

Kite Tales



Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 35 Number IV

December 2000

Coming Attractions

December 14th, Thursday, 7:30 PM - General Meeting
Administration Building, Laguna Waste Water Treatment Plant
4300 Llano Road, Santa Rosa (see map on page 5 of our November edition)

Identification of our Winter Birds - Dan Nelson

With two Sonoma County Christmas Bird Counts in the near future, it's time to brush up on our identification skills.

Dan will use his excellent slide show to guide us through the intricacies of identifying both the wintering migrants and our resident species. There will be a test. Be prepared!

December 17th, Sunday Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count

This is the annual RROS sponsored Christmas Count. Become part of the history and help us be sure that we've found 'em all, don't let any of those birds go uncounted. Call Doug Ellis...well maybe you should call Mike Parmeter (707 255-6757) or Gerry Mugele (707 -938-2134) and we can arrange for your labors to be put to the best use.

Other Northern California Christmas Counts and contacts:

Saturday, December 16th Pt. Reyes	David Wimpfheimer 415-663-1363
Saturday, December 16th Ukiah	Alan Falleri .707-485-1377
Saturday, December 16th Contra Costa (Mt.Diablo)	Jimm Edgar 510-658-2330 or 925-284-5980
Monday, December 18th Benicia	Robin Leong 707-643-1287
Tuesday, December 19th Peace Valley	Pete Sands 530-846-5142 or Bruce Deuel 530-527-9071
Saturday, December 30th Western Sonoma County	Ken Wilson 707-795-7547
Monday, January 1st Angwin	Wayne Tillay 707-965-2978

Or you can search out other counts on the internet at:
<http://www.goldengateaudubon.org/Conservation/CBC00.htm>

December 20th, Wednesday - 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

December 26th, Tuesday - 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 #18**Birding Bodega Harbor**

by Deyea Harper & Kathy Mugele

We usually start at Doran Regional Park. Driving north and west on State Highway 1 from Valley Ford, turn left onto Doran Beach road and drive past Bodega Bay Lodge. The Cypress trees in this area have been a roosting location for Black-crowned Night Herons and Turkey Vultures. The plantings at the Lodge often are in bloom during the Fall and winter and should be checked for Hummingbirds.

The first place to stop past the Lodge is a "Wildlife Observation Area" which looks over the tidal pond at the entrance to Doran Park. The cattails should yield Marsh Wrens and Red-winged Blackbirds. The pond itself will give mixed results depending on the season. Look for various ducks and shorebirds. Red Phalarope are a possibility in the Fall.

Continue along to the entrance of the park. (There is a day use fee charged. Ask for the new "Birds of Bodega Bay" checklist). Park at the first parking area on the left (after the entrance.) Cross the road to walk the trail along the edge of the Doran Park Marsh. Depending on the light and the tides, there are views of the harbor and the birds feeding. Often terns, turnstones, plover, etc. are pushed right up to the edge for easy viewing. (Bring a scope!)

The road goes out to the Jetty area at the mouth of the harbor. Pull out at any wide spot to bird and be sure to stop at the various parking and picnic areas. Snowy Plover can often be seen in sandy depressions on the beach by the "Cypress Day Use Area". This can also be a good location for Bonaparte's and other gulls.

At the Jetty Day Use area, there can be a clear view down as far as Pt. Reyes (or not, depending on the weather). Loons, Guillemot, Murres, Cormorants, and Pelicans are certainly good possibilities here.

Exit Doran the same way that you entered, as you return to Highway One. The next stop is on the left, a few hundred yards north: "Birdwalk Coastal Access" with parking lot and a day use fee. Warblers can be found in the willows at the edge of the parking lot. Walk along levee for views into the sewer ponds and the harbor.

A bit further north, Smith Bros. Road loops

views into the sewer ponds and the harbor.

A bit further north, Smith Bros. Road loops back to overlook the harbor. This can be a coffee and restroom stop. A scope is needed to check out the mudflats of the harbor.

The next stop is the Tides Restaurant....is it time for clam chowder yet? There are usually sea lions barking at the dock area. Gulls and cormorants will be on the pilings.

And on to Diekmann's Deli...it is worth stopping here to look for hummingbirds and warblers. During the winter months vagrants can frequently be seen in the bush and vines below the parking lot. There is also a view of the harbor and a tiny pond that may yield herons or egrets.

Continue on Highway 1 to Eastshore Road which will take you back down to the harbor. If you haven't had lunch yet, the Sandpiper restaurant provides a nice stop. Porto Bodega marina area can be birded with some success...mostly the expected shorebirds and gulls are feeding here.

Now turn onto Bay Flat Road and continue west around the harbor. A stop can be made at the "Rail Ponds" (does anyone see rails here anymore?)...pishing in the bushes may arouse some warblers and hummers. Kingfishers can be seen here, too. Turn around and there may be loons in the harbor and an Osprey overhead.

Work your way around the harbor. Again, the time of day and the state of the tides will affect what you are going to see. Stops could include:

- The sandy point just past Spud Point Marina...at low tide it is a resting place for many shorebirds and terns.
- Westside Park, lots of shorebirds and gulls, day use fee and bathroom. Check the cypress trees for warblers.
- Bodega Marine Lab: using scope, there are lots of shorebirds and pelicans feeding at low tide or resting at high tide. (The Marine Lab is open on Friday from 2 PM to 4 PM and is worth a visit)
- Owl Canyon, it is always good to at least walk up a little way and have a look. Check for the Great Horned Owl if nothing else, but this is a "famous" spot for vagrant warblers, flycatchers and other goodies.

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• Campbell Cove and the "Hole in the Head" are the next stop. Walk out the boardwalk to see the Night Herons roosting. Marsh Wrens and Yellowthroat could be in the cattails. Walk to the end of the parking area and check the willows for warblers: this is another "reliable" spot for vagrants in the fall. Look into Campbell Cove itself for ducks, gulls, loons etc.

Of course, no trip to Bodega would be complete without a stop at "The Head". There can be glorious sunsets, incredible surf or a sea as smooth as glass. There are always birds when the fog is allowing it: Keep an eye out for raptors; Redtails and Harriers are almost certain. Look at the rocks for oystercatchers, surfbirds and tattlers. Take a close look at the gulls. Scan out to sea and watch for pelagics, unusual sightings are often made from the Head. In season, there are nesting cormorants and Pigeon Guillemots to be seen. In the fall, watch the waves of Brown Pelicans and lines of Scoters flying by.

Bodega has birding for everyone. It can be a quick trip to see a reported vagrant or an entire week (or month) can be spent learning the best places to bird. And it is so close to where we live!

Your Membership in RROS...

Is it at risk? Check your mailing label on this edition of Kite Tales for your status as a member of RROS. If you have not already done so, please send your dues payment to our Treasurer Mike Nelligan immediately.

Fieldtrip Report Willow Creek Canyon November 11, 2000

- by Alan Wight

We started our day watching two Rough-legged Hawks forage over the hills north of Bridgehaven. At the Russian River mouth, we saw a Pied-billed Grebe in an unusual location - hanging out with Western Grebes on the ocean.

We had a nice comparison of side-by-side female Red-breasted and Common Mergansers on the Russian River. At the lower end of Willow Creek Road we saw a Greater White-fronted Goose mixed in with a flock of Canada Geese along the Russian River. Here we also watched

along the Russian River. Here we also watched a Merlin catch and eat its lunch.

Further up Willow Creek Canyon we saw a Golden Eagle. A total of 71 bird species were observed.

The fieldtrip participants were Betty Groce, Jack Groce, Cynthia Rathkey, John Rathkey, and Alan Wight.

Birds observed: Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Surf Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Merlin, California Quail, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, American Coot, Heermann's Gull, Mew Gull, California Gull, Herring Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Anna's Hummingbird, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Steller's Jay, Western Scrub-Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Bushtit, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Wrentit, American Pipit, European Starling, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Pine Siskin.

Silly Birding Trivia

Q: Where in North America are there no Corvids?

A: It's Corpus Christi, Texas. Yup, it's too far north for Green Jay and Tamaulipas Crow, too far south for Blue Jay and American Crow and it's too far east for Chihuahuan Raven

This tidbit, although interesting, is certainly nothing to crow about. Nor is it caws for anyone to be raven about the point.

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Observations

Species	#	Date	Place	County	Who	Notes
Red-necked Grebe	1	11/4	Campbell Cove	SON	BDP, TE	
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	1	11/11	75 miles west of the San Mateo coast			TE, DN
White-faced Ibis	1	11/10	West of Yolo causeway	YOL	DN, TCN	
Grtr-wht Fronted Goose	1	11/4			Pond at Stage Gulch Rd	SON RL
" " "	"	1	11/11		Bridgehaven	SON AW, RROS
" " "	"	4	11/15		Bodega farm pond	SON RL
Canada Goose	1	11/15	Bodega farm pond	SON	RL	"cackling" race
Tundra Swan	1	11/5	Bodega, Hole-in-the-Head		SON	RL fly-by
" "	2	11/23	Stage Gulch Rd	SON	GM	flying SE
Eurasian Wigeon	1	11/25	Bodega farm pond	SON	RL	
Blue-winged Teal	16	11/6	Shollenberger Park	SON	RL	
Redhead	2	10/29	Ramal Rd.	SON	AW	
"	1	11/26	Carmody Rd Pond, South	SON	GM, LR, MR, DNr	
Long-tailed Duck	1	11/2	Bodega Harbor	SON	W S	female
" " "	1	11/4	Bodega near Owl Canyon	SON	BDP, TE	
Barrow's Goldeneye	2	11/13	Corte Madera	MAR	RL	
Hooded Merganser	6	11/4	Carmody Rd farm pond	SON	BDP, TE	3 fem. 3 male
Broad-winged Hawk	1	11/26	near Spud Point	SON	RL	
Ferruginous Hawk	1	11/1	Bodega Farm Pond	SON	IM	
" "	1	11/25	Willow Creek Canyon	SON	RL	
Rough-legged Hawk	1	11/9	Two Rock	SON	DN	
" "	"	2	11/11	SON	AW, RROS	
" "	"	1	11/26	SON	LR, MR, DNr, GM	
Golden Eagle	2	11/3	Adobe Canyon Rd.	SON	IM	flying over
Merlin	1	11/15	Bodega Harbor	SON	RL	
"	2	11/16	Tolay Creek	SON	PL, BP	
Peregrine Falcon	1	11/4	NE end of Bodega Harbor	SON		BDP, TE
" "	1	11/11	Ida Clayton Rd.	SON	RR	
" "	1	11/15	Bodega Harbor	SON	RL	
" "	1	11/26	by Bodega Marine Lab	SON	LR, MR, DNr, GM	
Pacific Golden Plover	1	11/6	Shollenberger Park	SON		RL, AW, et al continuing thru the 19th
Snowy Plover	12	11/4	Doran Beach	SON	BDP, TE	
Red Knot	7	10/31	Doran Beach	SON	DA, TE	
" "	2	11/2	Spud Point	SON	BG, MAS	
Rock Sandpiper	1	11/19	Humboldt Bay Jetty	HUM	RR	
" "	1	11/25	Bodega Harbor!	SON	RL	
Thayer's Gull	1	11/15	Bodega Harbor	SON	RL	
" "	1	11/26	Bodega Head	SON	GM, DNr	
Glaucous Gull	1	11/19	Humboldt Bay Jetty, north		HUM	RR adult
Black-legged Kittiwake	2	11/19	Humboldt Bay Jetty	HUM	RR	
Northern Pygmy-Owl	1	11/11	Ida Clayton Rd.	SON	RR	heard
" "	"	1	11/26		Salmon Creek Rd.	SON GM, LR, DNr,
MR heard						
Short-eared Owl	1	11/16	Tolay Creek	SON	PL, BP	

Observations (continued)

<u>Species</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Notes</u>
✓ Tropical Kingbird	1	11/29	3rd St. treatment ponds	SON	JDr, CS	
✓ Clark's Nutcracker	5	11/4	atop Mt. St. Helena	SON	AW	4th county record
"	"	12 + 11/5	atop Mt. St. Helena	& NAP	AW, BDP	
"	"	10 + 11/7	atop Mt. St. Helena	SON	DN	
"	"	14	11/11 Ida Clayton Rd.	SON	RR	
"	"	9+	11/12 Mt. St. Helena	SON	BG, RL, BDP, AW	
Canyon Wren	1	11/7	Mt. St. Helena	NAP	DN	
"	"	3	11/12 Mt. St. Helena	SON	BG, RL, BDP, AW	
Townsend's Solitaire	4	11/4	Mt. St. Helena	SON	AW	
✓ "	"	35	11/7 Mt. St. Helena	SON	DN	
"	"	1	11/11 Ida Clayton Rd.	SON	RR	
✓ Tennessee Warbler	1	11/2	Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		CC, LH, BG, MAS
"	"	1	11/4 Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		BDP, TE
Orange-crownd Warbler	1	11/4	Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		BDP, TE
✓ Wilson's Warbler	1	11/6+	Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		BDP, RS, RL late - thru the 15th
Fox Sparrow	10	11/7	Mt. St. Helena	SON	DN	2 races, 5 each
✓ White-throated Sparrow	2	11/19	Lebaudour's garden	SON		RL
✓ Harris's Sparrow	1	11/15	Richard's garden in Cotati	SON		RM, et al still there?
✓ Black-headed Grosbeak	1	11/11	Sonoma Mtn.	SON	KF	1st fall male
✓ Baltimore Oriole	1	11/5	Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		RM, RL 1st yr male
✓ Bullock's Oriole	1	11/5	Diekmann's Store, Bodega	SON		RL late
✓ Cassin's Finch	1	11/5	Mt. St. Helena	SON	BDP, AW	
"	"	1	11/12 Mt. St. Helena	SON	BDP, AW, RL, BG	
Red Crossbill	1	11/5	lower Mt. St. Helena	NAP	BDP, AW	heard

Observers: Dick Ashford, Tyler Cannon-Nelson, Chris Corben, Joan Dranginis (JDr), Ted Eliot, Betty Groce, Kathy Francone, Lisa Hug, Rick Lebaudour, Peter Leveque, Madrone Audubon Society, Richard Merris, Ian Morrison, Gerry Mugele, Dan Nelson, Dan Noreen (DNr), Mike Parmeter (BDP), Bill Payne, Lilly Reichert, Mary Rooney, Ruth Rudesill, Werner Schumann, Claire Shurvinton, Rich Stallcup, Alan Wight

Xmas Bird Songs...

Ludlow, the red-billed seagull,
 Had a very shiny beak
 And if you ever saw it
 You would have to say it's chic.

Then how the gulls all loved him,
 As they shouted out with glee,
 "Ludlow the red-billed gull,
 You'll go down in history"

All of the bonnie seagulls
 Used to behave like beasts.
 They wouldn't let poor Ludlow

They call him a Black-headed Gull
 Even though his head is brown.
 But we all know it's Christmas

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](mailto: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
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Treasurer: Mike Nelligan, 124 Wikiup Drive, Santa Rosa CA 95403-7700 707 576-1475
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2000 - 2001 Chairs:

Field Trips: Alan Wight, 19 Wooddale Dr., Petaluma CA 94952 707 763-8572
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