

# KITE TALES

MARCH

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
VOL. 8 - NO. 6 SANTA ROSA, CALIF.

1974

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS.....

March 14, Thursday: March meeting  
of RROS

"Biological Pollution" -- our  
speaker, a Biologist with the  
California Department of Food and  
Agriculture, will discuss the  
problems of introduced species.

March 14, Thursday: Deadline for  
April Kite Tales

March 16, Saturday: RROS Field Trip  
to Lake Hennessee

Meet at the Black Forest Inn, Calistoga Rd., at 7:30 A.M.  
Bring lunch. Gordon Bolander will lead.

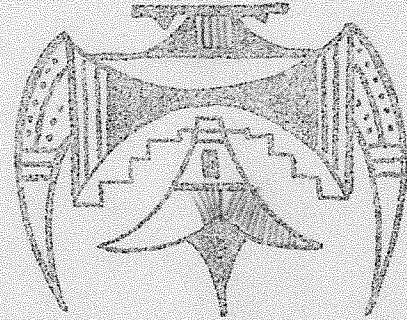
Editor's note: It has been brought to my attention that for  
last month's field trip car pooling didn't work out. I think  
that we can't afford not to car pool-- and hope that for this  
trip everyone will stop at the meeting place to get people  
into as few cars as possible. Perhaps we can discuss more  
organization of car pooling at the next meeting.

March 23, Saturday: Audubon Wildlife Film

The film "Wild Tennessee" will be shown at Santa Rosa Junior  
College at 7:30 P.M. The film announcement sheet says, "With-  
in this one state thrive nearly every variety of wildlife  
that may be found from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada, a  
unique collection which serves as subject of John Sulger's  
latest film."

April 11, Thursday: April meeting of RROS

April's meeting will feature Peter Connors giving a program  
on the Auckland Islands of New Zealand.



*Pueblo Design - Hopi*

COURSE OFFERED BY POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY.....

Kite Tales received the following announcement from PRBO:

BIRDS OF SOUTHEAST ARIZONA - 14--20 MAY

A nature experience with four outstanding naturalists: Rich Stallcup, Bill Glow, Peter Warshall and Arthur Earle in one of the best birding areas of the country- Tucson, Madera Canyon, Patagonia, Mile High and the Chiricahua Mountains. Many species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals encountered occur nowhere else in the United States.

For information write Point Reyes Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 442, Bolinas, California 94924.

SNOWY OWL REPORT.....

Many thanks to Carolyn Connors for writing up this account of a most exciting visitor!

Snowy Owl in Bodega Bay

With reports of about 25 Snowy Owls invading the state of California this winter, it has seemed likely that one might appear some place on Bodega Head. The extensive dunes and open grassland areas of the Head are in general appearance similar to this bird's breeding habitat in the Arctic tundra and closely match the habitat in areas where the owls have been seen before in California. Although several of us at the Bodega Marine Lab had been watching all winter for this owl, it was not until noon on January 30 that Stanley Read looked out a window from the marine lab and saw the bird perched on the small weather station near the lab parking lot. Within minutes most of the marine lab staff were in the parking lot looking at the bird. Setting a new speed record between Timber Hill and Bodega Head, Gordon Bolander arrived soon afterward, and by late afternoon several birders from Santa Rosa, Napa and Berkeley had found the bird.

The Snowy Owl left the weather station after a few hours and by the end of the day had reached the dunes area where it evidently stayed for about 10 days, perching on top of the small dunes or on driftwood or state park sign posts. This individual was an extremely dark bird which suggests an immature bird or possibly an adult female. The back of the head was dark, which sometimes made it difficult to locate the bird when it faced away from the observer. Only the face was pure white and when the bird turned in the sunlight this white flash could be seen on the top of a dune from a great distance. The black feather-tips and barring gave the bird a beautiful pattern across the wings and back when it flew powerfully and glided from dune to dune.

The owl was not seen taking any prey as far as we know.

although it was often alert when perched on top of a dune or sign post and may have been hunting. One observer watched the owl cast a large pellet at about mid-day which we retrieved and examined. The bones in the pellet were mainly those of birds and the only unbroken recognizable fragment, when compared with bird skeletons at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology in Berkeley, compared most closely with the bones of a Surf Scoter. It is unlikely that a Snowy Owl could catch a diving duck on water but Surf Scoters are often seen dead, sick or injured on the beach, where they would probably be easy prey for this predator.

The Snowy Owl was last seen on Bodega Head on Saturday, February 9, and has not been reported since.

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP LIST.....

Here is Gordon Blander's list for the Thornton field trip:

Pied-billed Grebe	Common Snipe	Bewick's Wren
Double-crested Cormorant	Long-billed Curlew	Long-billed Marsh Wren
Great Egret	Greater Yellowlegs	Mockingbird
Black-crowned Night Heron	Dublin dowitcher sp.	Robin
Whistling Swan	Glaucous-winged Gull	Varied Thrush
Canada Goose	Herring Gull	Hermit Thrush
White-fronted Goose	California Gull	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Mallard	Ring-billed Gull	Water Pipit
Pintail	Mew Gull	Loggerhead Shrike
Green-winged Teal	Mourning Dove	Starling
Cinnamon Teal	Anna's Hummingbird	Orange-crowned Warbler
American Widgeon	Belted Kingfisher	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Common Flicker	House Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Acorn Woodpecker	Western Meadowlark
Turkey Vulture	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Red-winged Blackbird
White-tailed Kite	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Brewer's Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Black Phoebe	Brown-headed Cowbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	Horned Lark	House Finch
Rough-legged Hawk	Tree Swallow	American Goldfinch
Marsh Hawk	Cliff Swallow	Rufous-sided Towhee
Prairie Falcon	Scrub Jay	Brown Towhee
American Kestrel	Common Crow	Savannah Sparrow
Sandhill Crane (several 1000)	Plain Titmouse	White-crowned Sparrow
Virginia Rail	Bushtit	Fox Sparrow
Common Gallinule	White-breasted Nuthatch	Song Sparrow
Goat Killdeer	Wrentit	
Black-bellied Plover	House Wren (very early)	

BOOKS.....

Two Books about the Brooks Range, Alaska

- 1) Alaska Wilderness, Exploring the Central Brooks Range. Marshall, Robert. University of California Press. 1970 (paperback). I'm not sure about availability.
- 2) Birds of Anaktuvuk Pass, Kobuk, and Old Crow, A Study in Arctic Adaptation. Irving, Laurence. Smithsonian Institution. 1960. A copy is in Santa Rosa City Library (598.2 Irving).

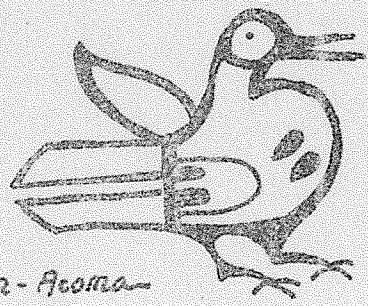
During this time of public concern for oil shortages, long range, intelligent planning of natural resources is in danger of being overshadowed by panic-derived antidotes to the energy 'crisis'. Now, perhaps, is the time to keep an especially clear head on conservation matters. One of these matters is that of Alaskan oil, pipelines, and such.

What of this Brooks Range, the obscurely-known mountains which act as gateway to the Arctic slope of Alaska? What effect will the oil pipeline project have on the wilderness of the Brooks Range? The two books reviewed below help answer the question that must be asked first. What is the wilderness of the Brooks Range?

Bob Marshall. In the 1930's, this far-sighted, sensitive-souled U.S. forester explored the untracked rivers and peaks of the Brooks. The chronicles of his expeditions, including clear personal accounts of the few people within the region, stands as a classic definition of the natural resource we call wilderness.

During the 1950's, Laurence Irving, of the Smithsonian Institution studied the bird life of three areas within Arctic Alaska. One of these, Anaktuvuk Pass is part of the region explored twenty years earlier by Marshall. Irving's careful field studies complement the adventurous narrative of Marshall. Irving includes detailed information on each of the many species found in each study area. Such species as Yellow Wagtail and Hoary Redpoll add to the remoteness of this northern land.

Lynn Stafford



Pueblo Design - Acoma

MEMBER SIGHTINGS.....

Thanks to Mike Parmeter for the following description of some sightings in late January:

"Gordon, Sud Gralapp, John and myself went on an off-shore trip out of Moss Landing on 1/26/74. The following is a list of the highlights.

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Black-footed Albatross, 2 or 3 | Oldsquaw, 4                     |
| Fulmar, 2                      | Glaucous Gull, 2nd year bird    |
| Sooty Shearwater, 25           | Black-legged Kittiwake, many    |
| Slender-billed Shearwater, 1   | Marbled Murrelet, 2             |
| Fork-tailed Petrel, 8          | Cassin's Auklet, 100s           |
| Ashy Petrel, 4                 | Rhinoceros Auklet, est. 3- 5000 |

We saw a 5th Oldsquaw at the Monterey Harbor. Also a 1st year King Eider, Red-necked Grebe and Red Phalarope. Looked in vain at Afio Nuevo for Harlequin Duck and Snowy Owl. Did watch a spectacular battle between 2 young bull elephant seals in the water, quite close to shore.

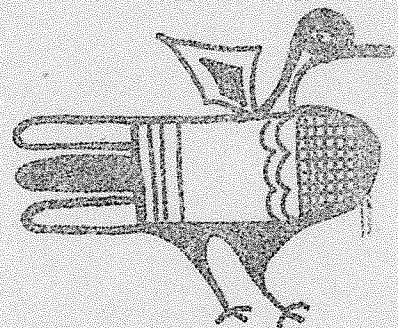
Last Wed. (my first afternoon off in 4 weeks) John and I were able to see the Snowy Owl at Bodega Bay. I had to wait 45 minutes until John's school let out before I could leave Napa. Got a bit anxious during this time.

Also saw a Sora at Crespi's Pond. "

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS.....  
by Deyea Harper

Robert Herr became interested in birds through one of Dr. Jack Arnold's classes. He has moved here from Los Angeles, is a senior at CSCS majoring in field biology and particularly likes shore and sea birds.

Barbara Wagner was a medical secretary before returning to major in biology in the graduate program at CSCS. While she has no specialty in birding, she has been birding for one year after taking a natural history course from Dr. Arnold.



*Puceta Design - San Ildefonso*

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY...  
Established in 1962 for the purpose of  
encouraging the study and conservation of  
birds, other wildlife, and their natural  
habitat.

Regular monthly meetings are held from October through May on  
the second Thursday of the calendar month in Room 221 of the  
Charles Darwin Hall of Science at California State College, Sonoma,  
Rehbert Park. Meeting time is 8 P. M. Visitors are welcome.

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# PARKING PERMIT

COURTESY OF

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, SONOMA

For use in NON-RESERVED SECTION, only

on Thursday, March 14, 1974

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
ROOM 221 - DARWIN

(Display clearly in driver's compartment of car)