

Kite Tales

SEPTEMBER

REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Vol. 15, No. 1

1980

Sonoma County

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Sept. 11, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. RROS General Meeting and Potluck Supper

This is the first meeting of the season, so we're having a social-type event. The location is Jack & Deyea Harper's, 2310 Northwood, Santa Rosa. (Call 542-1542, if you're lost). Bring your own utensils (silverware, plates, cups) and a favorite dinner goodie. RROS will provide the fixings for coffee and tea. Come for a terrific meal and some good company!

Sept. 13, Saturday, 8:30 a.m. Field Trip to Bodega Bay

Meet leader Betty Burrige at the upper parking lot of the Tides Restaurant. Bring lunch and jacket and friends to spend the day looking for fall migrants.

Sept. 20, Deadline for Observations Column

Write or call Mike Parmeter with any interesting or unusual sightings (2500 Emerson St, Napa, Ca. 94558 707-255-6757).

Sept. 25, Deadline for the Kite Tales

Call or write to Kathy Mugele (PO Box 790 Sonoma, Ca 95476 707-938-2134) with any bird news. If you miss the 25th, call anyway, and we'll try to get it in!

Sept. 27, Saturday, PRBO Bird-a-thon

This is PRBO's third annual Bird-a-thon. This effort has raised over \$30,000 in the last two years. This year they are trying for \$40,000! Half will be used for PRBO's research efforts and half will go to NAS Mono Lake Fund. Last year, RROS helped by sponsoring Rich Stallcup and Mike Parmeter. Maybe this year we can get a few more counters in the field too. If you are interested, contact PRBO for full information:

PRBO/Mono Lake Birdathon
4990 Shoreline Hiwy
Stinson Beach, Ca 94970

Oct. 12, Sunday, Field Trip to Point Reyes

Mike Parmeter will meet the group at 8 a.m. at the Fish Docks at Point Reyes. This should be the height of the fall migration and a good time for vagrants.

Oct. 19, Sunday, Boat Trip to Cordelle Banks

Mike Parmeter and Doug Ellis will be leading this offshore trip. The cost will be \$20.00 per person with only 16 spaces left. Plan ahead, if you want to take part. Make the check payable to RROS and mail to Ellen Falconer (1151 Corby Av. Santa Rosa, Ca). You will be mailed confirmation of your place on the boat.

SNOWY PLOVERS

Last winter Point Reyes Bird Observatory coordinated a statewide survey, done mostly by volunteers, to document the size and distribution of the wintering Snowy Plover population in California. Censusers also searched the wintering plover flocks for birds color banded at breeding areas on Monterey Bay and at Mono Lake. Participants on last winter's survey collected great information on the size and distribution of the population and located some of the banded plovers.

This summer we banded more adults and chicks at Mono Lake and on Monterey Bay and would like to continue the winter search for banded birds. If you would like to help us locate our banded plovers, help us learn more about the wintering population, or find out more about our studies of this secretive inhabitant of California's beaches and alkaline lakes, please write:

Gary Page
PRBO
4990 Shoreline Hiwy
Stinson Beach, Ca 94970

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's just a hint of what is to come...there's the Sonoma coast, Honey Lake, Annadel, Gualala for coming field trips...and for programs, there's Mexico and Betty and Deyea; Jon and the Great Gray Owls; Iceland with Kathy and Gerry; and maybe a trip to South America and who knows what surprises? Get ready for a great year!

OBSERVATIONS--Summer of 1980--by Mike Parmeter

All 3 loons summered at Bodega Harbor, Common Loons being the most, Red-throated the least common. A Red-necked Grebe in breeding plumage was at Bodega Harbor on July 8 (Deyea Harper). A single Black-footed Albatross was seen on a Monterey Bay offshore trip on Aug 24 (John Parmeter, Benjamin D. Parmeter). On the same trip, 250 Sooty Shearwaters and about 20 Pink-footed Shearwaters were seen. Ten Black Storm Petrels and two Ashy Storm Petrels were seen on the same day. A flock of 850+ White Pelicans was at Vallejo on Aug 9 (JP, Phil Lenna). On the same date, a white-phased Little Blue Heron was found between Vallejo and Mare Island (JP, BDP, PL). A single Black Brant was noted at the mouth of the Gualala River on June 8 (Dan Nelson, Doug Ellis). A pair of Blue-winged Teal were on a small pond at Duncan Mills on June 6 (DE, PL, BdP). On the same pond was a Wood Duck with 10 downy young. Greater Scaup were, as usual, the only scaup noted in our area. Doug Ellis reports a single Common Goldeneye at Bodega Harbor on July 19. He also had 2 female Buffleheads on July 20. A male and female Harlequin Ducks were just south of the county park at Gualala on June 7 (DE, DN, BDP). This species is seen regularly at this spot even during the summer months. Both White-winged and Surf Scoters summered in small numbers in our area. A female Common Merganser with 10 young was noted at Gualala on June 7 & 8 (BDP, PL, DE, DN). Two Red-breasted Mergansers were at Bodega Harbor on June 20, alate date (DE).

A Goshawk was seen at Glacier Point on June 19 (Deyea and Jack Harper). Sharp-shinned Hawks are rare in Sonoma County during the breeding season, but one was seen on Harrison Grade Road on June 28 (DE). A Blue Grouse was observed

Observations (cont)

booming on the ground at very close range on June 17 (JP, BDP). Doug Ellis found a new spot for Black Rails just east of Avon in Contra Costa County. His censusing of a large marshy area revealed at least 44 birds. A Black Oystercatcher nest with 3 eggs was easily viewed on an offshore rock at Bodega Head during late July. A single Lesser Yellowlegs was at the Nunes Ranch Pond on Aug. 23 (BDP, DE). The first Baird's Sandpiper was noted at the Doran Park Pond on Aug 3 (PL, JP, Peter Connors). A Semipalmated Sandpiper was seen at the same spot ~~at the same spot~~ on Aug 10 (Joel Hornstein). Thirty-five Black-necked Stilts were seen in a flooded field near the Petaluma River in Marin County on July 31 (DE). Red Phalaropes were quite common on the Aug 24 offshore trip from Monterey Bay (JP, BDP). On the same trip, only two Pomarine Jaegers were seen, a low number. A total of 15 Sabine's Gulls in various plumages were seen the same day (JP, BDP). Excellent views were obtained of this hard to see species. Common, Arctic and Elegant Terns were all seen on this trip. A flock of 10 Least Terns were at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza on July 12 (BDP, JP). Ten-twelve Black Terns were seen along the road between Willows and Glenn on July 27 (JP, DE, DN). Marbled Murrelets were common off the mouth of the Gualala River on June 6,7,8 (BDP, DE, PL, DN). Two Craveri's Murrelets were seen on the Monterey Offshore Trip on Aug 24 (JP, BDP). The dark underwing linings were carefully noted.

Three Yellow-billed Cuckoos were seen and heard near Glenn on July 27 (JP, DE, DN). There are two reports of Flammulated Owls. Two birds at Henness Ridge in Yosemite on June 18 (JP, DN, BDP), and near Chico on July 12 (DH). A single Great Gray Owl was well studied both morning and evening on June 18 (JP, BDP, DN). The bird was under observation for 30 minutes on each occasion. A Common Nighthawk was watched booming over the town of Gualala on June 6 and later that same evening was seen and heard over adjacent Sonoma County (BDP, DE, PL, DN). The Costa's Hummingbird has come back to the Wolcott home near Healdsburg. It was seen on July 1 by Doug Ellis. The exact date of its return is not known. Pileated Woodpeckers were common at Crane Flat on June 16 and 17 (DN, JP, BDP). Williamson's Sapsuckers were seen at Siesta Lake on the Tioga Pass Road by several observers during June. A Black-backed Three-toed Woodbecker was seen at Bridalveil Campground on June 18 (BDP, JP, DN) and 2 pair were seen at Summit Meadow on July 3 (DE).

The big sighting of the summer was an adult male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in slightly worn plumage on July 27. It was found by Gloria Markowitz and was seen during the afternoon of the same day by many RROS members. Unfortunately, it was not found the following day. This is species #361 for the Sonoma County list. A Western Kingbird, an Ash-throated Flycatcher, and an Olive-sided Flycatcher were seen at the Pt Reyes Lighthouse on Aug 23. Twenty-thirty Bank Swallows were at Ocean Beach in SF on June 22, a regular spot for them (DE, DN, JP). Purple Martins were noted a Gualala where they usually nest on June 6,7,8. The White Wagtail (probably the same bird) returned to the Watsonville Sewer ponds. It was seen by DE, DN, JP, BDP and many bay area birders. A singing male Magnolia Warbler was at the Fish Docks on June 21 (BDP,JP). The same day a subadult male American Redstart was singing in the willows at Drakes Beach (BDP, JP). Hermit Warblers were common in the Gualala area in early June, on territory and singing (BDP, DE, PL, DN). Blue Grosbeaks were noted along the Sacramento River near Chico on

July 12 (DH). A male Indigo Bunting was at Sea Ranch on June 8 (BDP, DN, DE). Both Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Grosbeaks were reported from Yosemite in June and July. Red Crossbills were near Gualala on June 8 (BDP, DE, DN, PL). Singing Grasshopper Sparrows were heard near the entrance to the county park at Gualala on June 8 (BDP, DE, DN, PL). A singing Black-chinned Sparrow along with several Sage Sparrows was near Aetna Springs on May 25 (BDP, JP, PL).

All interesting sightings should be reported to Mike Parmeter, 2500 Emerson, Napa, Ca 94558 (707-255-6757). Please note species, number, sex, age, plumage and other pertinent details.