

# Kite Tales

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NOVEMBER

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
Vol. 14, No. 3 Sonoma County

1979

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

### November 8, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. RROS General Meeting

Peter Connors will give an update on his Sanderling research which he has conducted for several years at the Bodega Marine Lab and vicinity. Also, come to this meeting and sign up for your Christmas count territory.

### November 10, Saturday, Field Trip to Willow Creek/Jenner

Doug Ellis will meet all owlers at the Coleman Valley "Overlook" at 5:30 a.m. (this is the location where the Sawhet Owl is frequently heard). At 8 a.m., there will be a gathering on Coleman Valley Road in Occidental, then off to bird Willow Creek canyon and Jenner.

### November 24, Saturday, NAS Birdathon

Proceeds from Audubon's California Birdathon will go into funds to support Condor research and to save Mono Lake. These two issues are both important to California birders. At the October meeting, the members of RROS voted to support this effort by pledging 25¢ per species to Rich Stallcup and 25¢ per to Mike Parmeter. Mike is joining with John Parmeter and Laurie Binford to try for a "Big Day" too. Good Luck to everyone!

### December 16, Sunday, Santa Rosa Christmas Count

Help us celebrate Beethoven's birthday with a day of bird counting. This year we're going for 140 species on the Santa Rosa CBC. Bring some friends and help make this our best count ever. The compilation will be held at the Bennett Valley Grange on Grange Road (between Bennett Valley Road and Crane Canyon Road). All those interested please contact Gerry Mugele as soon as possible at P.O. Box 790, Sonoma or 938-2134.

## CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Birds of Sonoma County by Gordon Bollander and B. D. Parmeter. Send a check for \$4.74 (\$4.00 + .24 tax + .50 handling) to Dr. John Arnold, 199 Calistoga Rd, Santa Rosa, Ca 95404.

Birds of Northern California by Paul deBenedictus, Guy McKaskie, Dick Erickson and Joe Morlan. Send \$5.80 for post-paid copy to: Golden Gate Audubon, 2718 Telegraph Suite 206, Berkeley, Ca 94705.

1980 California Birder's Calendar--black and white drawings by Pedro J. Gonzales. Send check for \$5.50 to Golden Gate Audubon, 2718 Telegraph Suite 206, Berkeley, Ca 94705.

## FIELD TRIP RESULTS

October's field trip to Point Reyes was a splendid success! The following members saw some outstanding birds: Mike and John Parmeter, Laurie Binford, Jack Arnold, Rich Stallcup, Doug Ellis, Herb McGrew, Deyea Harper, Betty

## FIELD TRIP(cont)

Burridge, Hal & Olive Corey, Bill and Helen Heneks, Mike Nelligan, Bob McLean, Terry Babineaux, Jim Matzinger, Brad Hanson, David Lowe and Terry Colborn.

Common Loon	Greater Yellowlegs	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Arctic Loon	Pectoral Sandpiper	Water Pipit
Horned Grebe	Short-billed Dowitcher	Loggerhead Shrike
Eared Grebe	Western Sandpiper	Hutton's Vereo (2)
Pied-billed Grebe	Sanderling	Black-and-white Warbler
White Pelican	Northern Phalarope	Yellow Warbler
Brown Pelican	Glaucous-winged Gull	Magnolia Warbler (1)
Double-crested Cormorant	Western Gull	Townsend's Warbler
Brandt's Cormorant	Herring Gull	Blackburnian Warbler (2)
Pelagic Cormorant	California Gull	Palm Warbler (7!)
Great Blue Heron	Ring-billed Gull	Common Yellowthroat
Great Egret	Heermann's Gull	American Redstart (6)
Pintail	Elegant Tern	House Sparrow
American Wigeon	Rock Dove	Western Meadowlark
Surf Scoter	Barn Owl	Red-winged Blackbird
Ruddy Duck	Great Horned Owl	Tricolored Blackbird
Turkey Vulture	Anna's Hummingbird	Brewer's Blackbird
White-tailed Kite	Common Flicker	Brown-headed Cowbird
Cooper's Hawk	Ash-throated Flycatcher	House Finch
Red-tailed Hawk	Black Phoebe	Pine Siskin
Ferruginous Hawk	Least Flycatcher	American Goldfinch
Marsh Hawk	Horned Lark	Savannah Sparrow
Prairie Falcon	Barn Swallow	Lark Sparrow (1)
American Kestrel	Scrub Jay	Dark-eyed Junco (1)
California Quail	Common Raven	Brewer's Sparrow (1)
Virginia Rail	Red-breasted Nuthatch	White-crowned Sparrow
Sora	Winter Wren	Golden-crowned Sparrow
American Coot	Bewick's Wren	Fox Sparrow (2)
Killdeer	Long-billed Marsh Wren	Song Sparrow
Black-bellied Plover	Rock Wren (1)	Lapland Longspur
Black Turnstone	Western Bluebird	
Whimbrel	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	
Willet		

OBSERVATIONS--by Mike Parmeter

What a month of birding! The biggest fall movement of vagrant warblers ever on the northern coast of California, along with a lowland invasion of montane species. Good weather permitted almost daily birding.

Red-necked Grebe: many records--the most notable being 4 birds at Drake's Beach on 9-22, along with 6 offshore at Limantour the same day (John Parmeter, Doug Ellis). White Pelicans were seen at Bodega Harbor regularly (many observers), but 7 birds at Middletown on 10-6 is a more unusual record (Jim Matzinger). A female Blue-winged Teal in Willow Creek marsh on 10-14 (Suzanne Luther, Brian McCaffery). A Redhead seen offshore in a flock of scoters on (-29 (DE) is an early date. An Oldsquaw at Pt Arena Mendocino County on 10-17 constitutes one of the few county records (DE).

A Swainson's Hawk at Sherman Island in Sacramento County on 10-9 is a late record (DE). Ferruginous Hawks were seen by nearly all birders visiting outer Point Reyes. A single Ferruginous Hawk was seen near Sonoma on 10-21 (JP). Three immature Broad-winged Hawks were seen during 2 hours of watching on 9-28 (Benjamin D Parmeter). There were multiple Golden Eagle sightings: 9-22--abandoned ranch, Pt Reyes, Rich Stallcup; 9-29--Cheney Gulch, an immature (DE); 10-11-- Freestone, single bird, (Terry Colborn); 10-15--Black Point, 2 adults, (Gerry Mugele); 10-15, Sears Point, one adult, (GM). Two adult Bald Eagles at Middletown on 10-16 were an excellent sighting (JM). Prairie Falcon: 10-7 Single birds at the Fish Docks (BDP) and at Drakes Beach (Betty Burrige); single bird in Willow Creek Canyon (SL, BMC); single bird at Nunes Ranch, 10-14, (DE). A Peregrine Falcon, probably of the subspecies anatum, was seen regularly at Bodega Harbor, usually in the area of Doran Park (mob). Merlin records included: Mendoza Ranch--9-22 (BDP, DE); 10-10, Sherman Island, Sacramento county, (DE); 10-13, Willow Creek Canyon (SL, BMC).

Fifty Sandhill Cranes at Stalen Island, San Joaquin County, on 10-10 is an early arrival date (DE). Golden Plover sightings were scarce. Two birds at the Lodi sewer ponds 10-9 and a single bird at the RCA Station on 10-14 were the only records submitted (both DE). Eight hundred+ Black-bellied Plovers at the Lodi sewer ponds is an unussally large number, 10-9 (DE). Many Pectoral Sandpiper sightings, all for one to three birds except: 9-19, 25 birds at Borax Lake, Lake County, (JM); 10-17, 8 birds at Manchester Beach, Mendocino County (DE). A single Buff-breasted Sandpiper was at the Hall Ranch at Point Reyes on 9-22 (BDP, JP, DE, Herb McGrew). An immature Ruff was Zmudowski Beach State Park on 9-28 (LC Binford, BDP). There were several Pomarine Jaeger records and an even larger number of Parasitic Jaeger sightings. The latter species is more apt to be seen from shore. A Parasitic Jaeger in light-phase was found at Doran Park on 9-16 (Jack Arnold, DE) and was seen in this area intermittently for nearly 3 weeks. Three Parasitic Jaegers were seen at the same time offshore at Limantour on 9-22 (JP, Phil Lenna). There were numerous sightings for Red Phalarope toward the end of the reporting period. On 10-17, Doug Ellis saw thousands at Point Arena. A Common Tern was Doran Park 9-29 (DE), and the last record being four on 10-9 (Hal Corey). Marbled Murrelets were reported several times with a high count of 12 birds on 9-22 off Doran Park (BDP, JA, DE, PL). Twelve Marbled Murrelets were at the mouth of the Russian River on 9-29 (DE).

Pygmy Owls were noted several times, usually from coastal canyons such as Willow Creek, but also from Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Spotted Owls were reported twice from Willow Creek canyon: 9-29, 2 birds (DE); 10-14--one bird (SL, BMC). A Sawhet Owl was calling at the Coleman Valley overlook on 9-29 (DE).

The male Costa's Hummingbird continued to come to the feeder on Dry Creek Road at least through 10-6 (anyone know of a later date?). On 9-29, a Poorwill was calling at Sugarloaf Ridge (DE). Pileated Woodpeckers are doing well in our area. There were many sightings, all of single birds.

A Tropical Kingbird was at the Nunes Ranch on 10-13 (BDP, JP) and 10-14 (DE). One of the highlights of the RRoS Trip to Pt Reyes on 10-7, was a Least

Flycatcher which had been found the day before by Rich Stallcup. The bird afforded us excellent views and even called several times. Dr Binford and Rich were present when the club saw it and gave us good information on the identification of this difficult species. It was a lifer for many and a state bird for nearly all. A flock of about 9 Clark's Nutcrackers were seen on Mt St Helena in Napa County, 10-6 (JM). A single Townsend's Solitaire was seen at the top of Mt St Helena on 10-11, as were several Canyon Wrens (BDP). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at the Nunes Ranch on 10-13 (BDP) and on 10-21 (JP).

The vagrant warblers were the best in many years, perhaps the best ever! I'll try to summarize them. Black-and-white Warbler: 10-7, Fish Docks (BDP, JA); 10-21, female, Olema Marsh, (Rs, BDP). Tennessee Warbler: 10-13 Fish Docks (Jon Winter); 10-13, Nunes Ranch (BDP); 10-14, Nunes Ranch (DE); 10-21, Mendoza Ranch (BDP, JP, DE). A Northern Parula was at the Fish Docks on 9-29 (Terry Babineaux, Bob McLean). Magnolia Warbler was at the Fish Docks on 9-29 (TB, BMC) and on 10-7 (RS). A Cape May Warbler was at the Fish Docks on 9-29 (TB, BMC). Black-throated Blue Warbler: 9-29, Fish Docks (TB, BMC); female, Mendoza Ranch, 10-13 (JP, BDP) and 10-14 (DE). Probably the same individual was there 10-21 (BDP, JP, DE). Doug Ellis saw a Bay-breasted Warbler at the Mendoza Ranch on 10-14. Blackburnian Warblers were at the Fish Docks on 10-7 and another at the Nunes Ranch on the same date. These were both seen by RROS members. A Blackburnian was also seen at the Fish Docks on 9-29 (TB, BMC). A Chesnut-sided Warbler was at the Fish Docks 9-29 (TB, BMC). Blackpoll sightings were many, too numerous to list, as were Palm Warblers. An Ovenbird was at the Fish Docks, 9-23 (Dan Nelson). The biggest find of the period was a Mourning Warbler found by Rich Stallcup on 9-27. It remained 4 days and was seen by many birders from around the state including a number of RROS members. A Canada Warbler was in the canyon on the west side of Bodega Lagoon on 9-24 to 9-26 (Steve Laymon, Nancy Conzat). American Redstart records were many. On the RROS trip to Pt Reyes on 10-7, at least 6 different birds were seen. On 9-27, Rich Stallcup found 19 different warbler species at Point Reyes which must surely be a California state record for one day!!

Evening Grosbeaks, one of the montane invaders, have been noted regularly. They were first seen in Napa on 9-29, a flock of 15 was present on 10-14 (JP), and have been noted regularly about our house since. A flock of 25-30 Red Crossbills were in Willow Creek canyon on 9-29 (DE).

A Sage Sparrow was at the pt Reyes Lighthouse on 9-27 (RS). A Brewer's Sparrow was at the Nunes Ranch on 10-7 (DE, RS, BDP). Lincoln's Sparrows arrived at Howell Mountain the last week in September (Wayne Tillay). An adult Swamp Sparrow was at the ponds at the north end of Bodega Harbor on 10-16 (Elmer Aldrich, Vince Mobray, DE). Lapland Longspurs were first noted at the Hall Ranch on 9-22 (JP) and have been present since. Chesnut-collared Longspurs are also now present with the Laplands; on 10-21, a single bird was seen (JP, DE, BDP).

Correction to the addition

From last month: Add to The Birds of Sonoma County Least Tern--2 birds at Bodega Bay, June 23, 1977 (Hal Corey, Jim Wilson, Warren Munson.)