

Kite Tales



Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 35 Number III

November 2000

Coming Attractions

November 9th, Thursday, 7:30 PM - General Meeting
Administration Building, Laguna Waste Water Treatment Plant
4300 Llano Road, Santa Rosa (see location details and map on page 5)

The Origin of Birds with Nick Geist

Once again travel back in time, along that sticky path in search of the ancestors of modern birds. Nick Geist, Paleobiologist and Assistant Professor of Biology at Sonoma State University will bring us up to date with all the latest information on this fascinating subject.

Nick's article, Non-Avian Avian Feathers in a Late Triassic Archosaur was recently published in The Journal of Science and in The Journal of Nature presenting new evidence of the possibility that birds evolved in trees.

Nick Geist graduated and received his Phd. from the Zoology Department at Oregon State University. His thesis work included research on the origins of avian flight, dinosaurian reproductive behavior and the respiratory physiology of living birds. His interests include the physiology and anatomy of vertebrates. We'll see you all there.

November 11th, Saturday Field Trip to Willow Creek Canyon

Meet at Bridgehaven Pond (at the intersection of Highways 1 and 116) at 8:30 AM. Park off the road in the dirt area. We will scope the Russian River mouth and then head up into Willow Creek Canyon for a day of land birding. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, lunch, water, and warm clothes. Leader is Alan Wight. Call Alan at (707) 763-8572 if you have any questions.

November 16-19th Thursday through Sunday 4th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Radisson Hotel - Stockton, California

The Symposium offers something for everyone: Great seminars; Renowned speakers, including Jon Dunn and Ken Kaufmann; Workshops on bird identification, photo, sketching, gardening.

Register by November 10th to ensure space. Contact Central Valley Bird Club Web page:
<http://www.geocities.com/aegolius/cvbc.html> Or contact Frances Oliver (209) 369-2010

November 20th, Monday - Observations Deadline

The 20th is our deadline for Kite Tales observations. Please forward sightings to Ned Wynn 129-B Powell Ave. Healdsburg, Ca 95448 707 431-8412 or via email: ekwynn@pon.net

November 25th, Saturday - Kite Tales Deadline

Send announcements, articles, complaints, trivia, errata, letters to the editor and such to Gerry Mugele PO Box 813 Glen Ellen, Ca 95442 or via email: mewgull@ix.netcom.com

Good Birding Spots #17**Willow Creek Road**

by Deyea Harper & Kathy Mugele

The condition of Willow Creek Road is always an unknown, although it is usually passable. As of October 2000, Sonoma County Road Maintenance has a sign posted indicating the road is closed.

There is extensive off road logging by Mendocino Redwood Company. The narrow road is passable, with some considerable grading having been done by the lumber company. With heavy winter rains and all the new logging roads that have been cut into the hills, it is possible that the road really will be closed. Observe the "No Trespassing" signs.

Willow Creek Road turns off Highway One at the bridge over the Russian River by the Sizzling Tandoor Restaurant in Bridgehaven. Along your left, the south side of the river, are willows and alders with a place to pull off near the cattle guard. This is a good spot for river viewing of ducks, grebes, cormorants and other river critters, plus those hiding out in the willows. Approximately one quarter mile from Highway 1, the road crosses over Willow Creek where there is a large marshy area on the right which harbors rails--a rail tape is helpful in luring them.

At the bend in the road you can park and walk out to the environmental camp for some tree birding. As you proceed up the canyon look along the ridge top for raptors, in the willows along the creek for warblers, and on the steep hillside for Rufous-crowned sparrows. The pullouts along the right side of the road often yields rails among the cattails. Check the willows around the second bridge, and then the marshy area near 23455 address for Swamp Sparrows. There is lush willow growth in the flat area of the canyon; pull off the road whenever possible to bird. Be sure to check the old barn area.

At Pomo Canyon Campground there is a trailhead for "Dr. David Joseph Trail" which leads to Shell Beach through some redwood stands. The open areas around the campground can yield Quail and other ground feeders. Across the third bridge it is possible to park, climb up to the ridge and hike back to the environmental camp.

Continuing up the canyon stop at wide pullouts to bird. The last farmhouse often has bluebirds, juncos and robins which can be seen in the open fields. It is here that the paved road ends. It is a beautiful drive up the canyon through Redwoods and Douglas Fir and further on into Oak & Bay woodlands. In this area many species of owls have been heard and seen as well as Pileated woodpeckers. When the road again becomes paved, at the top, you are in the midst of homes, but check the open hillsides between the houses and the orchards for birds. Willow Creek Road makes a T intersection with Coleman Valley Road: a left turn will take you into Occidental and a right will return you to Highway 1.

AOU Checklist now On-Line

Have you been avoiding going "on-line" and eschewing the benefits of the internet? Well it's now getting even sillier to neglect this great resource. The American Ornithologist Union has now put their AOU Checklist on the web at:

<http://pica.wru.umt.edu/AOU/birdlist.html>

Of course this list includes all the recent updates! How about that! No more months of waiting for the official word on the latest splits and lumps.

One word of caution: when entering the URL (web address) be sure to put the 'AOU' in capitals or it will not be recognized.

A Misplaced Shearwater

August 19th this year, a 12 year old girl returned home to discover a banded Manx Shearwater resting in the driveway of her home in Macomb County, Michigan! It is most impressive that this family of non-birders was able to track this bird's banding data via the internet. They found that it was banded in Ireland in 1991. Not only is this a first record for Michigan, but it may be the first inland occurrence of the species in North America.

The find is particularly odd in that there were no weather systems that might have contributed to the bird's presence there! A similar situation occurred three weeks earlier when a Leach's Storm-Petrel showed up in Ontario.

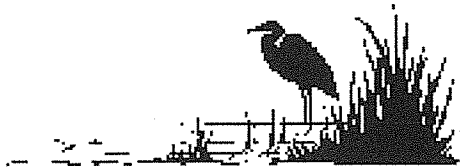
The bird was cared for at the Detroit Zoo but on August 24 it died.

Fieldtrip Report
Bodega Bay and Salmon Creek
October 21, 2000

- by Mike Parmeter

The fieldtrip participants were Julie Allen, Betty Burrige, Nancy Conzett, Marilyn and Lew Edmundson, Betty Groce, Marilyn and Jack Jones, Terry Low, Mike Parmeter (leader) Bertha and Bob Rains, Cynthia and John Rathke, Colin Specht, Ann Stone, Don Toms, Jean and Jim Tonascia.

Birds observed: Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Mallard, Greater Scaup, Surf Scoter, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Black Oystercatcher, Willet, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Black Turnstone, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Elegant Tern, Forster's Tern, Band-tailed Pigeon, Great Horned Owl, Anna's Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Steller's Jay, Western Scrub Jay, Common Raven, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Wrentit, European Starling, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, California Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.



At Least the Starlings Will Eat 'em

Birder Joe Seals of Santa Maria has an interesting observation. He reports that, "Nesting Starlings have taken to regularly eating the garden snails (*Helix aspersa*) in my neighborhood."

Joe's report prompts us to share this Poem by RROS member Mary Rooney.

O snail,

I do not pluck away
tree frogs, salamanders,
or daddy longlegs,
but you I pry
from petals and leaves,
from the mossy bottoms
of shaded clay pots,
put in the pearl bowl
of an abalone shell,
carry you through the house,
open the front door,
place you beside
what you cannot eat:
mock orange, agapantha.
Sometimes I bring along
the tender
half-eaten leaf
that betrayed you
to my eye, and try to,
but cannot quite,
love you.

Kite Tales

November 2000

Observations

<u>Species</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Notes</u>
✓ Species	#	Date	Place	County	Who	Notes
✓ Grtr-wht Fronted Goose	1	10/21		Bridgehaven		SON RL, RM imm..
✓ " " "	3	10/21		Bodega Farm Pond		SON RL, RM all
imm..						
CanadaxGrtr White Frnt	2	10/13		Sacramento	NWR	COL RL, RM hybrids
Eurasian Wigeon	5	10/13	Sacramento	NWR	COL	RL, RM
✓ White-tailed Kite	35!!	10/12	Bodega Farm Pond	SON	BG	
Bald Eagle	1	10/13	Sacramento	NWR	COL	RL, RM imm..
✓ Common Black-Hawk	1	10/14	Willowside Rd	SON	LH	county record?
Broad-winged Hawk	7	9/30	Hill 129 - Marin Headlnds		MAR	RL, RM
✓ Ferruginous Hawk	1	10/20	West of Sonoma	SON	RL	imm..
✓ Parasitic Jaeger	4	9/25	off Bodega Head	SON	RL	harassing Elegant Terns
Black-bcked Woodpcker	1	10/14		Drakesbad Near Lassen		PLU RL, RM
female						
✓ Least Flycatcher	1	10/8	Owl Canyon - Bodega	SON	RL, DN, DH	
✓ Tropical Kingbird	1	10/12	Bodega Rail Ponds	SON	MAS, BG, DB, KW	
Blue-headed Vireo	1	9/23	Fish Docks at Pt. Reyes	MAR	RL	
Gray Jay	4	10/14	Juniper Lake	PLU	RL, RM	
Clark's Nutcracker	3	10/22	Hill 129 - Marin Headlnds		MAR	RL
Virginia Warbler	1	9/23	Mendoza Ranch - Pt Reyes		MAR	RL
✓ Prothonotary Warbler	1	10/12	Bodega Rail Ponds	SON	MAS, BG, DB, KW	
Baltimore Oriole	1	10/7	Pt Reyes Lighthouse	MAR	RL	imm.. male

Observers: Dennis Beall, Betty Groce, David Hoffman, Lisa Hug, Rick Lebaudour, Madrone Audubon Society, Richard Merris, Dan Nelson, Ken Wilson,

Observation Errata and notes:

- In the September Kite Tales, we reported a Lesser Nighthawk at Bodega and credited the observation to Ted Eliot. This was incorrect. Ted saw a Nighthawk that could not be identified to species. At this point the report of the Lesser Nighthawk is in doubt.
- Dennis Beall, of Cazadero, reports two albino Chestnut-backed Chickadees frequented his feeders with a small group.
- James Sams of San Diego reports that a friend had mourning doves nesting in his yard. The nesting was successful. When the two young fledged, one of the adult doves inadvertently flew into his home. He retrieved the bird and found it to be covered with ants (he described them as red ants). The dove was apparently in good health. It was released and is still seen in the area. He now wonders what were the ants doing on the bird? Do we have a symbiotic relationship here?
- Please Remember: When reporting your sightings, especially of notable rarities, please be sure to provide all the information: what, how many, when, where, who, and how to contact you for additional details or to clarify points. Thanks!

Phone Wheel Update Time

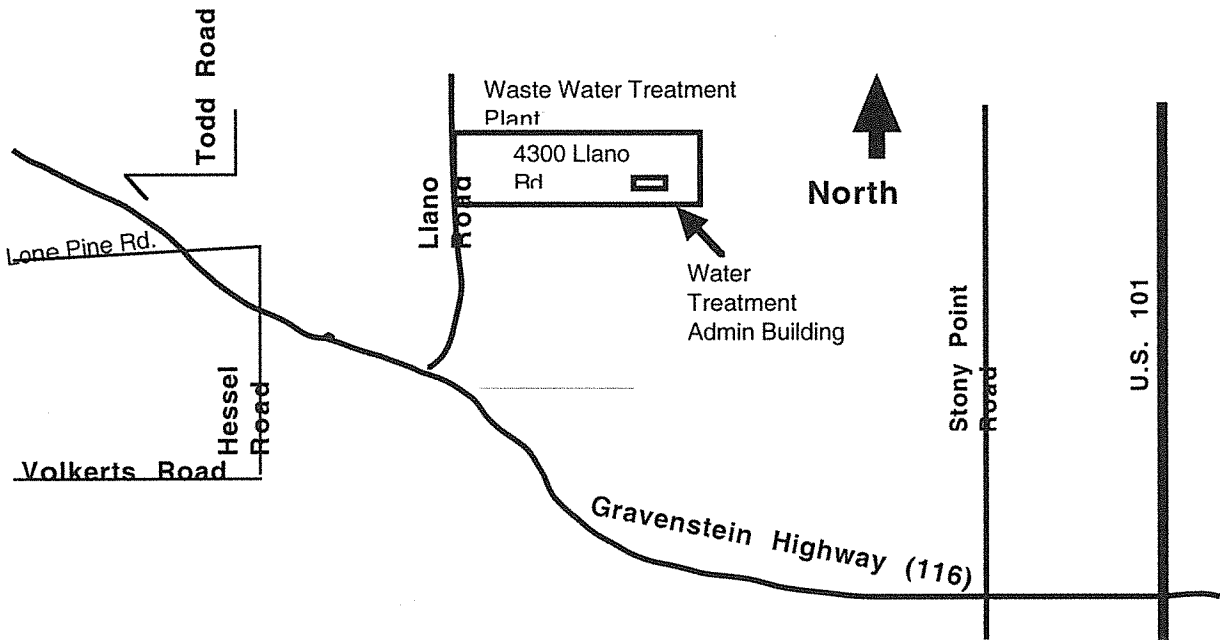
The RROS phone wheel is now ready for the official update. Here it is with additions, changes and deletes included.

Reminder: please keep phoning until you hear a live person, otherwise the rare bird may be missed.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1) Richard Merriss | 707 525-8629 | 15) Diane Hichwa | 707 579-1182 |
| 2) Rick Lebaudour | 707 792-1800 | 16) Ken Wilson | 707 795-7547 |
| 3) Lew Edmundson | 707 763-9264 | 17) Dan Wilson | 707 579-3949 |
| 4) Alan Wight | 707 763-8572 | 18) Betty Groce | 707 539-8664 |
| 5) Gerry Mugele | 707 938-2134 | 19) Betty Burrridge | 707 527-0225 |
| 6) Ted Eliot | 707 935-3410 | 20) Avis Anderson | 707 539-0470 |
| 7) Mike Parmeter | 707 255-6757 | 21) Jack Troutfetter | 707 545-7920 |
| 8) Wayne Tillay | 707 965-2978 | 22) Deyea Harper | 707 542-1542 |
| 9) Ruth Rudesill | 707 833-6026 | 23) David Hoffmann | 707 546-0325 |
| 10) Ian Morrison | 707 833-2065 | 24) Dennis Beall | 707 632-5124 |
| 11) Richard Hurley | 707 833-4286 | 25) Linda Petrulias | 707 632-5532 |
| 12) Bob Rains | 707 528-6785 | 26) Louise Johnston | 707 823-2245 |
| 13) Ann Stone | 415 346-8360 | 27) Margaret Flemming | 707 824-1220 |
| 14) Tony Kroha | 707 537-9648 | 28) Ned Wynn | 707 431-8412 |

RROS Monthly Meetings new location:

Our new permanent home, for regular RROS meetings is the Santa Rosa Waste Water Treatment Facility at 4300 Llano Road in Santa Rosa. It is probably easiest to take Highway 116 to the intersection with Llano Road and then proceed north a little over a mile. Upon your arrival, if the gate (east side of the road) is closed, there is a phone on the north side of the driveway which you can use to call someone to come and open the gate. The first person to arrive may have to do that each month.



Redwood Region Ornithological Society was organized in 1962 "to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitat." Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Regular general meetings (October through April) are held at 7:30 PM at the Laguna Waste Water Treatment Plant, 4300 Llano Road, Santa Rosa, California. Dues are \$15 per family, \$8 per individual, or \$3 per student for one year membership. Send dues to the treasurer shown below.

2000 - 2001 Officers:

President: Betty Groce, 411 Trail Ridge Ct., Santa Rosa CA 95409-6482 707 539-8664
E-Mail: blgroce @ Prodigy.net

Vice President: Ken Wilson, 8 Pine Tree Circle., Cotati, CA 94931 707 795-7547
(net impaired)

Secretary: Bertha Rains, 450A Las Casitas, Santa Rosa, CA 95403-1383 707 528-6785
E-Mail: bbr@ap.net

Treasurer: Mike Nelligan, 124 Wikiup Drive, Santa Rosa CA 95403-7700 707 576-1475
E-Mail: bandm@monitor.net

2000 - 2001 Chairs:

Field Trips: Alan Wight, 19 Wooddale Dr., Petaluma CA 94952 707 763-8572
E-Mail: shwand@sonic.net

Observations: Ned Wynn, 129-B Powell Ave., Healdsburg CA 95448-3413 707 431-8412
E-Mail: ekwynn@pon.net

Social: Barbara Gumtow, 7915 Bella Vista Dr., Sebastopol CA 95472-2701 707 823-7869

Christmas Count: Doug Ellis, PO Box 776, Kenwood CA 95452-0776 707 935-3410

Good Birding Spots: Ted Eliot, 5850 Grove St., Sonoma CA 95476-6095 707 935-3410
E-Mail: patted@sonic.net

Kite Tales: Gerry Mugele, PO Box 813, Glen Ellen, Ca 95442-0813 707 938-2134
E-Mail: mewgull@ix.netcom.com

Gerald G. Mugele
PO Box 813
Glen Ellen, California 95442



Parmeter, BD & S, Fnd. Membrs
2500 Emerson St.
Napa CA 94558