



Kite Tales

Volume 41 Number 5

February 2006

GENERAL MEETING – Feb. 9, 7:30 P. M.

BIRDS OF SOUTH AFRICA

JOHN C. ROBINSON, ornithologist/author/tour guide, from Fairfield and Arizona will entertain and inform us by lecture and photos about bird identification techniques and the birds. Be there or be square!

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. From Hwy. 12, take Llano Rd. south about 3 miles. Plant is on left.

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OTHER COMING ATTRACTIONS: (See next page for details)

Feb. 11, Sat. 9:00 a.m. Field trip to Sonoma Land Trust's North Point Property

Feb. 20, Mon. 7:30 p.m. Madrone Audubon Society General Meeting – Bryant and Diane Hichwa recount their trip to Rwanda and Kenya, 1st United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa 95404

Feb. 24 – 26, Fri. to Sun. Field Trip to Tule Lake and Klamath Basin

March 11, Sat. 9:00 a.m. A repeat of Feb. 11 field trip.

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Check out www.rros.org and <http://Audubon.Sonoma.net> (Madrone Audubon) for the latest birding news and information.

Saturday, February 11 – Field Trip to Sonoma Land Trust’s North Point Property

Sonoma Land Trust has offered to lead us on a hiking trip through their North Point property. We will explore the hilly area north of Highway 37 and east of Lakeville Highway. This is a great spot for Golden Eagles and wintering Burrowing Owls and offers nice views of southern Sonoma County. A Long-eared Owl was found this winter in a willow thicket on the property. This is a great opportunity to visit part of Sonoma County that you probably haven't visited before. We will hike about three miles and finish up around noon (though bring lunch just in case we take longer). The terrain will be rough in places. Waterproof footwear is recommended. Meet at 9 a.m. at the dairies complex on the south side of Highway 37 just east of the intersection of Lakeville Highway and Highway 37. The driveway for the dairies is right off of the highway. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, lunch, water, and warm clothes (rain gear if weather is questionable). Leaders are Ted Eliot and John Brosnan

Friday-Sunday, February 24-26 - Field Trip to Tule Lake and Klamath Basin

This interesting area is a great winter spot for Bald Eagles and waterfowl. Occasionally we have found rarities such as Northern Shrike, Bohemian Waxwing, and Trumpeter Swan. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, lunches, water, and very warm clothes. We will be staying at the Motel 6 in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The phone number for making reservations is (541) 884-2110. Information on this motel can be found at the Motel 6 website: <http://www.motel6.com>. We will meet in the hotel parking lot each morning (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) at 7:45 a.m. to go out for the day. If the weather is good, we may get up extra early on Saturday morning to see the Bald Eagle flyout at dawn and then return to the hotel before going out for the day. There is a restaurant available for breakfasts next to the hotel. Bring food for lunches in the field. We will plan to have dinners at restaurants in Klamath Falls. Leader is Alan Wight. Please email or call Alan at 763-8572 (weekdays 7-9 pm or weekends any time) if you plan to go on this trip.

Saturday, March 11 – Field Trip to Sonoma Land Trust’s North Point Property

This is a repeat of the February 11 field trip, with the potential for some spring wildflowers (and continuing Burrowing Owls if we're lucky). See above for details. Meet at 9 a.m. Leaders are Alan Wight and John Brosnan.

Lake Berryessa Field Trip Report, Jan. 7, 2006

The clouds cleared in the morning giving us nice views of Lake Berryessa and the surrounding hills. Highlights were four Greater White-fronted Geese mixed in with Canada Geese, one male Hooded Merganser below Berryessa Dam, one Ferruginous Hawk in Pope Valley, one adult Golden Eagle, three or four Prairie Falcons, one Spotted Sandpiper, one Lewis's Woodpecker, a few Yellow-billed Magpies, two Rock Wrens, and at least 30 Tricolored Blackbirds flying by us on the northeast side of Lake Berryessa. We watched as several hundred American White Pelicans flew up from Lake Berryessa in lines and soared over the hills north of the lake – a beautiful sight! Above us, we observed an adult Bald Eagle harassing an Osprey that was carrying a fish until the Osprey dropped the fish and the Bald Eagle grabbed it mid-air. Finally, on our way home we re-found the immature Northern Shrike that had been found a few days before on Pleasants Valley Road in Solano County. The field trip participants were Sharon Audiss, Janet Bosshard, Betty Groce, Don Howard, Richard Hurley, Andy Lacasse, Don McCarthy, Len Nelson, Gwendolyn Toney, Alan Wight.

Birds observed (74 species): Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, White-tailed Kite, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Prairie Falcon, American Coot, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, California Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Lewis's Woodpecker, Acorn Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Shrike, Hutton's Vireo, Western Scrub-Jay, Yellow-billed Magpie, American Crow, Common Raven, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, White-breasted Nuthatch, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren,

(Continued on page 4)

OBSERVATIONS: November 2005 through January 2006

RUTH RUDESILL

Bird Species	Date	Location	Co.	#	Observers
✓ Snow Goose	12/10/05	near Bloomfield	SON	9	Awgh 1 ad., 8 imm
✓ Snow Goose	1/15/06	near Petaluma sewer ponds	SON	1imm	AWgh
✓ Cackling Goose	12/18/05	Shiloh Road	SON	1	AWgh Aleutian subspecies
✓ Cackling Goose	12/18/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	J&JH
✓ Cackling Goose	1/15/06	near Petaluma sewer ponds	SON	1	AWgh minima
✓ Cackling Goose	1/20/06	Joy Road	SON	2	L&CLi
Swan sp.	12/10/05	off Bodega Head	SON	1	AWgh flying south well offshore
Eurasian Wigeon	12/22/05-1/2/06	Bodega Harbor	SON	1m	DF, BDP, mob
✓ Blue-winged Teal	12/25/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	13	BDP,JP
Canvasback	12/16/05	Doran Pond	SON	1	DF
✓ Canvasback	12/22-25/05	Bodega Farm Pond	SON	3 prs	BDP,SBI
✓ Redhead	12/18/05	pond no. of County Airport	SON	2	AWgh
✓ Redhead	12/18/05	Spring Lake	SON	1m	RAR
✓ Harlequin Duck	11/5/05	Bodega Harbor	SON	1f	BDP,AWgh
✓ Harlequin Duck	12/22/05	Bodega Harbor	SON	1m	BDP,JP,BL
✓ Hooded Merganser	12/10/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	1f	BDP
✓ Hooded Merganser	12/18/05	Delta Pond	SON	10	BDP Seven males & 3 females
✓ Hooded Merganser	12/18/05	Spring Lake	SON	1f	RAR
✓ Hooded Merganser	1/20-22/06	Carmody Road ponds	SON	4-5	JT, L&CLi
✓ Common Merganser	12/18/05	Delta Pond	SON	33	BDP
Red-necked Grebe	12/11/05	off Bodega Head	SON	1	BDP
Red-necked Grebe	1/1-16/06	Bodega Harbor	SON	2-4	RAR, D&DH
Laysan Albatross	12/4/05	Cordell Bank area	MRN	1	RS,LHg,DF
Short-tailed Albatross	12/4/05	Cordell Bank area	MRN	1	RS,LHg,DF
✓ American Bittern	10/30/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	1	BDP
✓ American Bittern	12/18/05	Spring Lake	SON	2	RAR
✓ American Bittern	1/22/06	Shollenberger Park	SON	2	Bdy One with red eyes
✓ Cattle Egret	12/13-15/05	Laguna area	SON	12-70	DShw,LT
✓ Cattle Egret	1/08/06	Sebastopol/Laguna	SON	231	LHg big #s
Osprey	11/5/05	Bridgehaven	SON	1	BDP,AWgh
Osprey	12/18/05	Spring Lake	SON	2	RAR
✓ Bald Eagle	11/5/05	near Jenner	SON	2	BDP,AWgh One near ad., one imm.
✓ Bald Eagle	12/4/05	Spring Lake	SON	1	RRh
✓ Ferruginous Hawk	11/5/05	Jenner	SON	1	BDP,AWgh dark
✓ Ferruginous Hawk	12/23/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	2	BDP, JP imm
✓ Rough-legged Hawk	12/22/05	Stage Gulch Rd	SON	1	RAR
✓ Golden Eagle	12/4/05	near Lakeville Hwy	SON	1	AWgh Adult
✓ Golden Eagle	12/18/05	Lakeville Hwy	SON	1	LBI
✓ Golden Eagle	12/23/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	1	BDP, JP 1ad
Merlin	11/5/05	Bridgehaven	SON	1	BDP,AWgh
Merlin	12/11/05	Bodega Head	SON	1	BDP
Peregrine Falcon	12/4/05n	near Lakeville Hwy	SON	1	AWgh Adult
Peregrine Falcon	12/18/05	Delta Pond	SON	1	BDP
✓ Prairie Falcon	12/4/05	near Lakeville Hwy	SON	1	AWgh Adult
✓ Black Rail	12/30/05	Petaluma Wetlands	SON	4	SVCBC
✓ Black Rail	1/2/06	marsh no of Shollenberger Park	SON	1	Awgh Seen perched at high tide
Virginia Rail	12/17/05	Pt Reyes	MRN	11	BDP near Johnson Oyster Works
✓ Clapper Rail	12/4/05	Port Sonoma	SON/MRN	3+	AWgh heard only
Mountain Plover	1/14/06	Flannery Road	SOL	16+	AWgh, SH,ELi
Snowy Plover	12/17/05	Pt Reyes,Abbotts Lagoon	MRN	6	BDP
✓ Snowy Plover	12/22/05	Inner bay Doran Park	SON	6	BDP,JP,BL
✓ Black-necked Stilt	12/18/05	field Delta Pond	SON	9	BDP
✓ American Avocet	12/23/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	110	BDP,JP
✓ American Avocet	12/25/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	70	BDP, JP
✓ Red Knot	12/22/05	Se Bodega Harbor	SON	7	BDP,JP BL
✓ Red Phalarope	12/22/05-1/1/06	Doran Park area	SON	7-36	DF, BDP, mob
Red Phalarope	12/28/05	Lake Hennessey	NAP	1	BDP,JP
✓ Red Phalarope	12/26/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	Bdy
Little Gull	12/4/05	Cordell Bank area	MRN	1	RS,LHg,DF
✓ Bonaparte's Gull	12/10/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	7	BDP
✓ Thayer's Gull	12/22/05	Campbell Cove beach	SON	1	BDP,JP,BL
✓ Thayer's Gull	1/1/06	Doran Park	SON	1	RAR,BGr
✓ Herring Gull	1/1/06	Doran Park near jetty	SON	1	RAR,BGr Possible vegae, heavily mottled
✓ Glaucous-winged Gull	12/18/05	Delta Pond	SON	1	BDP
Forster's Tern	1/1/06	Bodega Harbor	SON	30+	RAR,BGr,DF,mob

✓ Marbled Murrelet	1/22/06	off Bodega Head	SON	30	L&CLi
✓ Short-eared Owl	12/5/05	Skaggs Island	SON	1	AWgh
✓ Short-eared Owl	12/4/05	Skaggs Island	SON	2	AWgh
Snowy Owl	1/13-14/06	Liberty Island Rd	SOL	1	AWgh, SH, Eli, mob found by Joan Humphrey
✓ Long-eared Owl	1/1/06	Coleman Valley Rd	SON	2	DShw
✓ Loggerhead Shrike	12/26/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	4	BDP,JP
Northern Shrike	1/7/06	Pleasants Valley Rd	SOL	1 imm.	AL, AWgh,RROS
Steller's Jay	12/01/05-1/6/06	Glen Ellen yard	SON	2	JS fide Bbu First time in 35 years
Blue Jay	1/14-17/06	near Fairfield	SOL	1	AWgh, SH, Eli,RAR
California Thrasher	12/18/05	Lake Ralphine	SON	1	RAR calling
Mountain Bluebird	12/28/05	Lake Berryessa	NAP	1	BDP,JP County bird for Mike!
✓ Barn Swallow	12/31/05	Carmody Road south pond	SON	1	AWgh
✓ Tree Swallow	12/10/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	15	BDP
✓ Tree Swallow	12/23/05	Hudemann Slough	SON	125	BDP, JP
Tree Swallow	12/25/05	Shollenberger Park	SON	4	BDP,JP
Ovenbird	1/15-22/06	SE of Davis	SOL	1	AWgh, mob
Painted Bunting	1/9/06	feeder on Joy Rd	SON	1m	CBu fide BBU
✓ Vesper Sparrow	1/22/06	Tubbs Island	SON	1	DShw
Swamp Sparrow	12/7/05	Point Reyes	MRN	1	BDP near Johnson Oyster Works
Swamp Sparrow	12/18/05	Delta Pond	SON	1	BDP
White-throated Sparrow	12/18/05	Lake Ralphine area	SON	1	RAR tan stripe
White-throated Sparrow	12/15/05	Gull Campground	SON	1	DF
Dark-eyed Junco	12/18/05	Lake Ralphine area	SON	2	RAR Slate-colored, 1 male & 1 female

Observers: Sara Blauman, Len Blumin, Carol Burgoa, Betty Burrige, Bob Dyer, Dea Freid, Betty Groce, David & Denise Hamilton, Shelly Hernandez, Jean & John Hubbard, Lisa Hug, Andy LaCasse, Bill Lenarz, Eric Lichtwardt, Les & Cindy Lieurance, B.D. (Mike) Parmeter, John Parmeter, Rhio Reigh, Ruth Rudesill, Janni Schafer, Doug Shaw, Sonoma Valley CBC, Rich Stallcup, Laurence Taylor, Jean Tonascia, Alan Wight

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(Field Trip Report Continued from page 2)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Western Bluebird, American Robin, Wrentit, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Lark Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Tricolored Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch.

Alan Wight

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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
Vice President	Jim Castle	900 Civic Center Dr., Rohnert Park	94928	wldfbio@yahoo.com	585-8617
Secretary	Rhio Reigh	1640 Austin Way, Santa Rosa	95404	rhioleigh@juno.com	579-3400
Treasurer	Jack Harper	P. O. Box 5254, Santa Rosa	95402	jharpertrustee@sbcglobal.net	542-1542

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 Burrige	1653 Arroyo Sierra Way, Santa Rosa	95405	bburridge@sbcglobal.net	527-0225
Hospitality	Adeene Nelligan	29 Sequoia Circle, Santa Rosa	95401		523-1116
Membership	Gwendolyn Toney	1992 Windmill Cir. Santa Rosa	95403	Gwendolyn@sonomawestholdings.com	824-2534

Kite Tales Deadlines: Submit Observations to Ruth Rudesill by February 20th, all other items to Editor Betty Burrige by February 25th

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.

2005 Christmas Bird Count on Jan 1, 2006 – Betty Burrige

What is it like to participate in a Christmas Bird Count with mudslides and rising waters threatening access to and within the area to which you have been assigned? Think adventure!

The first challenge was getting to our territory at Bodega Bay. The only passable bridge over the Laguna de Santa Rosa was Guerneville Rd. However, I water was already onto, but not quite yet across the roadbed. Hmm! Could we get back home later via this route? Who do we know in Bodega Bay that we can bunk with tonight? Never mind. Duty calls. The birds will be counted.

Next challenge was finding our team. We were 1/2 hour late. Our leader, Ian Morrison, was stranded at home by raging Sonoma Creek that removed his driveway. Amazingly everyone else who was expected showed up. Plus two unexpected and very valuable last minute volunteers.

Then we really had to deal with the weather. After an initial 5 minute respite from the storm, driving rain and gale force winds moved in and kept us isolated in our vehicles. Almost all of the birds wisely hunkered down in whatever shelter they could find. A few stalwarts floated uncertainly on the waters of the harbor.

We developed a somewhat useful technique of placing our cars between the wind and any exposed birds, so that we could at least have a chance to look at and ID some birds through partially opened windows. Windshield wipers were occasionally useful between downpours.

Then the tide came in. Not just any ordinary high tide, but a seven footer that was predicted to be the highest of the year. It fulfilled its promise by combining with 1 – 2 foot waves, pushed by 40 mph winds, that crashed onto and across harbor-rimming Bay Flat Rd. We drove through by timing the waves and crossing our fingers.

Well, it was noon and we headed to the Tides Snack Bar for lunch. The winds there were so strong that I was nearly blown off my feet getting to the front door. Inside, we were relieved to find a counter that we had become separated from in all the fray, and spray. There she was comfortably seated at a table, Irish Coffee in hand! Clearly she was the most sensible person on our team!

We returned to Santa Rosa after lunch via Sebastopol, Hwy 116 to Cotati, and then Hwy 101 N. to a pot of hot tea and a fire in the fireplace.

The most 'numerous' birds that we saw? First were gulls, second were Buffleheads (ducks), and third were Red Phalaropes, normally rare seabirds that are seldom seen on land.

The list of the most common birds we did NOT see includes mallard, chickadee, bushtit, woodpecker, robin, cormorant, thrush, fox and song sparrow, hummingbird, hawk, turkey vulture, killdeer, junco, kinglet, house sparrow and house finch.

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EVERY FIELD TRIP AND CHRISTMAS COUNT AN AUSPICIOUS OCCASION!

The word **auspicious**, meaning giving promise of success, prosperity, or happiness; prosperous, or fortunate, derives from Latin Auspicium, "an omen, a sign," from auspex, "one who looks at the habits of birds for purposes of divination," from avis, "bird" + specere, "to look, to look at."

From <http://www.Dictionary.com/WordoftheDay>.

On the lighter side!

Bird watchers top my honors list.
I tried to be one, but I missed.
Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,
My aim turned out to be erratic,
And I, bespectacled and binocular,
Exposed myself to comment jocular.
We don't need too much bird lore, do we,
To tell a flamingo from a towhee;
Yet I cannot, and never will,
Unless the silly bird stands still.
And there's no enlightenment in a tour
Of ornithological literature.
Is yon strange creature a common chickadee,
Or a migrant alouette from a Picardy?
You rush to consult your Nature guide
And inspect the gallery inside,
But a bird in the open never looks
Like its picture in the birdie books -
Or if it once did, it has changed its plumage
And plunges you back into ignorant gloomage.
That is why I sit here growing old by inches
Watching the clock instead of finches,
But sometimes I visualize in my gin
The Audubon that I audibin. OGDEN NASH!
(with thanks to Ted Eliot for this thought!)

KITE TALES

1992 Windmill Circle
Santa Rosa CA 95403

February 2006

