

Kite Tales



Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 35 Number VII

March 2001

Coming Attractions

March 8th, 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)

Southern Africa with Bud Getty

Bud is co-owner of *Look Again Tours*, a general nature tour company, designing and leading tours to Great Britain, Costa Rica, Peru, Galapagos and Africa.

In his role as Superintendent of California State Parks and Recreation for the Silverado District, in September 2000 he attended the International Rangers Conference in Kruger National Park in South Africa. Following the conference, Bud led a tour through Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana, visiting such places as Victoria Falls, Okavanga Delta and the Kalihari Desert.

Come join us and help Bud relive his exiting journey.

March 9th - 11th Friday - Sunday, **Field Trip to Susanville Area for Sage Grouse**

We will spend three days birding the Susanville area. Our main goal is to see Sage Grouse at dawn on Saturday at their lek. Depending on road conditions, some predawn walking may be required to get to the Sage Grouse lek.

Arrangements have been made for a group discount at the River Inn (530 257-6051) in Susanville if we use enough rooms. Say that you're with "Redwood Region Ornithological Society" when you make your reservation. Room rates (AAA rates) are \$41 to \$48 per night without the group discount. Some of us will be driving up Thursday night in order to maximize our time in the area. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, and very warm clothing. Leaders are Alan Wight and Rick Lebaudour. Call Alan at 763-8572 (weekdays 7-9 pm or weekends any time) if you have any questions. If you are planning on going, please call Alan as last minute weather reports could cancel the trip.

March 20th, Tuesday - 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

March 25th, Sunday - 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

**Santa Rosa Xmas
Count
Results Entered**

A team of volunteers managed to get the data entered and submitted for inclusion in the database at Cornell. With Doug Ellis' passing it was necessary for Ken Wilson, Ted Elliot and Bob Evans to finish the job. Ted and Bob have taken over the role as compilers for the Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to all.

On December 17th 2000, 34 observers in the field found 21,977 birds of these 139 species:

✓ Pied-billed Grebe	118
Eared Grebe	2
Western Grebe	7
Clark's Grebe	1
✓ American White Pelican	79
Double-crested Cormorant	99
Great Blue Heron	21
Great Egret	42
Snowy Egret	141
✓ Cattle Egret	49
Green Heron	8
Black-crowned Night-Heron	12
Turkey Vulture	224
✓ Snow Goose	2
✓ Canada Goose	401
Wood Duck	3
Gadwall	18
Eurasian Wigeon	1
American Wigeon	226
Mallard	842
✓ Blue-winged Teal	1
✓ Cinnamon Teal	16
Northern Shoveler	91
Northern Pintail	60
Green-winged Teal	240
✓ Canvasback	19
Ring-necked Duck	98
Bufflehead	111
Common Goldeneye	21
Hooded Merganser	3
Common Merganser	46
Ruddy Duck	418
✓ Osprey	3
White-tailed Kite	39
Northern Harrier	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6
Cooper's Hawk	5
✓ Red-shouldered Hawk	35
Red-tailed Hawk	73
American Kestrel	33
Merlin	1
Peregrine Falcon	1

Ring-necked Pheasant	2
Wild Turkey	27
✓ Mountain Quail	1
California Quail	103
Virginia Rail	17
Sora	5
✓ Common Moorhen	14
American Coot	879
Killdeer	137
✓ Black-necked Stilt	7
Greater Yellowlegs	22
Spotted Sandpiper	1
✓ Long-billed Curlew	102
Least Sandpiper	22
Long-billed Dowitcher	12
Common Snipe	34
Mew Gull	190
Ring-billed Gull	275
California Gull	116
Glaucous-winged Gull	70
Rock Dove	603
Band-tailed Pigeon	25
Mourning Dove	147
Barn Owl	2
Western Screech-Owl	3
Great Horned Owl	1
Northern Pygmy-Owl	2
Spotted Owl	1
Short-eared Owl	2
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1
Anna's Hummingbird	66
Belted Kingfisher	17
Acorn Woodpecker	71
Red-breasted Sapsucker	2
Nuttall's Woodpecker	64
Downy Woodpecker	7
Hairy Woodpecker	7
Northern Flicker	59
Pileated Woodpecker	1
Black Phoebe	85
Say's Phoebe	9
✓ Loggerhead Shrike	3
Hutton's Vireo	13
Steller's Jay	11
Western Scrub-Jay	246
American Crow	1,262
Common Raven	70
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	106
Oak Titmouse	103
Bushtit	448
Red-breasted Nuthatch	5
White-breasted Nuthatch	48
Brown Creeper	10
Bewick's Wren	13
Winter Wren	9
Marsh Wren	3
Golden-crowned Kinglet	25
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	158
Western Bluebird	184
Hermit Thrush	21
American Robin	1,090
Varied Thrush	24
Wrentit	8
✓ Northern Mockingbird	66
California Thrasher	1
European Starling	4,751
American Pipit	89
Cedar Waxwing	45

Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Yellow-rumped Warbler	217
Townsend's Warbler	16
✓ Western Tanager	1
Spotted Towhee	60
California Towhee	214
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1
Lark Sparrow	40
Savannah Sparrow	4
Fox Sparrow	38
Song Sparrow	127
Lincoln's Sparrow	13
Swamp Sparrow	2
White-throated Sparrow	6
White-crowned Sparrow	339
Golden-crowned Sparrow	308
Dark-eyed Junco	411
✓ Black-headed Grosbeak	1
Red-winged Blackbird	1,116
Tricolored Blackbird	20
Western Meadowlark	236
Brewer's Blackbird	755
Brown-headed Cowbird	207
Purple Finch	19
House Finch	542
Pine Siskin	4
Lesser Goldfinch	123
American Goldfinch	100
House Sparrow	160

Participants:

B. Burridge, G. Danek, M. Danek, T. Eliot, D. Ellis, B. Evans, A. Groce, B. Groce, E. Guilford, D. Harper, J. Harper, C. Johnson, R. Lebaudour, B. Lenarz, R. Merriss, G. Mugele, A. Nelligan, M. Nelligan, D. Nelson, M. Noelke, D. Noreen, B. Olson, B. D. Parmeter, L. Petrulias, L. Mugele, M. Rooney, R. Rudesill, C. Shurvinton, A. Stone, G. Wagner, K. Wagner, A. Wellman, G. Wellman, K. Wilson

Ruby Nelligan's OK

Mike Nelligan brought his mother Ruby to our February meeting as a guest. During the business portion of the meeting Ruby Nelligan fainted. An EMT crew transported her to Memorial Hospital for observation. She was home by midnight. It was just a combination of dehydration and a very slow heart rate.

**Fieldtrip Report Grizzly Island
February 10, 2001 - by Alan Wight**

Seven birders explored Grizzly Island Road, Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, and then drove out east of Fairfield to look for Mountain Plovers. Highlights were an American Bittern right next to the road, one Burrowing Owl (thanks to Don for showing us the spot), three Rough-legged Hawks, two Ferruginous Hawks, one Golden Eagle, one Prairie Falcon, one Yellow-billed Magpie, and, finally, one Mountain Plover just as the rain finally caught up with us.

The field trip participants were Margaret Fleming, Betty Groce, Richard Hurley, Mike Parmeter, Don Reinberg, Ann Stone, and Alan Wight.

Birds observed: Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Canada Goose, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Prairie Falcon, Ring-necked Pheasant, Virginia Rail, Common Moorhen, American Coot, Killdeer, Mountain Plover, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Greater Yellowlegs, Long-billed Curlew, Dunlin, Long-billed Dowitcher, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Herring Gull, Western x Glaucous-winged Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Barn Owl, Burrowing Owl, Anna's Hummingbird, Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Yellow-billed Magpie, Common Raven, Marsh Wren, Loggerhead Shrike, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, California Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, American Goldfinch.

**Big News and Out of Town
Visitors**

The big news in local birding for the past five weeks has been the Sand Plover at Bolinas Lagoon. The bird was first discovered near private, gated Seadrift Estates at Stinson Beach on January 29th. It was found by Steve Howell and Sue Abbott. The actual identification of the bird has stirred some controversy although it has generally been accepted as a Greater Sand Plover. It will be interesting to see how the California Bird Records Committee handles this one.

On Sunday the 25th of February, Keith Hansen of Bolinas, reported to *Kite Tales* that Jon Dunn and Rich Stallcup both have reservations about calling this a Greater Sandplover. Both suspect that it probably is one but they're just not yet convinced. It should be noted that Dunn has substantial experience with the species in Asia.

The other possible identification of this bird is a large billed race of Mongolian Plover. The Mongolian Plover itself is a pretty rare sighting in California and this would likely be one of the southern or interior races, rather than the "expected" northern coastal birds. Some speculate that they are even less likely to occur here than the Greater Sandplover.

Peter Pyle points out that the contrast between the worn tertials and coverts and the fresh scapulars makes this is a second calendar year bird.

Joe Morlan has contacted plover gurus Erik Hirschfeld from Sweden and Trevor Hardaker of South Africa. Joe sent them remarkably fine photographs of this bird. Based on the photos and Joe's detailed written description, they agree that we do have the first Western Hemisphere record of Greater Sand Plover.

This bird has drawn listers from all over North America. On Sunday the 25th, we met three birders from Pennsylvania who'd rented a car on Friday and then drove, via St. Louis, (for a Smew,) to Stinson in 46 hours. They had to return the car within six days. Wouldn't it be fun to hear the rental people ponder the 6000 miles in six days?

Observations

Species	#	Date	Place	County	Who	Notes
Red-necked Grebe	1	1/28	Bodega Harbor Entrance	SON	DN	
Laysan Albatross	~12	1/28	Cordell Bank	MAR	DN	
Northern Fulmar	few	2/4	Bodega Head	SON	BDP, TE	1 dark form
Reddish Egret	1	2/3	San Diego River Mouth	SDG	RR	
✓ Grtr-wht Fronted Goose	2	2/19	Adobe Rd @ Stage Gulch	SON	AW	
✓ Brant	~500	2/4	Bodega Harbor	SON	BDP, TE	
✓ Tundra Swan	2	2/24	Bloomfield	SON	BDP	1 imm.
Eurasian Wigeon	3	2/10	Stinson Beach	MAR	RR	2 male
"	9+	2/25	Bolinas Lagoon	MAR	GM	9 drakes
✓ Blue-winged Teal	15	2/6	Shollenberger Park	SON	PL	
✓ Canvasback	36	2/10	Shollenberger Park	SON	GW	
Redhead	1	Jan.	Marin Civic Center pond	MAR	RS	
"	1	1/25	Bolinas Lagoon	MAR	GM, LM, M.ob.	male
Ring-necked Duck	7	2/12	Vineyard off Mill Statn rd.	SON	SON	MJ
Tufted Duck	1	Feb.	E. of Lucerne, Clear Lake	LAK	JWh	
"	1	Feb.	Bolinas Lagoon	MAR	BG, M.ob.	
King Eider	1	Feb.	Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	MAR	M.ob.	1st yr male, continuing
✓ Long-tailed Duck	1	Feb.	Bodega Harbor	SON	M.ob.	continuing
✓ Barrow's Goldeneye	1	2/4	Spud Point	SON	BDP, TE	
"	4	Feb.	Petaluma River mouth	SON	DN	
"	1	Feb.	W. of Lucerne, Clear Lake	LAK	JWh	
Hooded Merganser	1	2/3	Cheney Creek mouth	SON	KW	
"	5	2/6	Carmody Road Pond	SON	PL	
Bald Eagle	2	2/18	Lake Hennessy	NAP	adults	
✓ Rough-legged Hawk	3	1/20	Skaggs Island	SON	DA, TE, M.ob.	1 dark phase
✓ " " "	1	2/4	Carmody Rd.	SON	BDP, TE	
✓ " " "	1	2/10	Reclamation Road	SON	AW	
✓ " " "	1	2/11	Bodega Farm Pond	SON	AW	
Golden Eagle	1	2/26	Glen Ellen	SON	LM	adult
Merlin	1	2/3	Spud Point	SON	KW	suckleyi (black Merlin)
"	1	2/10	Stinson Beach	MAR	RR	
Peregrine Falcon	1	2/4	Walker Rd.	SON	BDP, TE	
"	1	2/8	Ragle Park, Sebastopol	SON	J&BG,	
✓ Prairie Falcon	1	2/13	Helen Putnam Park	SON	DT	
✓ Clapper Rail	1	2/25	Port Sonoma	SON	BDP	calling
✓ Pacific Golden Plover	1	2/2	Shollenberger Park	SON	LS, TE	continuing?
✓ Greater Sand Plover !!!	1	2/4	Seadrift Colony - Stinson	MAR	SH, SA, PP, M.ob.	American First?
✓ Wandering Tattler	1	2/4	Bodega Head	SON	BDP, TE	
Common Snipe	57	1/23	Laguna Farms Sebastopol	SON	PL	
Glaucous Gull	1	2/10	Stinson Beach	MAR	RR	adult
Marbled Murrelet	1	2/4	Bodega Head	SON	BDP, TE	
✓ Short-eared Owl	18!!	2/1	Laguna Farms Sebastopol	SON	PL	
✓ " " "	2-3	2/11	Bodega Head	SON	AW	continuing
California Gnatcatcher	1	2/4	Poway	SDG	RR	
California Thrasher	1	2/8	Ragle Park, Sebastopol	SON	J&BG,	
✓ Blue-winged Warbler	1	1/8	Cherry St. Petaluma	SON	DT	
Cape May Warbler	1	Feb.	Stinson Beach	MAR	M.ob.	
Palm Warbler	1	2/10	Stinson Beach	MAR	RR	
✓ Western Tanager	1	2/4	Nancy Conzett's garden	SON	BDP, TE	continuing
White-throated Sparrow	2	2/10	Petaluma yard	SON	AW	
Brown-headed Cowbird	>500	2/12	roost at Petaluma Safeway	SON	AW	

Observers:

Sue Abbott, Dick Ashford, Ted Eliot, Jack&Betty Groce, Stephen Howell, Marilyn R. Jones, Peter Leveque, Gerry Mugele, Lilly Mugele, Dan Nelson, Mike Parmeter (BDP), Peter Pyle, Ruth Rudesill, Rich Stallcup, Lang Stevenson, Don Tanner, Karen Wagner, Glo Wellman, Jerry White (JWh), Alan Wight

RROS Officers Slate 2001/2002

A nominating committee consisting of Mike Parmeter, Bob Raines & Betty Burrige will submit a slate of candidates for the year 2001-2002 to be voted upon at the March meeting. If you have any recommendations, please contact one of the aforementioned committee members. The election will take place at the April meeting.

Doug Ellis Memorial Fund

An RROS memorial fund has been established for Doug Ellis. Contributions can be sent to our treasurer, Mike Nelligan. Be sure to make your intention clear by indicating that your check is for the Doug Ellis memorial fund.

Phone Wheel Update

Please add Don McCarthy's telephone number to your copy of our phone wheel. His # is 415-883-0763. Insert this number after Ned Wynn. If implemented correctly, Ned should make the call to Don and Don should make the call to Richard Merriss to complete the wheel.

On this subject; *Kite Tales* has received complaints from several people on the phone wheel. They insist that it just isn't working. Therefore it seems appropriate to reiterate the proper method for using this facility. When someone (on the wheel) finds or hears of a rarity it is that person's responsibility to initiate the call to the next person on the wheel. If that person is not available or you only reach an answering machine, proceed down the list until you are able to deliver the news to a person. That person, in turn, has the responsibility to do the same.

Clearly, the news of rarities has not been disseminated very effectively over recent months. This tool is only of value if we all play our role.

Pre-meeting Meeting

Each month, prior to our regular RROS meeting a group of members meets for dinner at Mary's Pizza Parlor in Rohnert Park. All members and friends are welcome and encouraged to join us. We usually arrive about 6, some as early as 5:30.

Sand Plovers and Listers

Some of us may be aware that excellent local bird artist Keith Hansen is endeavoring to build the ultimate "yard list" for his Bolinas residence. Certainly Bolinas provides opportunities for yard sightings simply not possible elsewhere. Keith's list currently stands at about 267 species; a remarkable feat.

We understand that his greatest competition comes from someone living in a highrise apartment situated on a beach in New Jersey.

While location may be the three most important aspects to such an enterprise, certainly creativity plays a large role.

In order to add the "needed" Greater Sand Plover to his yard list, Hansen got Leslie Lieurance to go to Seadrift to find the bird and then via cell phone guided Keith to the bird from about a half mile away using his Leica spotting scope with a 32x eyepiece.

Wild On Wetlands Weekend

Here's something for those not joining RROS at the Sage Grouse Lek.

Los Banos, CA; March 10-11, 2001
WOW! See Ross's Geese and Sandhill Cranes; 20 species of waterfowl; hundreds of herons, ibis, curlew, and white pelicans; and endemics such as Tri-colored Blackbird. You can also enjoy workshops, wildlife art and other exhibits, demonstrations, and a regional duck calling contest.

Contact: Los Banos Chamber of Commerce, Wild On Wetlands Weekend, PO Box 2117, Los Banos, CA 93635. 800-336-6354. www.losbanos.com

Heron Days

Lower Lake, CA; April 14-15, 2001
Pontoon boat tours to view a heron rookery in Anderson Marsh on Clear Lake. Educational programs and children's activities. Contact: Redbud Audubon Society, 13806 Cliff Dr., Lower Lake, CA 95457. 707-994-2024.

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
E-Mail: talontours@yahoo.com

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

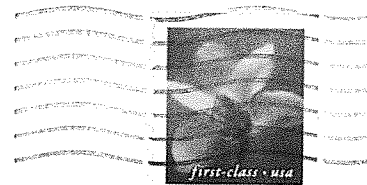
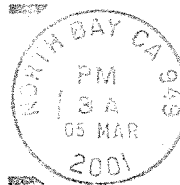
Social: Barbara Gumtow, 7915 Bella Vista Dr., Sebastopol CA 95472-2701 707 823-7869

Christmas Count:

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

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