

Kite Tales



Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 34 Number VI

February 2000

Coming Attractions

February 10th, Thursday, 7:30 PM - General Meeting
Darwin Hall, Room 207 - Sonoma State University, Cotati

Feathers from Scales?

This month's program will feature Nicholas R. Geist, Phd., Assistant Professor, Dept. of Biology at SSU who will speak to us on "Bird breath and dinosaur lungs: or, is that sparrow really a tiny T. Rex?" Whether or not you think you can answer this question, join us on the 10th for this interesting talk and slide exploration of the subject and find out if you're correct.

February 12th, Saturday, 8:00 AM

Field Trip to Shollenberger Park (or possibly Grizzly Island)

Meet in the Shollenberger Park parking lot in Petaluma at 8:00 am. We will decide there whether to continue on to Grizzly Island in Solano County. Shollenberger Park is reached from US 101 by taking the Lakeville Highway (Highway 116) exit. Proceed southeast on Lakeville Highway to South McDowell Boulevard and turn right. The entrance to Shollenberger Park is opposite the end of Cader Lane. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, lunch, water, and warm clothes. Leader is Rick LeBaudour. Call Rick at 792-1800 if you have any questions.

February 20th, Sunday - Observations Deadline

The 20th is our 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@pon.net

February 25th, Friday - Kite Tales Deadline

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

North Coast Birding Activities:

Aleutian Goose Festival, Crescent City - March 24-26th, 2000.

www.delnorte.org/soar Keynote presenter - Stanley W. Harris

and

Godwit Days Spring Migration Festival, Arcata, April 14-16th, 2000.

www.godwitdays.com Keynote presenter - Clay Sutton

Good Birding Spots #13**Monticello Dam and Lake Solano***by Betty Groce*

This write-up is intended for spring & summer birding. The region gets very hot in summer so it is best visited mid-May to mid-June. It is a regularly scheduled Madrone Audubon trip during this period.

Monticello Dam is located on the eastern most arm of Lake Berryessa on State Highway 128 in Napa County just prior to Yolo County line on the north side of Putah Creek and Solano County on the south side. A large parking area is located on the north side of the highway at the dam site.

This is an almost certain location to get White-throated Swifts, Canyon & Rock Wrens--all of which nest here. The Canyon Wrens sing up a storm and, with patience, can usually be seen across Putah Creek on the rocks and have been seen carrying nesting material into the crevices of the cliff face. The Rock Wren is generally seen singing on the rocks on either or both sides of the road. The White-throated Swifts nest in the crevices of the rocks on the south side of the road and not only soar high over the rocks and the dam but also frequently fly at eye level. Other song birds and a few butterflies are usually present also.

Continuing east on Highway 128, you can turn left into the parking area at the bottom of the hill to look for Orioles, etc. However; the bridge over the ravine washed out several years ago and, unless you are part mountain goat or in hot pursuit of a rarity, you more than likely will not scramble across the ravine.

You can walk down to Putah Creek from the parking area side of the ravine. There may be Common Mergansers on the creek.

Continue east on 128 until you get to Pleasant Valley Rd. Turn right and at the bottom of the hill make a left into Lake Solano parking area. Overflow parking is up the hill to the right of the toll booth. There is a small parking fee. Flush toilets and many picnic tables are in the park.

The grounds are wooded and usually abounds with Robins, Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed

Grosbeaks, plus an occasional Hermit Thrush. The specialties of the area are Phainopepla and Yellow-billed Magpie. Phainopeplas are not as abundant as in years past but you should get one or two in the picnic and parking areas.

Bird the entire area along side the lake to a marshy area at the far end and return close to the trees on the south side of the open area, making an elliptical loop. If you haven't seen a Magpie, climb the steps to the upper area as they are sometimes in the orchard next to the park. There's also a good chance of getting Western Bluebirds, Cedar Waxwings, Northern Mockingbird, American Goldfinch, and others feeding in fruiting Mulberry trees.

As you leave, you can drive south on Pleasant Valley Rd. and turn left on Putah Creek Rd. which goes around the lake and into the town of Winters and on to I-505. Swainson's Hawks have been seen on this road. Or you can take Pleasant Valley Rd. (another good place to get Yellow-billed Magpie) south all the way to I-80 at Vacaville.

Letters to the Editor:**Prop. 12 Good for the Birds.**

I hope you will agree that ~~that~~ RROS members should enthusiastically support Prop 12, the Park Bond measure.

Proposition 12 on the March 7, 2000 ballot will protect, restore and improve parks and natural resources throughout California, including the Bay Area and Sonoma County. Its provisions will greatly benefit birds by protecting and restoring their habitat. For example, it includes \$277.5 million to protect and restore wetlands, redwoods and oak woodlands; \$195.4 million to acquire and restore coastal parks and habitat; and about \$1.3 billion to acquire and restore state and regional parks and open space. All bird lovers will want to support this bond measure, which totals \$2.1 billion.

I do truly believe that RROS members have a great stake in this issue because the birds we love do. Please Vote for Prop 12.

Ted Eliot
Sonoma

Field Trip Report**Bodega Harbor**

January 22, 2000

- by Alan Wight

The clouds cleared and the fog remained inland, giving us very nice weather at Bodega Harbor. The day's highlights were lots of Brant on the harbor, a Eurasian Wigeon at the Doran mudflats, an Osprey building a nest on a channel marker, a couple of Rhinoceros Auklets and a Pigeon Guillemot off Bodega Head, and a third-winter Glaucous Gull at the Porto Bodega Marina.

While we were studying gulls, Rhio spotted the Glaucous Gull perched on a dock. We initially could only see the head and a bit of the mantle, but then it flew up onto a post and gave us nice looks.

Participants were Linda Allen, Rich Bertoli, Carol Brant, Nancy Conzett, Roger Marlowe, Bob and Bertha Rains, Rhio Reigh, Carole Sunlight, and Alan Wight.

Birds observed: Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Brandt's Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Brant, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Black Oystercatcher, American Avocet, Willet, Whimbrel, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Black Turnstone, Surf-bird, Red Knot, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Mew Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Herring Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Glaucous Gull, Forster's Tern, Pigeon Guillemot, Rhinoceros Auklet, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Western Scrub-Jay, Common Raven, Chestnut-backed Chickadee,

Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, American Pipit, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, California Towhee, Song Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Pine Siskin.

Sometimes things don't work out,

During the Fall migration in 1995, bird watchers flocked from all over England to see a relatively rare Red-necked Phalarope on a stopover on its migration from Iceland to Africa. As it swam in a reservoir in Leicestershire, the birders watched something "like a scene from 'Jaws'," one witness said. "One second the bird was swimming, the next there was a snap and a splash and it vanished." A four-foot pike had swallowed the bird in one bite, leaving only a few floating feathers.

Oiled Birds

Finding oiled birds is not unusual, as birds may be oiled from chronic small discharges of oil around boats, etc. However, even in a large event, we first discover it one bird at a time, so don't hesitate to call. Early notification of spills or birds at risk helps a lot in cleanup and response, finding the source, and in protecting at-risk waters and birds.

From time to time birders have asked how they should report oiled birds. The number to call is DFG Dispatch at (916) 445-0045. They will contact the appropriate DFG-OSPR biologist to check it out.

Thanks for your help.

Thank you for the Donations.

President Deyea wishes to convey appreciation for the contributions made in memory of Wini Nelson.

Thanks to:

Cynthia K. & Leslie M. Lieurance
Mike Nelligan & Betty Burridge

Kite Tales

February 2000

Observations

Species	#	Date	Place	County	Who	Notes
✓ Common Loon	1	1/16	Sebastopol Comm. Center	SON	AW	juv.
Red-necked Grebe	4	12/28	Near Bodega Harbor jetty	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	basic plumage
" " "	1	12/30	Lake Hennessey	NAP	BDP	
Black-footed Albatross	8	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
Laysan Albatross	20+	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
Short-tailed Albatross	1	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	juv.
Northern Fulmar	325	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
Pink-footed Shearwater	4	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
Short-tailed Shearwater	45	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
✓ Cattle Egret	40+	1/16	Sebastopol Comm. Center	SON	AW	
Grtr-wht Fronted Goose	2	12/26	Garcia River/Hwy 1	MEN	BDP, JP, et.al.	
Snow Goose	9	1/16	Delta Pond	SON	RL, AW	
Tundra Swan	115	12/26	Garcia River/Hwy 1	MEN	BDP, JP, et.al.	
Eurasian Wigeon	1	1/9	Bodega farm pond	SON	BDP	drake
" "	1	1/16	Delta Pond	SON	RL, AW	continuing
" "	5	1/19	Bolinas Lagoon	MAR	BG, MAS	all drakes
" "	1	1/22	Doran mudflats, Bodega	SON	RROS	
Blue-winged Teal	1	1/9	Salmon Crk Pond.	SON	BDP	
✓ " " "	10	1/26	Shollenberger Park	SON	Mob.	continuing
Tufted Duck	1	1/19	Bolinas Lagoon	MAR	BG, MAS	drake
Barrow's Goldeneye	1	1/5	Port Sonoma	SON	DA, TE	drake
Hooded Merganser	2	1/6	Hodega Hwy/Tomales Rd	SON	DN	
" "	7	1/13	Lake Hennessey	NAP	BG, MAS	
" "	2	1/16	Delta Pond	SON	AW	
✓ Osprey	1	1/17	Spring Lake Park	SON	GW	
✓ " "	1	1/22	Bodega Harbor	SON	RROS	building nest
Bald Eagle	1	1/13	Lake Hennessey	NAP	BG, MAS	
Ferruginous Hawk	2	1/5	Skaggs Island Rd.	SON	DA, TE	
✓ Rough-legged Hawk	1	12/28	hillside near Shell Beach	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	immature
" " "	3	1/5	South Skaggs Island Rd.	SON	DA, TE	
✓ " " "	1	1/9	Coleman Valley Rd	SON	DN	
Golden Eagle	1	1/27	Stagegulch Rd.	SON	GM	immature
Peregrine Falcon	1	1/2	Rush Creek marsh	MAR	DN	
✓ " " "	1	1/3	Shollenberger Park	SON	DHr, KM	buzzing peeps
" " "	1	1/5	off Henno Rd Glen Ellen	SON	KM	
Wild Turkey	20	12/26	King's Ridge Rd	SON	BDP, JP, et.al.	
Mountain Quail	1	12/26	King's Ridge Rd	SON	BDP, JP, et.al.	cock
✓ Common Moorhen	1	12/28	Bridgeheaven Ponds	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	
✓ Sandhill Crane	1	1/16	Delta Pond	SON	RL, AW	
Pacific Golden Plover	1	1/26	Shollenberger Park, S. end	SON	DN	continuing
Mountain Plover	60	12/28	north of Road 16 & 88	YOL	DA, TE	continuing
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	1/5	Ramal Road Ponds	SON	DA, TE	
✓ Glaucous Gull	1	1/22	Porto Bodega Marina	SON	RR, RROS	3rd winter
" " "	1	1/26	"	SON	BG, MAS	
Black-legged Kittiwake	125	1/8	Cordell Bank	SON	DN	
Burrowing Owl	1	1/10	Skaggs Island Rd.	SON	DK	
Short-eared Owl	1	1/10	Skaggs Island Rd.	SON	DK	
✓ Least Flycatcher	1	1/14+	West End of Delta Pond	SON	DN, DHr	3rd County Record
✓ Eastern Phoebe	1	Jan	Delta Pond	SON	BDP, DN, Mob	Continuing



Observations: (continued)

<u>Species</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Notes</u>
✓ Barn Swallow	2	1/2	Hole in the Head, Bodega	SON	BDP	
Golden-crown Kinglet	1?	1/12	Spring Lake Park	SON	GW	
✓ Orange-crown Warbler	1	12/28	Below Diekmann's Store	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	gray headed
✓ " " "	1	1/26	"	SON	BG, MAS	
Townsend's Warbler	1	1/12	Spring Lake Park	SON	GW	
Black & White Warbler	1	12/28	Willow Creek Canyon	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	
Canada Warbler	1	12/11	Pt. Pinole Regional Park	CoC	DN	
Swamp Sparrow	2	12/28	Willow Creek Canyon	SON	BDP, JP, DE, DH	
White-throated Sparrow	1	1/16	Delta Pond	SON	AW	
" " "	1	Jan	Dick's feeder in Sonoma	SON	DA	from 11/28
" " "	1	1/17	Spring Lake Park	SON	GW	
McCown's Longspur	2	12/28	Road 16 & 90B	YOL	DA, TE	
Chestnut-collrd Longspr	20+	12/28	Road 16 & 90B	YOL	DA, TE	
Black-headed Grosbeak	1	12/25	Bodega Bay feeder	SON	NC	
Bullock's Oriole	1	1/26	Below Diekmann's Store	SON	BG, MAS	female, continuing

Observers: Dick Ashford, Nancy Conzett, Ted Eliot, Doug Ellis, Betty Groce, Deyea Harper (DHR), David Hoffman, Dan Kahane, Rick LeBaudour, Madrone Audubon Society, Gerry Mugele, Kathy Mugele, Dan Nelson, John Parmeter, Mike Parmeter (BDP), Rhio Reigh, Glo Wellman, Alan Wight

Aleutian Canada Geese Sightings

Victor Lyon at the San Joaquin NWR would like to know of recent sightings of Aleutian Canada Geese (pretty much anywhere). You may call him at (209) 777-0854.

The California Bird Records Committee

The CRBC held its annual meeting in San Jose on 14-15 January 2000. California birders may be interested in some of the decisions made at this meeting.

The terms of four CBRC members have expired; Dick Erickson, Guy McCaskie, Joe Morlan and Steve Rottenborn. Dick Erickson served as Committee Chairman for the past 3 years. All of these outgoing members are eligible for reelection next year, and the Committee will also consider other qualified members of the birding community. Elected to replace the outgoing members are: Jon Dunn, Kimball Garrett, Bert McKee, and Scott Terrill.

Full committee membership now consists of: Jon Dunn (Chair), Kimball Garrett (Vice-Chair), Mike Rogers, Robb Hamilton, Matt Heindel, Al Jaramillo, Bert McKee, Michael Patten, Peter Pyle, Scott Terrill

The following changes were made to the Review List:

Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) is REMOVED from the Review List.

Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) is ADDED to the Review List

The following two species have been officially accepted by the CBRC for the California list:

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*); at this point based only on the 1986 Otay San Diego record.

Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*); based on the 1998 Bolsa Chica ORA record.

The following two species can now be annotated as specimen-supported:

Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) and Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*)

Recent information about the Committee and its decisions may be found on the WFO/CBRC web site:

www.wfo-cbrc.org

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 207 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.

1999 - 2000 Officers:

President: Deyea Harper, 2310 Northwood Dr., Santa Rosa CA 95404 -2245 707 542-1542
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Vice President: Betty Groce, 411 Trail Ridge Ct., Santa Rosa CA 95409-6482 707 539-8664
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Secretary: Benjamin D. Parmeter, 2500 Emerson St., Napa CA 94558-4611 707 255-6757

Treasurer: Mike Nelligan, 124 Wikiup Drive, Santa Rosa CA 95403-7700 707 576-1475
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