



Kite

Tales

Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 36 Number IX

May 2002

Coming Attractions

May 9th, Thursday, 6:00 PM, Year End Potluck Meeting Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park, Adobe Canyon Road

Once again we're ending the RROS year with a potluck feast and meeting. We will meet at the picnic area across from the parking lot shortly beyond the entrance kiosk. (The picnic area at the astronomical observatory is not available.) Picnic tables are available. Bring a potluck dish, your plate, cup, and utensils. Also bring some warm clothes, as it will likely get chilly as the evening wears on. We will share our dinners and birds in the area, have our meeting and then take a walk along the level Meadow Trail at dusk in search of owls and poor-wills. Last year, a poor-will was on the trail. There is a restroom near the picnic area. The State Park has assured us that no fees will be charged us. If there is a ranger at the kiosk, tell her/him that Supervising Ranger Gregg Hayes so assured RROS vice-president Ted Eliot.

May 18th, Saturday, 8:00 am RROS Field Trip to Pine Flat Road

We'll search for chaparral, grassland, and woodland birds along the length of Pine Flat Road. If Pine Flat Road is closed due to pipeline work, we will go up Geysers Road instead. Meet at the first bridge on Pine Flat Road at 8:00 am. Bring binoculars, hiking shoes, water, and a lunch. Leader is Alan Wight. Please call Alan (weekdays 7-9 PM or weekends any time) at 763-8572 if you have any questions.

June 21st - 23rd, Friday - Sunday RROS Field Trip to Lava Beds National Monument

After a hiatus of several years, RROS will once again explore this diverse area in the breeding season. We will camp at the Lava Beds campground on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Motels are available in Klamath Falls, Oregon for those who prefer not to camp. We will bird our way around Lava Beds National Monument and the surrounding area (possibilities include Tule Lake, Lower Klamath NWR, Medicine Lake, and southern Oregon). Birds seen on past trips at Lava Beds include Prairie Falcon, Common Nighthawk, Purple Martin, Pinyon Jay, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Canyon Wren, Brewer's Sparrow, and Vesper Sparrow. On our way home, we will try for Bank Swallows at Fall River Mills and Black Swifts at Burney Falls State Park. Bring binoculars, maps, field guides, food, water, and camping gear. Leader is Alan Wight. Please call Alan (weekdays 7-9 PM or weekends any time) at 763-8572 if you plan to go on this trip or if you have any questions.

Field Trip Report

Mitchell Canyon, Mt. Diablo State Park April 20, 2002

Our field trip started with a surprise when we found out that Mitchell Canyon was closed for the day due to trail-building. Susan Watson led us to nearby Donner Canyon, where we spent the day. On the way to the Donner Canyon trailhead, we stopped at a city park where we saw Phainopeplas, Western Kingbirds, Bullock's Orioles, and a Say's Phoebe bringing food to a nest with nestlings in the park restroom. Donner Canyon produced a nice collection of birds, including Golden Eagles, a Great Horned Owl, White-throated Swifts, an Anna's Hummingbird on a nest, a few cooperative and vocal Hammond's Flycatchers, a Hutton's Vireo building a nest, a Lincoln's Sparrow, Hooded Orioles in the neighborhood at the trailhead, and finally, a difficult-to-see pair of Lawrence's Goldfinches. At lunchtime, Lew and Marilyn had a close encounter with a baby rattlesnake that shared a log with them. The field trip participants were Lew Edmondson, Marilyn Edmondson, Ted Eliot, Betty Groce, Richard Hurley, Heidi Lebaudour, Rick Lebaudour, Tom McCuller, Joan Merriss, Richard Merriss, Ian Morrison, Becky Olsen, Wendy Peterson, Rhio Reigh, Susan Watson, Alan Wight, and Ken Wilson.

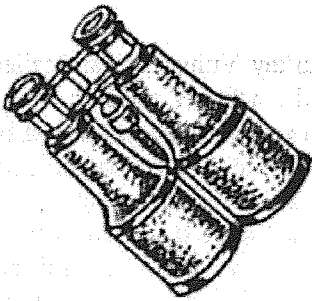
Birds observed: Turkey Vulture, White-tailed Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, California Quail, Rock Dove, Band-tailed Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, White-throated Swift, Anna's Hummingbird, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Western Wood-Pewee, Hammond's Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Violet-green Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Steller's Jay, Western Scrub-Jay, Common Raven, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, White-breasted Nuthatch, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Wrentit, Northern Mockingbird, California Thrasher, Phainopepla, European Starling, Hutton's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Lincoln's Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Hooded Oriole, Bullock's Oriole, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, Lawrence's Goldfinch, American Goldfinch.

Alan Wight

OBSERVATIONS

SPECIES	#	DATE	PLACE	COUNTY	OBSERVERS	NOTES
Rufous Hummingbird	1	7-Apr	Petaluma	SON	AW	
Lazuli Bunting	3	13-Apr	Fairfield Osborn Preserve	SON	BO	Early
Purple Martin	1--2	14-Apr	Geysers Rd.	SON	AW	Males
Redhead	2	20-Apr	Highway 37	SOL	TE, TMc, AW	
Lawrence's Goldfinch	1	25-Apr	Calistoga & St. Helena Roads	SON	KW	Male
Out of County/State						
Black-throated Sparrow	abun	12-Apr	Palm Canyon	RIV	EKW,DRC	State bird
Phainopepla	2	13-Apr	Palm Canyon	RIV	EKW	
Greater Roadrunner	2	12-Apr	Palm Desert	RIV	EKW,DRC	
Black-chinned Hummingbird	4	13-Apr	Palm Canyon	RIV	EKW,DRC	
Verdin	abun	13-Apr	Palm Desert	RIV	EKW,DRC	

Observers: Ted Eliot, Tom McCuller, Becky Olsen, Alan Wight, Ken Wilson, Ned Wynn, Donna Cook-Wynn



Report Your Sightings

The Observations column in the Kite Tales serves as a permanent record of sightings in Sonoma County. As such, this data is a valuable resource. It is used to compile statistics, report to nationwide databases and extract frequency and arrival date information. Our Observations served as part of the foundation for the book, *Birds of Sonoma County*.

Please remember to report your sightings of rare or unusual birds, early or late migrants, birds seemingly out of place and anything else of interest. Whom to contact is elsewhere in this issue.

It's Not Too Early to Renew

Check your address label on this issue of Kite Tales to determine when your membership expires. If it is next month, you will want to beat the autumn rush by mailing your renewal to our treasurer now. Annual dues are on the back page.

THANKS FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we wind down our public year, I give thanks to all those members who have made this presidency an easy and pleasant experience. Thanks to our current Vice-president (and future President) Ted Eliot for putting together such interesting speakers for our monthly meetings, and to Betty Burrige for her excellent job of keeping us apprised of our finances. Linda Allen has done a great job as Secretary and I am grateful to Linda for stepping into Gerry Mugele's shoes and maintaining the quality of our newsletter. Thanks to Ned Wynn for continuing our Observations column and to Alan Wight for arranging and leading such valuable Field trips throughout the year. Congratulations to Mike Parmeter and all those who helped Mike reproduce his successful *Birds of Sonoma County*. And finally, much thanks to all the members who have attended the monthly meetings and field trips that help keep RRROS a healthy and viable organization.

Ken Wilson

An Easy Job But Somebody's Gotta Do It

The position of Social Chair has gone unfilled for too long. The job no longer requires that you bring anything – just that you arrange to have the hot water pot going seven times a year for meetings. All the supplies are on-site. Occasionally it is necessary to replenish the coffee or tea bags. That's all. Our generous members sign up each month to serve the baked goods. Please consider contributing in this painless fashion.

Kite Tales Deadlines

August 20th, Observations Deadline

Please submit sightings to:
Ned Wynn, 129-B Powell Ave., Healdsburg, CA 95448,
via email: ekwynn@pon.net, or call him after 8:00 AM and
before 8:00 PM at (707) 431-8412.

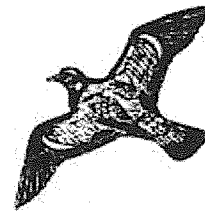
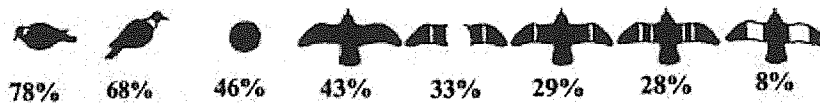
August 23rd, Submissions Deadline

Send announcements, articles, complaints, trivia, errata
and letters to the editor to:
Ruth Rudesill, PO Box 371, Kenwood, CA 95452.

Controlling Pesky Birds®

In agricultural areas, granivorous species often raid crops and cause significant economic losses. A number of techniques have been used to repel pest species, including chemical poisons and repellents, models of predators, and playback of alarm calls. Across Europe, shooting is a common method to reduce damage caused by large flocks of Woodpigeons (*Columba palumbus*). However, observations collected in the mid-1970's indicate that a non-lethal technique, that exploits how pigeons visually communicate alarm, could be an effective deterrent. When decoys of stuffed pigeons were placed in the field, 54% of wild birds that circled landed near "closed-winged" decoys, while only 4% landed near "open-winged" decoys. Since Woodpigeons do not emit an alarm call, the researchers suggested that the sight of the wing-bars on the open-winged decoys served as a visual alarm signal.

Percentage of pigeons that landed near different decoys as opposed to those that landed in an area with no decoy. A value of 50% indicates that the pigeons tested showed no preference with regard to where they landed.



Woodpigeon

To test the "alarm signal" interpretation, a set of experiments was conducted. Woodpigeons at a preferred feeding site were presented with different decoys (two at a time): some decoys had closed wings, some had open wings but no wing-bars, and some had open wings with larger than normal wing-bars (see figure above). It was confirmed that display of wing-bars could serve to deter birds from settling. Doubling the area of each bar to create a super-normal stimulus made the decoys even more aversive. In field trials, open-winged decoys significantly reduced Woodpigeon damage over a nine-week period. Most interestingly, the super-normal stimuli were no more effective than normal wing-bars after an initial period of two weeks. However, the researchers speculated that the total aversive effect would be enhanced if someone could invent a decoy that flapped its wings at the same rate as a flushed Woodpigeon escaping from a predator – W.J. Davis

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New Kite Tales Editor

No introduction to our next newsletter editor is needed. Ruth Rudesill is known to us all. She has served RR0S in many capacities. Indeed not so long ago, the newsletter, Kite Tales, was in her very competent hands. She has graciously agreed to become our editor for next year. Your September issue will be under Ruth's stewardship. Please direct contributions

to her at: PO Box 371, Kenwood, CA 95452.
Telephone: 833-6026. E-mail: rar@pcweb.net.

The Welcome Mat

We would like to welcome **Lisa Hug** of Sebastopol as a member. By the way, it was so nice to see new member **Tom McCuller** at our last meeting.

Library of Nature Slides

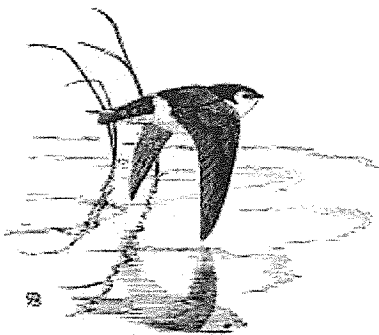
Sea and Sage Audubon Society in Orange County, California has a slide library containing more than 16,000 slides. It contains 568 species of birds and 111 species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians. All of these slides are sold, some are even loaned and they are quite reasonably priced. All revenues go to supporting their conservation, research and environmental education programs.

In making your request, you are encouraged to be specific as to field marks, plumage, poses, habitats or behaviors that you want. A complete list of slides, with ratings and descriptors, is available on the web-site below

<http://exo.com/~kenyon/libnatureslides.htm>

Russian River at Guerneville

A number of birds may be seen during the summer in the willow thickets bordering this river. A good area is along the highway between Guerneville and Rio Nido. Go in the early morning before the swimmers begin to use the adjacent beaches. Those birds commonly seen here include Green Heron, Spotted Sandpiper (along the river beach), Swainson's Thrush, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler and



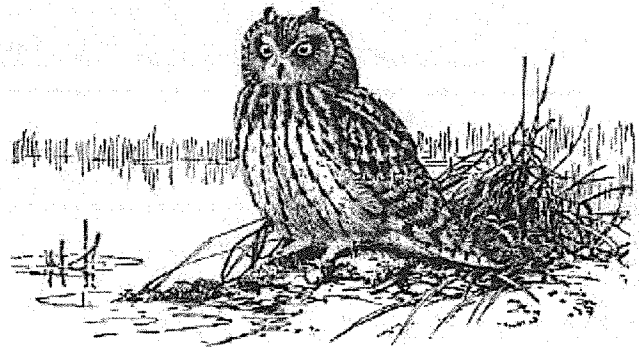
Yellow-breasted Chat. This is the best spot we know to find this latter elusive species in Sonoma County. If one is lucky, Vaux's Swift may be seen over the river, usually

in late afternoon. Violet-green and Rough-Winged Swallows are regular, and Osprey nest nearby. Wood Ducks frequent this section of the river.

Excerpted, with permission, from Birding Locations, Birds of Sonoma County California, 2001, Parmeter and Bolander

Calling All Parents, Teachers and Kids of Any Age

Have you ever dissected an owl pellet? Here is your opportunity to see what's in the pellets of six owl species – plus another bird that you wouldn't expect. This is an exceptional website, www.kidwings.com, that offers virtual owl pellet dissections and more. There is a game, called BIRDO, there are flight experiments, skulls, nests and many things to do.. There is even a section with teacher materials. All in the name of "Inspiring the next generation".



REDWOOD REGION ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2001-2002 Officers

Board of Directors

President	8 Pine Tree Circle	795-7547
Ken Wilson	Cotati, CA 94931	talontours@yahoo.com
Vice-President	5850 Grove Street	935-3410
Ted Eliot	Sonoma CA 95476-6095	patted@sonic.net
Secretary	6332 Stone Bridge Road	538-9194
Linda Allen	Santa Rosa CA 95409	lsallen@sonic.net
Treasurer	1653 Arroyo Sierra Way	527-0225
Betty Burridge	Santa Rosa CA 95405	bandm@monitor.net

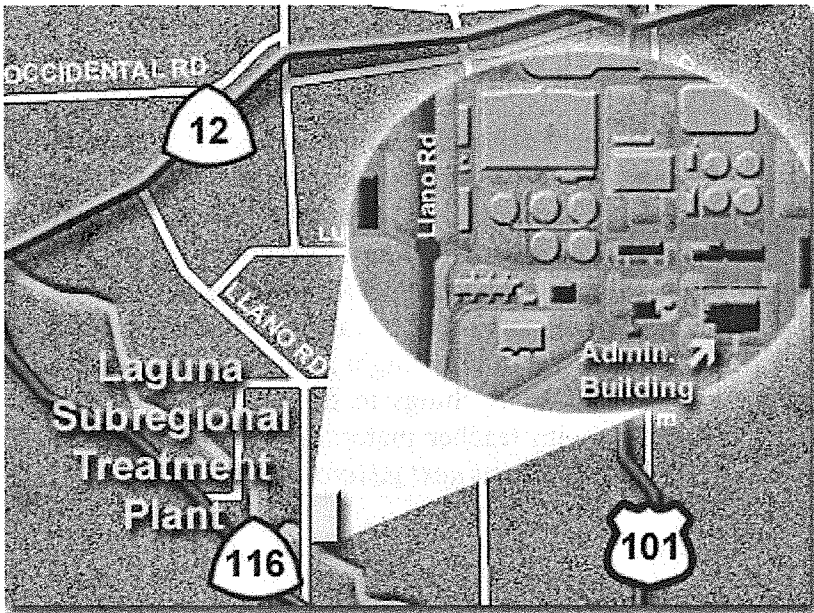
Committee Chairs

Field Trips	19 Wooddale Drive	763-8572
Alan Wight	Petaluma CA 94952	shwand@sonic.net
Observations	129-B Powell Avenue	431-8412
Ned Wynn	Healdsburg CA 95448	ekwvnm@pon.net
Social	Position Open	

Christmas Count	5850 Grove Street	935-3410
Ted Eliot	Sonoma CA 95476-6095	patted@sonic.net
Bob Evans		823-0609
Kite Tales	PO Box 548	538-9194
Linda Allen	Kenwood 95452	lsallen@sonic.net

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 RROS, 1653 Arroyo Sierra Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95405

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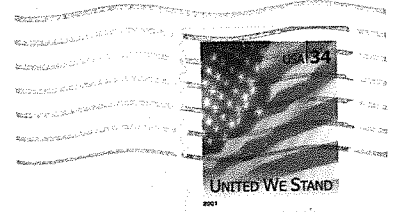
CALENDAR

- May 9th Potluck Picnic.....6:00 PM
- May 18th Field Trip.....8:00 AM
- June 21-23 Field Trip.....Call Alan
- JulyNo activities
- AugustNo activities
- August 20th.....Observations Deadline
- August 23rd.....Kite Tales Deadline
- Sept. 12th Potluck.....6:00 PM
- Oct. 10th General Meeting....7:30 PM

An Open Invitation

Prior to the General Meetings, October through April, join us for dinner at 6:00 PM. We have a standing reservation for a large table at Mary's Pizza Shack, 101 Golf Course Drive, Rohnert Park. Just ask the hostess for the RROS table.

Kite Tales Editor
PO Box 548
Kenwood, CA 95452-0548



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

