

KITE TALES

FEBRUARY

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
VOL. 9 - NO. 6

1975

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS.....

FEBRUARY 13, Thursday, 8:00 p.m.: A program on Owl Biology for February's meeting. Jon Winter, RRO member and owl expert, will be the feature of the February RRO meeting. Come, and learn about owl biology and owling techniques, perhaps with a live owl, even. Valuable information from one who-who-who-knows. Meetings are held in Rm. 221, Darwin Hall, CSCS campus.

FEBRUARY 15, Saturday, 8:00 a.m.: RRO's annual field trip to Thornton. Swans, geese, ducks, cranes, hawks and shorebirds are worth a trip to Thornton. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking lot of the Hall of Justice in Fairfield. It is located at the corner where Highway 12 turns right, off the main street through town. Or, a later meeting place will be at 9:30 a.m. east of the river, at Rio Vista. CAR POOLERS, gather at the parking lot by the Black Forest Inn (Callistoga Rd. & Highway 12, Santa Rosa) at 6:15 a.m. to make the 8:00 a.m. meeting at Fairfield, or at 8:00 a.m. to make the 9:30 regrouping by the river.

Carlyle Sather, a longtime member of RRO, died recently. A memorial contribution of \$15 was made in his name to RRO. We would like to express our great appreciation.

Oliver Kolkmann of Ukiah, RRO member, reports watching a Black-chinned Sparrow in his yard. An immature, or female, it was there for several days around the 24th and 25th of January. (It was reported by him then, but might still be there.)

REPORT OF THE JANUARY FIELD TRIP TO BODEGA.....

On January 11th eight RRO members enjoyed an exceptionally fine day of birding at Bodega: warm, clear, calm, ok tides, and obliging birds. With perfect weather conditions on the Head, we had plenty of opportunity to study two Rock Sandpipers among the surfbirds and Turnstones. 'Sharp-eyes' Bolander picked out both Ancient and Marbled Murrelets for the rest of us to worry over. A Thayer's Gull resting midst several other species of gulls for convenient comparison was almost outclassed by the side-by-side performance of a Mora and a Virginia Rail. After the group broke up, three members who journeyed up the coast to Salmon Creek Bridge were treated to simultaneous views of seven Whistling Swans, a pair of Golden Eagles, Rough-legged, Red-tailed, and Marsh Hawks, and an American Kestrel.

-- Lynn Stafford

(A complete list of species seen will be included in the next Kite Tales. I've run out of space for this issue. LH)

A NOTE ON PITKIN MARSH.....

Pitkin Marsh was mentioned at an evening RROS meeting, and it seemed to me that some of our readers might be interested in learning more about this area. I asked Ruth Hass, one of our members, to write about the area. The following contribution came from her:

Pitkin Marsh in Western Sonoma County is a very special place, certainly one of the most unique areas in Sonoma County. Here, through the ages, natural forces have produced an isolated plant community where a number of rare plant species, some of them found only at Pitkin, have managed to survive the encroachments of "progress". Among these is the beautiful Pitkin Lily (*Lilium pitkinense*), which is found only at Pitkin Marsh. Another very rare plant is a yellow paintbrush (*Castilleja uliginosa*). This is a single plant, probably the only one in the world. It produces flowers but does not develop seeds because it receives no cross-pollination. Among other localized and rare plants are a beaked rush (*Rhynchospora californica*) found only at Pt. Reyes and Pitkin, and California bellflower (*Campanula californica*) found sparingly from Marin Co. to Mendocino Co. It is probable that certain plants which are known to reach their southernmost stations in Sonoma County may now extend no farther south than Pitkin due to the drainage of other marshes in the area. Included among these are king's gentian (*Gentiana scepstrum*), sundew (*Urosora Rotundifolia*), and tofieldia (*Tofieldia glutinosa* ssp. *occidentalis*).

Although RRO. members John Arnold, Gordon Bolander, Lynn Stafford, Carmen Patterson, and Ruth Hass did not find an unusual number of bird species (45) at Pitkin on a field trip there on Dec. 8, 1974, they agreed that a higher count would doubtless be obtained during nesting season. Among the birds observed were Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, Yellow-shafted and Red-shafted Flickers; Acorn, Downy, and Nuttall Woodpeckers; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; White-breasted Nuthatch; Brown Creeper; Calif. Thrasher; Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets; Pine Siskin; and the elusive little Long-billed Marsh Wren, for whom Pitkin Marsh provides the ideal habitat.

Although several families own land traversed by Pitkin Marsh, it received its name from the pioneer family who came to the area in 1856. Two of the descendants, Miss Alpha Pitkin and Mrs. Leida Pitkin-Jones, still own property and reside adjacent to the marsh.

In the summer of 1953 Mr. Peter Rubtzoff completed his Master's thesis on Pitkin Marsh. This work is still considered the most authentic and complete record of the flora of the marsh. (See Wasman Journal of Biology, summer 1953, Vol. 2, no. 2)

Understandably members of Milo Baker Chapter (Santa Rosa area) of California Native Plant Society are very interested in Pitkin Marsh and are hopeful that it can be preserved. Other conservationists have expressed a similar opinion. Dr. Kenneth Stocking would like to see the marsh preserved as a memorial to the Pitkin family.

Unfortunately, a number of factors make its preservation a complex problem. The structure of the marsh is eutrophic, which means that it is fed principally by subsoil water, a source which could be diminished or changed by man's "progress" in adjacent areas. Cattle and horses are trampling and grazing in the marsh. Even the footsteps of well-meaning conservationists can take their toll of the delicate marsh plants. Although the present owners appreciate the wonders of Pitkin, and are cooperative in extending permission to scientific groups who wish to visit the marsh, there can be no guarantee of future protection by their heirs.

Additional information on Pitkin can be obtained from Milo Baker Chapter President, Nancy Harrison (546-9495) or from Ruth Hass (539-2103).



EXERCISE YOUR WITS WITH THIS.....

Start at any point and, by moving to any adjoining space in turn, spell out the names of forty-one birds now living in the United States. At least thirteen additional foreigners have been thrown in for the travelers. You may double a letter as you come to it if need be.

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- 7 robin
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- 9 condor
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- 16 DOLANDER
- 17 dodo
- 18 VERNY
- 19 bushy tit
- 20 Shrike
- 21 Kinglet

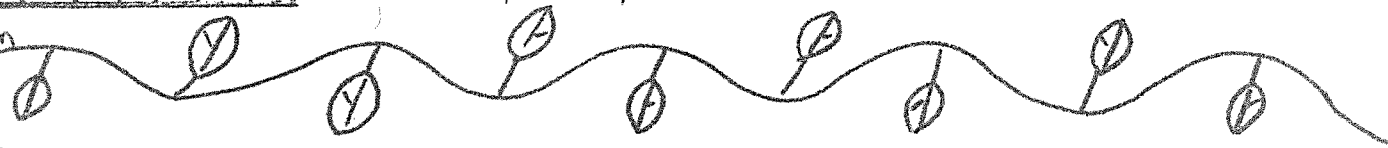
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FOREIGN

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Wren Throat



LOOKING FOR NAMES FOR THOSE PRETTY FLOWERS?.....

Well, here is a good way to find them: Tim Tunison will be teaching a course on SPRING WILDFLOWERS through CSCS' Continuing Education Program. The course offers one unit, number is Biology e295. Classes will meet in room 226 Darwin Hall, CSCS campus at Rohnert Park on four Saturdays, from 9 to 4:30. The dates are March 1, April 5, April 26 and May 17. Please note that a PRE-PAYMENT is due by February 7. The cost for one unit is \$28.

U.S. BIRDS

7-7	4-11-10	35-28-20	17-24-24-18	38-45-39-39	26-32-26-27	22-22-29-22	20-26-18-12	23-30-24-18	16-24-24-30	11-12-11-12	5-4-10-16	25-33-41-41	27-20-28-35	9-15-8-16	18-12-5-11	13-5-12-11	43-37-38-39-40	42-48-40-32-40	2-10-2-10-9	
25-24-32-26-34	1-9-10-16-9	46-40-40-48-49	32-33-39-32-33-39	17-24-30-31-24-25	42-35-34-34-40-47	2-8-16-10-16-8	27-19-25-26-20-12	27-26-27-20-26-34	18-19-25-33-27-19	29-22-16-16-15-9	4-11-19-26-34-42-35	32-26-18-18-12-5-11	32-33-27-19-18-26-18	23-22-30-38-39-40-47	29-37-36-29-22-30-38	13-5-12-11-18-26-18	32-39-33-40-32-26-25-31	32-24-32-24-16-22-30-23	23-22-30-38-32-26-25-31	13-7-7-6-14-7-14-20

A CHECK LIST OF THE BIRDS OF SONOMA COUNTY.....

The tentative check list on the next two pages of the birds recorded in Sonoma County has been compiled from all sources known to them by Dr. Benjamin D. (Mike) Parmeter and Gordon L. Bolander as a contribution to KITE TALES.

Your comments thereof would be appreciated by the authors. Any additional records should be accompanied by clear and full supportive details. Submit them to,

Dr. B. D. Parmeter
2500 Emerson St.
Napa, Cal. 94558

The species listed in this section are those which have been seen by one observer only and no specimen has been taken.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Short-tailed Shearwater | 11 Black Swift |
| 2 Fork-tailed Petrel | 12 Cassin's Kingbird |
| 3 Cattle Egret | 13 Eastern Phoebe |
| 4 American Brant | 14 Clark's Nutcracker |
| 5 Ross' Goose | 15 Blue Grosbeak |
| 6 Barrow's Goldeneye | 16 Indigo Bunting |
| 7 Goshawk | 17 Grasshopper Sparrow |
| 8 Turkey | 18 Harris' Sparrow |
| 9 Stilt Sandpiper | 19 Lapland Longspur |
| 10 Arctic Tern | 20 Snow Bunting |

The species listed in this section are those for which there has been no record during the past twenty-five years.

- 1 Leach's Petrel
- 2 Blue Grouse
- 3 Yellow Rail
- 4 Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- 5 Hammond's Flycatcher

An additional report for the list from Dr. John Arnold:

"Apparently this observation of the Cattle Egret (Bubulcus ibis) in Sonoma County has never been recorded in print:

In late November, 1972, Mr. Victor Crispin of the Art Dept., California State College, Sonoma, reported the presence of two Cattle Egrets in a pasture near his home in Penngrrove, Sonoma County, Calif. On 30 November 1972 these two birds were observed by L.W. "Bud" Gralapp, Baron McLean, and John R. "Jack" Arnold. The birds were easily approached and there was no question of their identification."

A CHECK LIST OF THE BIRDS OF SONOMA COUNTY

The species listed in this section have either been collected or otherwise positively identified in the field by at least two competent observers within the last twenty-five years. Species with five or fewer sightings recorded are so indicated.

1 Common Loon	39 Gadwall	77 Heron	115 Harledd Godwit
2 Yellow-billed Loon (4)	40 Pintail	78 American Kestrel	116 Ruff (2)
3 Arctic Loon	41 Green-winged Teal	79 California Quail	117 Sanderling
4 Red-throated Loon	42 Blue-winged Teal	80 Mountain Quail	118 American Avocet
5 Red-necked Grebe	43 Cinnamon Teal	81 Ring-necked Pheasant	119 Black-necked Stilt
6 Horned Grebe	44 American Wigeon	82 Clapper Rail	120 Red Phalarope
7 Lesser Grebe	45 Northern Shoveler	83 Virginia Rail	121 Wilson's Phalarope
8 Western Grebe	46 Wood Duck	84 Sora	122 Northern Phalarope
9 Pied-billed Grebe	47 Redhead	85 Common Gallinule	123 Pomarine Jaeger
10 Wandering Albatross (1)	48 Ring-necked Duck	86 American Coot	124 Parasitic Jaeger
1 Black-footed Albatross	49 Canvasback	87 Black Oystercatcher	125 Skua (3)
2 Pelican	50 Greater Scaup	88 Semi-palmated Plover	126 Glaucous Gull (5)
3 Pink-footed Shearwater	51 Lesser Scaup	89 Snowy Plover	127 Glaucous-winged Gull
4 Fork-footed Shearwater	52 Common Goldeneye	90 Killdeer	128 Western Gull
5 New Zealand Shearwater	53 Ruffhead	91 American Golden Plover	129 Herring Gull
6 Sooty Shearwater	54 Oldsquaw (9)	92 Black-billed Plover	130 Thayer's Gull
7 Ashy Petrel	55 Harlequin Duck (4)	93 Surf-bird	131 California Gull
8 Black Petrel (1)	56 White-winged Scoter	94 Ruddy Turnstone	132 Ring-billed Gull
9 White Pelican	57 Surf Scoter	95 Black Turnstone	133 Mew Gull
10 Brown Pelican	58 Black Scoter	96 Common Snipe	134 Bonaparte's Gull
1 Double-crested Cormorant	59 Ruddy Duck	97 Long-billed Curlew	135 Heermann's Gull
2 Brandt's Cormorant	60 Hooded Merganser	98 Whimbrel	136 Black-legged Kittiwake
3 Pelagic Cormorant	61 Common Merganser	99 Spotted Sandpiper	137 Sabine's Gull
4 Magnificent Frigatebird (2)	62 Red-breasted Merganser	100 Solitary Sandpiper (4)	138 Forster's Tern
5 Great Blue Heron	63 Turkey Vulture	101 Wandering Tattler	139 Common Tern
6 Green Heron	64 White-tailed Kite	102 Willet	140 Elegant Tern
7 Little Blue Heron (2)	65 Sharp-shinned Hawk	103 Greater Yellowlegs	141 Caspian Tern
8 Great Egret	66 Cooper's Hawk	104 Lesser Yellowlegs	142 Black Tern
9 Snowy Egret	67 Red-tailed Hawk	105 Red Knot	143 Common Noddy
10 Black-crowned Night Heron	68 Red-shouldered Hawk	106 Rock Sandpiper	144 Pigeon Gull-lemot
1 American Bittern	69 Rough-legged Hawk	107 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (2)	145 Marbled Murrelet
2 Whistling Swan	70 Ferruginous Hawk	108 Pectoral Sandpiper	146 Ancient Murrelet
3 Trumpeter Swan	71 Golden Eagle	109 Baird's Sandpiper	147 Cassin's Auklet
4 Canada Goose	72 Bald Eagle	110 Least Sandpiper	148 Rhinoceros Auklet
5 Black Brant	73 Marsh Hawk	111 Dunlin	149 Tufted Puffin
6 White-fronted Goose	74 Osprey	112 Short-billed Dowitcher	150 Band-tailed Pigeon
7 Snow Goose	75 Prairie Falcon (3)	113 Long-billed Dowitcher	151 Rock Dove
8 Mallard	76 Peregrine Falcon	114 Western Sandpiper	152 Mourning Dove

- 153 Roadrunner
 154 Barn Owl
 155 Screech Owl
 156 Great Horned Owl
 157 Snowy Owl (4)
 158 Pygmy Owl
 159 Burrowing Owl
 160 Spotted Owl (4)
 161 Long-eared Owl
 162 Short-eared Owl
 163 Saw-whet Owl
 164 Poorwill
 165 Common Nighthawk (2)
 166 Vaux's Swift
 167 White-throated Swift
 168 Anna's Hummingbird
 169 Rufous Hummingbird
 170 Allen's Hummingbird
 171 Calliope Hummingbird
 172 Belted Kingfisher
 173 Common Flicker
 174 Pileated Woodpecker
 175 Acorn Woodpecker
 176 Lewis' Woodpecker
 177 Yellow-billed Sapsucker
 178 Hairy Woodpecker
 179 Downy Woodpecker
 180 Nuttall's Woodpecker
 181 Eastern Kingbird (1)
 182 Tropical Kingbird (4)
 183 Western Kingbird
 184 Ash-throated Flycatcher
 185 Black Phoebe
 186 Say's Phoebe
 187 Willow Flycatcher
 188 Western Flycatcher
 189 Western Wood Pewee
 190 Olive-sided Flycatcher
 191 Horned Lark
 192 Violet-green Swallow
 193 Tree Swallow
 194 Bank Swallow (2)
 195 Rough-winged Swallow
 196 Barn Swallow
 197 Cliff Swallow
 198 Purple Martin
 199 Steller's Jay
 200 Scrub Jay
 201 Yellow-billed Magpie (3)
 202 Common Raven
 203 Common Crow
 204 Chestnut-backed Chickadee
 205 Plain Titmouse
 206 Bushtit
 207 White-breasted Nuthatch
 208 Red-breasted Nuthatch
 209 Pygmy Nuthatch
 210 Brown Creeper
 211 Wren-tit
 212 Dipper
 213 House Wren
 214 Winter Wren
 215 Bewick's Wren
 216 Long-billed Marsh Wren
 217 Canyon Wren (3)
 218 Rock Wren
 219 Mockingbird
 220 Gray Catbird (1)
 221 California Thrasher
 222 American Robin
 223 Varied Thrush
 224 Hermit Thrush
 225 Swainson Thrush
 226 Western Bluebird
 227 Mountain Bluebird (2)
 228 Townsend's Solitaire (2)
 229 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
 230 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 231 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
 232 Water Pipit
 233 Bohemian Waxwing (1)
 234 Cedar Waxwing
 235 Phainopepla (2)
 236 Northern Shrike
 237 Loggerhead Shrike
 238 Common Starling
 239 Hutton's Vireo
 240 Solitary Vireo
 241 Warbling Vireo
 242 Black-and-white Warbler
 243 Tennessee Warbler
 244 Orange-crowned Warbler
 245 Nashville Warbler
 246 Parula Warbler (5)
 247 Yellow Warbler
 248 Yellow-rumped Warbler
 249 Black-throated Gray Warbler
 250 Townsend's Warbler
 251 Hermit Warbler
 252 Chestnut-sided Warbler
 253 Blackpoll Warbler
 254 Parula Warbler
 255 MacGillivray's Warbler
 256 Yellowthroat
 257 Yellow-breasted Chat
 258 Wilson's Warbler
 259 American Redstart (3)
 260 House Sparrow
 261 Western Meadowlark
 262 Yellow-headed Blackbird (2)
 263 Red-winged Blackbird
 264 Tri-colored Blackbird
 265 Hooded Oriole (2)
 266 Northern Oriole
 267 Brewer's Blackbird
 268 Brown-headed Cowbird
 269 Western Tanager
 270 Summer Tanager (3)
 271 Rose-breasted Grosbeak (2)
 272 Black-headed Grosbeak
 273 Lesuliunting
 274 Painted Bunting (1)
 275 Evening Grosbeak
 276 Purple Finch
 277 House Finch
 278 Pine Siskin
 279 American Goldfinch
 280 Lesser Goldfinch
 281 Lawrence's Goldfinch
 282 Red Crossbill
 283 Green-tailed Towhee (2)
 284 Rufous-sided Towhee
 285 Brown Towhee
 286 Savannah Sparrow
 287 Vesper Sparrow
 288 Lark Sparrow
 289 Rufous-crowned Sparrow
 290 Sage Sparrow
 291 Dark-eyed Junco
 292 Chipping Sparrow
 293 Brewer Sparrow (1)
 294 Black-chinned Sparrow
 295 White-crowned Sparrow
 296 Golden-crowned Sparrow
 297 White-throated Sparrow
 298 Fox Sparrow
 299 Lincoln's Sparrow
 300 Swamp Sparrow (4)
 301 Song Sparrow

CSCS COURTESY PARKING PERMIT

I AM ATTENDING A MEETING OF
REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Rm 221, DARWIN HALL

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 13, 1975

(DISPLAY IN DRIVER'S WINDSHIELD AREA)

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