



Kite Tales

Volume 41 Number 3

November 2005

GENERAL MEETING – NOV. 10, 7:30 P. M.

REMEMBERING OWENS VALLEY ONCE AGAIN!

Mike Prather, Owens Valley Committee Outreach Coordinator, Biologist,

Teacher and active hardcore birder is coming from his home in Lone Pine

to show and tell us about amazing changes occurring in the water-starved Eastern Sierran Owens Valley. We will have a guided tour of the results of current water diversions returning water to Owens Lake. While a regional dust hazard is being thereby ameliorated, thousands of shorebirds and other wildlife are also rediscovering and reclaiming incredibly rich wetlands.

Directions: From Hwy 101 take Hwy 116 West toward Sebastopol. Turn right (north) on Llano Rd. and go ~ 1 mile to **Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant at 4300 Llano Rd, Santa Rosa**. Look for an open gate on right. Proceed to Administration. Bldg. at SE corner of the plant.

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OTHER COMING ATTRACTIONS:

Nov. 5, Sat. 8:30 a.m. RROS Field trip to the Sonoma Coast - Details on page 2.

Nov. 9, Wed. 7:00 Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Public Meeting – Lucchesi Community Center, 320 N. McDowell Blvd. Petaluma. **Program:** PRBO Biologist Leonard Liu will talk about his songbird research in the Petaluma Marsh.

Nov. 17 – 20, Central Valley Bird Symposium, Stockton, details at <http://cvbs.org>

Nov. 21, Mon. 7:30 Madrone Audubon Society General Meeting. First Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. **Program:** Mayacamas: Vegetative Recovery Following the Labor Day Fire of 2004 by Peter Leveque and his grandson, Gus Eichorn

Saturday, November 5 – Field Trip to the Sonoma Coast Meet at Bridgehaven Pond (at the intersection of Highways 1 and 116 along the Russian River) at 8:30 a.m. Park off the road in the dirt area. We will bird the area around the Russian River and then make our way down the coast towards Bodega Harbor. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, lunch, water, and warm clothes. Leader is Alan Wight. Call Alan at 763-8572 (weekdays 7-9 pm or weekends any time) if you have any questions.

Bodega Harbor Field Trip Report - October 23, 2005 - We had a nice day seeing a lot of the usual Bodega Harbor fall birds. Highlights were an immature Cooper's Hawk, one Snowy Plover on Doran Beach, at least 31 Black Oystercatchers on the south jetty, one Pigeon Guillemot off Campbell Cove, two heard-only House Wrens, and a huge adult male Steller's Sea Lion on Bodega Rock. Several people got good looks at a Virginia Rail near the Bodega Marine Lab residences. We saw five species of warblers, including one Black-throated Gray Warbler and one Orange-crowned Warbler in Owl Canyon and many Myrtle Warblers at various locations. **The field trip participants** were Robin Beeman, Janet Bosshard, Ron Breeze, Betty Burrige, Pam Campbell, Jim Clegg, Joannie Dranginis, Elmer Dudik, Dea Freid, Deyea Harper, Jack Harper, Dave Herrema, Don Howard, Helen Kochenderfer, Andy Lacasse, Shirl Maxson, Tom Maxson, Mike Parmeter, Rhio Reigh, Don Reinberg, Ron Storey, Don Toms, Jean Tonascia, and Alan Wight.

Birds observed (92 species): American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Surf Scoter, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, California Quail, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, American White Pelican, Brown Pelican, Brandt's Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Virginia Rail, American Coot, Black-bellied Plover, Snowy Plover, Killdeer, Black Oystercatcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Black Turnstone, Surfbird, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Dowitcher sp., Heermann's Gull, Mew Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Forster's Tern, Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Hutton's Vireo, Western Scrub-Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, European Starling, American Pipit, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, California Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Purple Finch, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

Alan Wight

Sonoma County Is lucky to have **two excellent birding websites.**

WWW.RROS.ORG and **HTTP://AUDUBON.SONOMA.NET**

Check out both of them

"DOING THE VIRGINIA RAIL" by Leha Carpenter

"What is the Virginia Rail?" my friend asked me, "Some kind of dance?" Even though we have Virginia Rails in Sonoma County, most people have never heard of them, let alone seen one, as they are among our most elusive birds. These "chicken-like marsh birds," as the Audubon field guides refer to them, live in the tall rushes that crowd fresh water marshes, where they do their best to keep a low profile.

So when a Virginia Rail teeters aimlessly in the median of the main road through Bloomfield, it's probably not just dancing. And this is why I stopped, jumped out of my car, and grabbed the little bird I spotted the other morning, on my way to work. If you can catch a bird in your hands and it isn't a baby, there is likely a problem, and this one was easy to catch. At least, he was easy to catch that first time.

Pulling off the road, having left the distressed bird on the passenger side floor of my new VW Beetle, I grabbed my transport basket and reached down to pick the bird up a second time, only to watch as he slid from my grasp, up, into a tiny hole that led to the space between my dash and engine compartment--apparently a feature of the New Beetle the dealership had forgotten to mention. A masterful ability to find just such a hiding place was in keeping, however, with the elusive temperament of the rail.

Four hours, a bucket of screws and caps, and several removed car parts later, as I lay upside down, performing the home mechanic's version of Capoeira in my closed vehicle, trying to get a view of the next screw that might release the glove box unit, I reached across to the driver's side, to get my balance, wondering if the bird was even really still in the car at all. There I felt the answer: bird poop, dripping from the grating that covered the underside of the steering column. Squeezing my head between steering wheel and hand brake, I could now see the legs of a timid little rail, as he nervously shifted from one foot to the other, likely sensing he'd been found out.

After a quick check by Bird Rescue Center's songbird expert, Emily, the elusive rail kindly paid back my efforts by being healthy enough to release the very next day. Perhaps he had gotten the wind knocked out of him by a passing vehicle that day, and so, his little vacation in my car was, I like to think, a chance to even the score. We can only be inspired by the ingenious ways in which wildlife so elegantly and consistently assert their essential nature into every circumstance that comes their way. These special qualities of each species are what make diversity such an optimal solution for the continuing dance of life. Perhaps the Virginia Rail is a kind of dance after all.

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Observations October 2005

Ruth Rudesill

<u>Bird Species</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Co.</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Observers</u>
Canada Goose	9/29/05	Petaluma	SON	1	BOI, GM
leucistic. same overall shape and size of a Canada, its bill and legs were a very light pink instead of black. The body (back, sides, primaries, belly) were the same color as a regular Canada but where the black stocking on the neck would be, it was mottled with white (I would say equal parts of white and black) and there was no white strap.					
✓ Snow Goose	9/25-10/2/05	Lucchesi Park, Pet.	SON	1	SBI, KWi Blue phase
Blue-winged Teal	10/20/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	12	Bdyer, LLo
Cattle Egret	10/23/05	So of Sebastopol	SON	30+	LLu, CLu
Yellow-Cr. Night Heron	10/13-23/05	Inverness	MRN	1	RS, AWgh, mob Subadult / photo AWight
✓ Ferruginous Hawk	10/23/05	off Joy Rd Bodega	SON	1	LLu, CLu
✓ Pacific Golden-Pover	10/7-20/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	2-5	LHg, mob
Lesser Yellowlegs	10/2-7/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	8-30	LHg, BDyer
✓ Wilson's Snipe	10/7/05	Sebastopol	SON	10	LHg
Red-necked Phalarope	9/25/05	Doran Turnout	SON	1	RRh
✓ Lewis's Woodpecker	9/27/05	Pine Flat Rd	SON	1	fide KWi
✓ Poorwill	10/13/05	Sonoma Mountain	SON	1	TE
✓ Tropical Kingbird	9/25-24/05	Bodega Head	SON	1	RAR, LHg, WW
✓ Pygmy Nuthatch	10/2/05	Marine Lab Bodega B.	SON	sev	SBI
Tree Swallow	10/4/05	Spring Lake	SON	100+	BBu
White-throated Sparrow	10/12/05	Santa Rosa yard	SON	1	JT early

Observers: Sara Blauman, Betty Burrige, Bob Dyer, Ted Eliot, Lisa Hug, Leslie and Cindy Lieurance, Gerry Mugele, Becky Olsen, Rhio Reigh, Ruth A. Rudesill, Rich Stallcup, Jean Tonascia, Alan Wight, Ken Wilson, Will Wilson

BOUVERIE PRESERVE GUIDED NATURE WALK LOTTERY FORMS

are now available for the Spring 2006 season. Write or call to receive the form for these popular excursions into the beautiful Bouverie Preserve of Audubon Canyon Ranch in the famous Valley of the Moon. Each walk will be led by a trained docent.

Bouverie Preserve, P. O. Box 1195, Glen Ellen CA 95442 (707) 938-4554

FOR SALE: Field Guide Art of Roger Tory Peterson

Printed by Easton Press. Two volumes - eastern and western birds.

These are the plates for the field guides in larger format -- 11x17x2 " leather bound with gold trim. These collector's books have only been out of the box once or twice and are autographed by RTP himself. Asking \$ 300. Will donate part of the sale to RR0S.

Contact: Ruth Rudesill 833-6026 or rar@pcweb.net .

Participants are needed for a base-line **BIRD CENSUS AT THE GALBRAITH PRESERVE** which was recently gifted to Sonoma State University. The nearly 4,000 acres of wildlands are located west of Cloverdale off Hwy 128. If you are interested in volunteering for the census, please contact Becky Olsen at olsenr@sonoma.edu or 775-2558

FYI : THE BRAND NEW SONOMA VALLEY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT will take place Friday, Dec. 30th. Contact Tim Rusert trusert@mac.com for details.

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RROS 2005-2006- Board of Directors

Officers

President	Lisa Hug	507 N. Main St., Sebastopol	95472	lisahug@earthlink.net	824-1067
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Committee Chairs

Field Trips	Alan Wight	1940 Bristol St., Petaluma	94954	shwand@sonic.net	763-8572
Observations	Ruth Rudesill	PO Box 371 Kenwood CA	95452	rar@pcweb.net	833-6026
Christmas Count	Ken Ackerman	477 Oakbrook Ct., Santa Rosa	95409	markandack@aol.com	538-2038
Kite Tales	Betty Burrridge	1653 Arroyo Sierra Way, Santa Rosa	95405	bburridge@sbcglobal.net	527-0225
Hospitality	Adeene Nelligan	29 Sequoia Circle, Santa Rosa	95401		523-1116

Kite Tales Deadlines: Submit Observations to Ruth Rudesill by November 20th, all other items to Guest Editor Linda Allen (by October 25th) jabirder@yahoo.com

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 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 a one-year membership. Send dues to RROS Treasurer, Box 5254, Santa Rosa CA 95402.

THE SANTA ROSA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT will take place on Sunday, December 18. Area team leaders may pick up packets for the count at the next RROS meeting. Those who can't make the meeting should contact the **compiler, Ken Ackerman at 707.538.2038/markandack@aol.com** to arrange for delivery of the materials. It is assumed that we will have the same area leaders as last year; Ken should be notified of any changes.

The Count dinner will be held at Mary's Pizza Shack, 535 Summerfield Rd., Santa Rosa (next to the Rialto Theatre) from 5:00 until 7:30. We have a room reserved, and extra space is available if we need it. Because we will be a single group, there will be one tab, which will be paid by the compiler. The total will include 8% sales tax and 15% gratuity; therefore, individuals will reimburse the compiler at the end of the dinner for the amount of their meal X 1.23 (8% + 15%) in cash or check (made out to Ken Ackerman). We'll have calculators available for the arithmetic.

Please Note: Mary's Pizza Shack has a \$10 per bottle corkage fee.

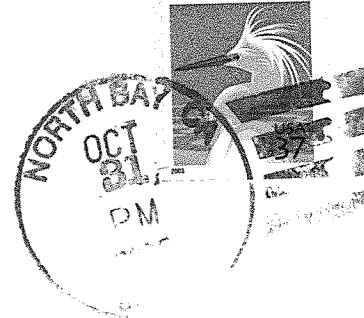
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THE WESTERN SONOMA COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT will take place on Sunday, January 1st. If you are not already signed up, or have questions please contact Compiler Joy Mander at www.wscbc@aol.com or 778-7865

KITE TALES

1653 Arroyo Sierra Way
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November 2005



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