grebe | 12 | Sora | 4 | Brown Creeper | 13 |
| Clark's Grebe | 2 | Common Moorhen | 4 | Bewick's Wren | 36 |
| ✓ White Pelican | 88 | American Coot | 1625 | Winter Wren | 13 |
| ✓ Double-crested Cormorant | 423 | Killdeer | 309 | Marsh Wren | 3 |
| American Bittern | 2 | Black-necked Stilt | 18 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 97 |
| Great Blue Heron | 33 | American Avocet | 54 | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 250 |
| Great Egret | 133 | Greater Yellowlegs | 12 | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | 2 |
| Snowy Egret | 215 | Long-billed Curlew | 64 | Western Bluebird | 202 |
| Cattle Egret | 48 | Least Sandpiper | 58 | Hermit Thrush | 73 |
| Green Heron | 9 | Dunlin | 90 | American Robin | 2825 |
| ✓ Blk-Crowned Night Heron | 17 | sandpiper sp. | 30 | Varied Thrush | 83 |
| ✓ Greater White-fronted Goose | 1 | Long-billed Dowitcher | 35 | Wrentit | 21 |
| ✓ Snow Goose | 2 | Common Snipe | 15 | Northern Mockingbird | 68 |
| ✓ Ross' Goose | 3 | Mew Gull | 183 | California Thrasher | 3 |
| Canada Goose | 427 | Ring-billed Gull | 474 | American Pipit | 141 |
| Wood Duck | 2 | California Gull | 392 | Cedar Waxwing | 99 |
| Green-winged Teal | 86 | Thayer's Gull | 4 | Loggerhead Shrike | 4 |
| Mallard | 985 | Glaucous-winged Gull | 22 | European Starling | 3050 |
| Northern Pintail | 71 | gull sp. | 545 | Hutton's Vireo | 26 |
| Cinnamon Teal | 1 | Rock Dove | 557 | Orange-crowned Warbler | 3 |
| Northern Shoveler | 152 | Band-tailed Pigeon | 75 | Yellow-rumped Warbler | 329 |
| Gadwall | 22 | Mourning Dove | 149 | Townsend's Warbler | 61 |
| ✓ Eurasian Wigeon | 2 | Barn Owl | 1 | Common Yellowthroat | 1 |
| American Wigeon | 239 | Western Screech Owl | 5 | Spotted Towhee | 67 |
| Ring-necked Duck | 49 | Great-horned Owl | 4 | California Towhee | 349 |
| Greater Scaup | 1 | Northern Pygmy Owl | 6 | Rufous-crowned Sparrow | 2 |
| Lesser Scaup | 2 | Spotted Owl | 1 | Lark Sparrow | 37 |
| Common Goldeneye | 20 | Northern Saw-whet Owl | 1 | Savannah Sparrow | 10 |
| Bufflehead | 170 | Anna's Hummingbird | 45 | Fox Sparrow | 66 |
| Common Merganser | 287 | Belted Kingfisher | 20 | Song Sparrow | 236 |
| Ruddy Duck | 731 | Acorn Woodpecker | 114 | Lincoln's Sparrow | 14 |
| Turkey Vulture | 197 | Red-breasted Sapsucker | 12 | White-throated Sparrow | 4 |
| Osprey | 2 | Nuttall's Woodpecker | 76 | Golden-crowned Sparrow | 496 |
| White-tailed Kite | 74 | Downy Woodpecker | 12 | White-crowned Sparrow | 674 |
| ✓ Bald Eagle | 1 | Hairy Woodpecker | 3 | sparrow sp. | 85 |
| Northern Harrier | 7 | Northern Flicker | 181 | Dark-eyed Junco | 1000 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | 4 | Pileated Woodpecker | 5 | Red-winged Blackbird | 1200 |
| Cooper's Hawk | 3 | Black Phoebe | 127 | Western Meadowlark | 409 |
| accipiter sp. | 1 | Say's Phoebe | 17 | Brewer's Blackbird | 1950 |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 42 | Tree Swallow | 98 | Brown-headed Cowbird | 10 |
| Red-tailed Hawk | 84 | Violet-green Swallow | 2 | blackbird sp. | 600 |
| Ferruginous Hawk | 3 | Steller's Jay | 43 | Purple Finch | 15 |
| Golden Eagle | 3 | Western Scrub Jay | 250 | House Finch | 495 |
| American Kestrel | 46 | American Crow | 1610 | Pine Siskin | 70 |
| Merlin | 1 | Common Raven | 78 | Lesser Goldfinch | 199 |
| Peregrine Falcon | 1 | Chestnut-backed Chickadee | 176 | American Goldfinch | 89 |
| hawk sp. | 1 | Oak Titmouse | 106 | House Sparrow | 114 |

Participants: Linda Allen, Betty Burridge, Glenn Clifton, Lew Edmundson, Ted Eliot, Douglas Ellis (Compiler), Bob Evans, Betty Groce, Eleanor Guilford, Deyea & Jack Harper, Rick LeBaudour, Bill Lenarz, Richard Merriss, Ian Morrison, Gerald Mugele, Mike Nelligan, Dan Nelson, Wini Nelson, Dan Noreen, Becky Olsen, Benjamin Parmeter, Linda Petruvias, Bertha & Bob Rains, Rhio Reigh, Don & Laverne Rickerts, Mary Rooney, Ruth Rudesill, Marilyn Sanders, Carole Sunlight, Wayne Tillay and Ken Wilson.

325

33-6

Kite Tales

February 1999

Observations

| Species | # | Date | Place | County | Who | Notes |
|-------------------------|----|-------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|
| American Bittern | 1 | 1/6 | Shollenberger Park | SON | J&JT | |
| Sandhill Crane | 2 | Jan | Near Delta Pond | SON | CD, et al | |
| Tundra Swan | 1 | 1/7 | Shollenberger Park | SON | DN | imm. |
| " " | 3 | 1/10 | Horseshoe Lake, Pt. Reyes | MAR | D&LR | |
| Mute Swan | 10 | 1/7 | Shollenberger Park | SON | DN | |
| Grtr-wht Fronted Goose | 1 | 1/10 | Lakeville Highway Dairy | SON | DN | |
| Snow Goose | 1 | 1/11 | Salmon Creek | SON | D&LR | thru period |
| Blue-winged Teal | 3 | 12/25 | Shollenberger Park | SON | JP, BDP, DH, J&ES | |
| " " " | 8 | 1/4 | Shollenberger Park | SON | TE | |
| Eurasian Wigeon | 1 | 1/14 | Bodega Farm Pond | SON | TE | |
| Redhead | 10 | 12/25 | Shollenberger Park | SON | JP, BDP, DH, J&ES | 7 male 3 female |
| Ring-necked Duck | 3 | 1/13 | Lake Hennessey | NAP | D&LR | |
| Oldsquaw | 2 | 1/2 | Bodega Harbor | SON | D&LR, DN, mob | |
| Black Scoter | 2 | 1/11 | Bodega Harbor | SON | D&LR | |
| Barrow's Goldeneye | 7 | 1/2 | Port Sonoma | SON | DN, TE | |
| Hooded Merganser | 4 | 1/2 | Carmody Road Ponds | SON | TE, DA, D&LR | |
| " " | 12 | 1/5 | Ramal Rd. Pond | SON | TE | |
| Red-breasted Merganser | 4 | 1/11 | Bodega Harbor | SON | D&LR | |
| Osprey | 3 | 12/21 | Geyserville area | SON | DN, TCN | |
| " | 1 | 1/13 | Lake Hennessey | NAP | D&LR | |
| Bald Eagle | 1 | 12/21 | Geyserville | SON | DN, TCN | imm. |
| " " | 1 | 1/13 | Lake Hennessey | NAP | D&LR | |
| Golden Eagle | 2 | 12/25 | Henry Road | NAP | JP, BDP, DH, J&ES | ads. atop an oak |
| " " | 1 | 12/27 | Shiloh Ranch County Park | SON | D&LR | |
| " " | 1 | 1/13 | Lake Hennessey | NAP | D&LR | |
| Ferruginous Hawk | 1 | 12/28 | Lovall Valley Rd. | SON | KM | |
| " " | 1 | 1/2 | Valley Ford Rd. | SON | TE, DA | |
| " " | 8! | 1/11 | Adobe Rd. | SON | GM | |
| " " | 1 | 1/16 | King Ridge Rd./Tin Barn | SON | D&LR | |
| Rough-legged Hawk | 1 | 1/5 | Hudeman Slough | SON | TE | |
| Peregrine Falcon | 1 | 1/5 | Drake's Estero | MAR | RH | |
| " " | 1 | 1/16 | Russian R. @ Jenner | SON | D&LR | |
| Prairie Falcon | 1 | 1/5 | Hudeman Slough | SON | TE | |
| Merlin | 1 | 12/24 | Willow Crk. Rd | SON | D&LR | Plucking prey |
| " | 2 | 1/4 | Carmody Lane | SON | DN | |
| Long-billed Curlew | 3 | 1/10 | Limantour | MAR | D&LR | |
| Glaucous Gull | 1 | 12/28 | Clearlake Park | LAK | JW | 4th County Record |
| " " | 1 | 1/2 | Bodega Bay | SON | TE, DA | |
| Marbled Murrelet | 2 | 1/2 | Bodega Bay | SON | TE, DA | |
| Cassin's Auklet | 2 | 1/2 | Bodega Bay | SON | TE, DA | |
| Rhinoceros Auklet | 3 | 1/2 | Bodega Bay | SON | TE, DA | |
| Short-eared Owl | 3 | 1/2 | Reclamation Rd (off 37) | SON | DN, TE | |
| Dusky-capped Flycatcher | 1 | 12/23 | Porto Bodega | SON | BDP, JP, DH, mob | 1st and 2nd |
| " " " | 1 | 12/23 | Bodega Dunes CG | SON | DN, mob | county records! |
| Tree Swallow | 2 | 12/25 | Shollenberger Park | SON | JP, BDP, DH, J&ES | |
| " " | 6 | 1/5 | Ramal Rd. | SON | TE | |
| " " | 5 | 1/7 | Carmody Road Ponds | SON | D&LR | |
| " " | 8 | 1/10 | Lakeville Treatment Ponds | SON | DN | |
| N. Rough-wing Swallow | 4 | 1/18 | Ukiah Sewer Ponds | MEN | CV, GC | |

Observations *(continued)*

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------|----------------------------|-----|---------------|-------------------|
| Orange-crowned Warbler | 1 | 12/27 | Below Diekmann's Store | SON | JP, BDP | |
| " " " | 1 | 1/15 | Post St. Petaluma | SON | DN | -lutescens |
| Hermit Warbler | 1 | 1/7 | Fitzpatrick Ln. Occidental | SON | CS | |
| Prairie Warbler | 1 | 1/11 | Bodega Marine Lab | SON | D&LR | remains from Dec. |
| Northern Waterthrush | 1 | 12/13 | ? Slough, Clearlake | LAK | JW, mob | 1st County Record |
| Black-headed Grosbeak | 1 | 1/11 | Bodega Dunes CG | SON | DN, NC, D&LR | |
| Swamp Sparrow | 2 | 1/7 | Willow Creek | SON | BDP, KVV | |
| Northern Oriole | 1 | 12/27 | Below Diekmann's Store | SON | JP, BDP, D&LR | imm. Bullock's |
| Orchard Oriole | 1 | 12/27 | Below Diekmann's Store | SON | JP, BDP, D&LR | 1st winter male |

Observers:

Dick Ashford, Tyler Cannon-Nelson, George Chaniot, Carolyn Dixon, Ted Elliot, David Hoffman, Rod Hug, Gerry Mugele, Kathy Mugele, Dan Nelson, Mike Parmeter (BDP), John Parmeter Dan & Laverne Richert, Carol Sklar, Jim & Ellen Strouss, Jean & Jim Tonascia, Kent Van Vuren, Chuck Vaughn, Jerry White

Field Trip Report - Pt. Reyes National Seashore, on January 10, 1999 *by Ruth Rudesill*

Participants: Ted Eliot, Betty Groce, Becky Olsen, Don and Laverne Richert, Ruth Rudesill, Gene Udwin, and Ken Wilson

Eight birders ventured out on the cold but clear day to Marin County. Unfortunately, we were unable to go to the outer point as planned. The National Park Service has decided to have shuttle buses from Drakes Beach to Chimney Rock and Lighthouse only. We could not get permission to go to Spaletta Plateau. We did check out the Drakes Beach and Hall Ranch before going to Olema Marsh and over the ridge to Limantour Beach area. (It was warm at the beach!)

Highlights included: 3 Tundra Swans on Horseshoe Pond, good views of Horned Larks and a Cooper's Hawk at Hall Ranch, a pair of Hooded Mergansers at Olema Marsh, a very cooperative Yellowthroat at Limantour Beach and a Great Horned Owl at Muddy Hollow. Total species: 90. Ken and Becky saw a Bobcat at Pt Reyes. Some of us continued on to check Schollenberger Park in Petaluma where we saw Redhead, Blue-winged Teal, Moorhen, and Sora.

Pt. Reyes National Seashore Closure

As you read above, Ruth and her field trip companions were surprised and disappointed to find that Point Reyes National Seashore officials have closed Sir Francis Drake Highway just beyond the Drake's Beach turnoff. We have been unable to locate any media announcements regarding this change so it is very likely that many birders are experiencing this surprise.

According to a National Park Service flyer the closure was instituted on December 26th and will continue weekends and holidays until April 18th 1999. Although the flyer offers no explanation for the closure, the period covered coincides with Elephant Seal whelping and the local populations are expanding their use of the outer peninsula beaches.

There is bus service available from Drake's Beach to the Lighthouse and Chimney Rock for a \$3 fee. Beginning at 9:00 AM, the bus departs "on demand" every 15 minutes with the last departure at 3:30 PM and the last trip back at 5:00 PM. Unfortunately the bus does not stop anywhere in between and foot traffic is prohibited as well.

Those wishing to express their thoughts may contact Don L. Neubacher, Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore, Point Reyes Station, Ca 94956

Redwood Region Ornithological Society was organized in 1962 "to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitat." Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Regular general meetings (October through April) are held at 7:30 PM in room 221 Darwin Hall, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California. Dues are \$15 per family, \$8 per individual, or \$3 per student for one year membership. Send dues to the treasurer shown below.

1998 - 1999 Officers:

President: Mike Nelligan, 124 Wikiup Drive, Santa Rosa CA 95403 707 576-1475
E-Mail: bandm@monitor.net

Vice President: Deyea Harper, 2310 Northwood Dr., Santa Rosa CA 95404 707 542-1542
E-Mail: JHarperTrustee@compuserve.com

Secretary: Benjamin D. Parmeter, 2500 Emerson St., Napa CA 94558 707 255-6757

Treasurer: Betty Burrige, 1653 Arroyo Sierra Way, Santa Rosa CA 95405 707 527-0225
E-Mail: bettyb@monitor.net

1998 - 1999 Chairs:

Field Trips: Ruth Rudesill, PO Box 371, Kenwood CA 95452 707 833-6026
E-Mail: rar@pcweb.net

Observations: Ned Wynn, 129-B Powell Ave., Healdsburg CA. 707 431-8412
E-Mail: ekwynn@sonic.net

Social: Barbara Gumtow, 7915 Bella Vista Dr., Sebastopol CA 95472 707 823-7869

Christmas Count: Doug Ellis, PO Box 776, Kenwood CA 95452
Ted Eliot, 5850 Grove St., Sonoma CA 95476 707 935-3410

Kite Tales: Gerry Mugele, PO Box 813, Glen Ellen, Ca 95442 707 938-2134
E-Mail: mewgull@ix.netcom.com

Gerald G. Mugele
PO Box 813
Glen Ellen, California 95442

