

Kite Tales

DECEMBER

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Vol. 14, No. 4 Sonoma County

1979

COMING ATTRACTIONS

December 13, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. RROS General Meeting

It's "Bring your own slides" night again! This is really a fun program, and it could be good practice for upcoming Christmas counts. Bring 5-10 of your favorite slides (birds or bird people) and be ready for a good show! There will also be a last discussion of Christmas count preparations.

December 16, Sunday, Santa Rosa Christmas Count

Celebrate Beethoven's birthday with RROS by helping make the Santa Rosa Christmas Count a record breaker. We can use the help of observers, tallyers, feeder watchers and cooks, so don't be afraid to volunteer--everybody can help! Contact Gerry Mugele at 938-2134.

The compilation and dinner will take place at the Bennett Valley Grange on Grange Road (between Bennett Valley Road and Crane Canyon Road). (To reach Bennett Valley Grange from Highway 101, take Highway 12 offramp eastbound towards the fairgrounds; travel about 2 miles, past the fairgrounds to the Bennett Valley Road turnoff; continue on BV Road about 5 miles to Grange Road; turn right and continue about 1/2 mile to the grange, which is on the right-hand side of the road.)

We also need some help with the supper. It is our usual loosely organized potluck sort of affair. Contact Terry Colborn (539-4157) if you can provide a pot of soup or chili. Otherwise, bring french bread or cheese or cookies or wine or something. And call Terry if you want to help get the supper together. We need someone to stir pots and fill the bowls (and stomachs) of starving, frozen birders.

Any time after 4:30 p.m. should be the right time. We'll have the official count down (compiling) about 6:30, so plan to be there!

December 30, Sunday, Western Sonoma Count Christmas Count

Sponsored by Madrone Audubon, this count takes place in an area familiar to all of us. Let's help Betty and Deyea make it another winner! Call them and volunteer. (Betty Burrridge--527-0225 and Deyea Harper--542-1542)

December 31, Monday, Lake County Christmas Count

Contact Jim Matzinger (P.O. Box 47, Cobb, Ca 95426 928-5376) to help with this one.

January 1, Tuesday, Angwin Christmas Count

If you're up for one more count on this long weekend, contact Wayne Tillay (160 Cold Springs Rd Angwin 94508) and volunteer!

FIELD TRIP RESULTS

Nine birders ventured out Willow Creek Road to "Blind Beach" overlook to observe 85 species. They were: Hal and Olive Corey, Jack Arnold, Gerry Mugele, Ellen and Eleanor Falconer, Doug Ellis, Dan and Wini Nelson, Bob McLean, Mike and John Parmeter.

Field Trip (cont)

Common Loon	American Coot	Chesnut-backed
Arctic Loon	Black Oystercatcher	Chickadee
Red-throated Loon	Killdeer	Bushtit
Horned Grebe	Willet	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Western Grebe	Red Phalarope	Brown Creeper
Pied-billed Grebe	Glaucous-winged Gull	Wrentit
Brown Pelican	Western Gull	Winter Wren
Double-crested Cormorant	California Gull	Bewick's Wren
Brandt's Cormorant	Ring-billed Gull	Long-billed Marsh Wren
Pelagic Cormorant	Bonaparte's Gull	American Robin
Great Blue Heron	Heermann's Gull	Varied Thrush
Mallard	Common Murre	Hermit Thrush
Pintail	Band-tailed Pigeon	Western Bluebird
Lesser Scaup	Mourning Dove	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Bufflehead	Great-horned Owl	Starling
White-winged Scoter	Pygmy Owl	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Surf Scoter	Spotted Owl	Townsend's Warbler
Black Scoter	Saw-whet Owl	Western Meadowlark
Turkey Vulture	Anna's Hummingbird	Red-winged Blackbird
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	Brewer's Blackbird
Cooper's Hawk	Common Flicker	Purple Finch
Red-tailed Hawk	Pileated Woodpecker	House Finch
Golden Eagle	Hairy Woodpecker	Pine Siskin
Marsh Hawk	Black Phoebe	Rufous-sided Towhee
Osprey	Steller's Jay	Brown Towhee
American Kestrel	Scrub Jay	Dark-eyed Junco
California Quail	Common Raven	White-crowned Sparrow
Mountain Quail	Common Crow	Golden-crowned Sparrow
		Fox Sparrow
		Song Sparrow

A NEW BIRD FOR SONOMA COUNTY (An "old" new bird!)

I recently received a copy of The California Condor, 1966-76: A Look at Its Past and Future, by Sanford Wilbur. On page 72, among a list of documented sightings of California Condors, is a record of four birds collected in Sonoma County in the 1840s. The four specimens are now in the Leningrad Natural History Museum! If any of you are planning to visit Russia, it might be well to put the museum on your itinerary and see the Sonoma County Condors. Mike Parmeter

CASSEROLE OF STARLING

A recipe for any leftover starlings you might have. Place Starling breasts in casserole, brush with butter and bake in hot oven 10 minutes. Add liquid from 1 four oz. can of mushrooms, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water in which 1 bouillion cube has been dissolved. Reduce oven heat to slow and continue baking until breasts are tender. Add mushrooms, 2 cups sliced onion which have been sauteed in butter until brown, and 1 cup seeded, peeled Malaga grapes. Always keep casserole covered when in oven. (from Outdoor California, July-August, 1979)

OBSERVATIONS by Mike Parmeter

Another banner month of birding!

John Parmeter was aboard a boat which ventured into Pacific waters 90

Observations (cont)

miles west of Morro Bay on Nov. 16. Two Cook's Petrels were identified with certainty, along with a possible Stejneger's Petrel. Four other petrels were also thought to be Cook's. (Check your Birds of New Zealand for these--ed. note) Two Fulmar were seen offshore from Bodega Marine Lab on Nov 23 (JP, Kent Van Vuren). A Cattle Egret was at Salmon Creek on Nov 8 (Brian McCaffery) and 3 were present north of Sebastopol on High School Road on Nov 11 (Hal & Olive Corey, David & Kathy Biggs). The latter birds have been seen subsequently. A male Wood Duck was seen at Salmon Creek on Nov 10 (Benjamin D Parmeter). Twenty-five Redheads on San Francisco Bay on Nov 11 is a large number (Doug Ellis). Fifteen Ring-necked Ducks were at the reactor site pond on Nov 4 (JP, DE), and a single bird was at Salmon Creek on Nov 10 (LC Binford). Amale Barrow's Goldeneye was at Lake Merritt with a flock of American Goldeneyes on Nov 21 (JP). A male Oldsquaw in winter plumage was seen from Bodega Head on Nov 10 (LCB). A male Harlequin Duck was seen at Salt Point State Park on Oct 27 (Betty Burrige). Two male Hooded Mergansers were at Five Brooks Stable Pond on Nov 14 (JP, DE). Hooded Mergansers returned in early November to a pond near Lower Lake (Jim Matzinger). (Hopefully, they will hang around for the Xmas count.)

An unusually late record for Swainson's Hawk was a single bird on Nov 10 at the Empire Tract in San Joaquin County (DE). Rough-legged Hawks are scarce this fall. A single bird was near Fairfield on Nov 12 (DE) and another was near Old Adobe on Nov 22 (LCB). Single Eagles were seen in Willow Creek Canyon on Nov 10 (DE) and at Sonoma State College on Nov 19 (John R Arnold). A Peregrine was seen at Salmon Creek on Nov 7 (BMCC). There were many sightings of Merlins, all from coastal locations.

A single Mountain Quail was heard calling in Willow Creek Canyon on Nov 11 (DE). This species is scarce on the coastal side of the Coast Range. Rock Sandpipers were first seen at Bodega Head on Nov 11 (Jerri Langham) and at the Bodega Marine Lab on Nov 22 (Peter Connors). Two Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (!!) were in the pond at the entrance to Doran Park on Nov 23 (JP, KVV). Dave Shuford reports three Golden Plovers in the grass field near the Bodega Bay School on Nov 13. Red Phalarope were very common at all coastal locations and a few birds were seen at ponds inland a short distance from the coast. A single Northern Phalarope was at Salmon Creek on Nov 10 (LCB). An immature Parasitic Jaeger was at Bodega Harbor, Nov 3 (Joe Morlan). An immature Franklin's Gull was seen near the base of the jetty channel on Nov 3 (JMo). On Nov 10, an immature Black-legged Kittiwake was seen from Bodega Head (LCB, JP). A single Elegant Tern at Bodega Bay on Nov 3 is a very late record (JMo). There were many records for Ancient Murrelets from several places along the Sonoma County coast. Hopefully, they will remain for the Christmas count. Five Marbled Murrelets were seen at Bodega Head on Nov 3 (JMo). Two Cassin's Auklets, seldom seen from land, were spotted from Bodega Head on Nov 10 (LCB, JP).

A flock of 500 Band-tailed Pigeons were seen just north of Jenner on Oct 27 (BB), and another flock of 200 were seen near Santa Rosa on Nov 19 (JRA). The second county record of a White-winged Dove was seen at Salmon Creek on Nov 4 and 5 (BMCC). On Nov 10, nine different Pygmy Owls were recorded in Willow Creek Canyon (DE). A Burrowing Owl was seen at Tubbs Island on Nov 4 (BB). This species hangs on tenaciously, in spite of man's encroachments on its habitat. Spotted Owls and Saw-whet Owls were both noted

from the Willow Creek Canyon area. The Costa's Hummingbird continued to come to the feeder on Dry Creek Road at least through Nov 5. A Pileated Woodpecker was calling near Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters on Nov. 4 (JP,DE).

A single Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was in the canyon on the west side of Bodega Harbor on Nov 22 (BDP, PC) and on Nov 23 (KVV). A carefully studied Ash-throated Flycatcher was near the entrance to Dunes Campground on Nov 10 (Art Edwards, LCB, JP). This is an unusually late sighting. An Eastern Phoebe was found in the town of Salmon Creek on Nov 4 (BMcC) and was seen by several RROS members including the Harpers and BDP. All three species of phoebes were seen within a short period of time by several observers at Salmon Creek on this date. A Yellow-billed Magpie (the 4th county record) was seen near the junction of Franz Valley Rd and Hwy 128 on Nov 9 (HC, Warren Munson, Stan Carpenter).

There were many observations of Orange-crowned Warbler, nearly all from coastal locations. A Nashville Warbler was at Salmon Creek on Nov 5 (BMcC Bud Fry, Jean Richmond); another was in the canyon on the west side of Bodega Bay on the same date (BMcC). Two Nashville Warblers were seen below Diekmann's Store at Bodega Bay on Nov 10 (LCB, BDP, Gerry Mugele), and on Nov 11, 3 were seen at the same spot (JMo, Jerri Langham). On Nov 14, a single bird was still present in the area (DS). On Nov 23, a Nashville was seen in the canyon on the west side of Bodega Bay (KVV). Palm Warblers were seen regularly in the town of Salmon Creek with a maximum of 4 birds on Nov 4 (BMcC). The biggest find of the month was a Canada Warbler at Diekmann's Store on Nov 10 (LCB, BDP, JP, P&Carolyn Connors, GM). It was seen on Nov 11 after four hours of looking (JMo, JL). It was seen on Nov 14 (DS). As far as I know, it has not been seen again.

A Clay-colored Sparrow was at Salmon Creek on Oct 26, the second county record (Stephanie Williams, BMcC). On Nov 20, another Clay-colored Sparrow came to a feeder at the Bodega Marine Lab (PC, BDP, JP, DE). It was still at the BML on Nov 23 (KVV). An adult White-throated Sparrow was seen at Salmon Creek on Nov 4 (DH, BDP). A Swamp Sparrow was seen at the pond at Doran Park entrance on Nov 14 (DS). Two (or possibly 3) Lapland Longspurs were in a freshly plowed field just south of Salmon Creek on Nov 10 (JP, LCB, BDP). On Nov 4, two Chesnut-collared Longspurs were present in the same field (BMcC), and again on Nov 5 (JMo). This is the first county record for this species.

FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!FLASH!

The returns are in! RROS members Mike Parmeter and Rich Stallcup have been busy setting records on the NAS Birdathon on Nov. 24. Mike (and friends) counted 168 species for the day. And Rich (and more friends) counted 169 to raise \$2100.00 for the support of the Mono Lake effort! Hooray ! for our side!