



Kite Tales

Volume 49 Number 4

December 2013

RROS General Meeting
December 12, 2013, 7:00pm
Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant

Members' Media Night - Members are encouraged to bring photos, paintings, videos and other images of birds and birding events to share. We have many talented members who provide a terrific show. There will be a powerpoint projector, speakers, a screen and a laptop computer at the site.

Directions to the monthly meeting:

From Hwy, take Hwy 116 West 101 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 the left.



American Bittern at Spring Lake
by Colin Talcroft

Dinner before November General Meeting : This month, join us at **5:30pm** at the **Outback Steakhouse**, 4619 Redwood Dr., Rohnert Park. Take the Golf Course Exit from Highway 101. The restaurant is located at the north end of the Wal-Mart Center just west of Hwy 101.

Save the Date: Thursday, January 9th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Jackie Sones, a naturalist at the UC Davis Bodega Marine Laboratory, will speak about the history of Bodega Head and the local bird research conducted at the Marine Laboratory.

FIELD TRIPS – December 2014, and beyond:

December 15, Sunday: RROS Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count. All wishing to participate, please contact your previous area leaders, or **compiler, Bill Doyle:** shortbill@comcast.net. Compilation dinner will be held again this year at Coco's Restaurant, on Farmer's Lane, 5:00pm.

January 11, Saturday: Visit highlights of the Mendocino County coast, led by local expert and noted nature photographer, Ron LeValley. With luck we might see famous Big Al, the Laysan Albatross, if he returns to Punta Arena Cove. We will also visit the Point Arena lighthouse, Van Damme State Park, picturesque Mendocino town (and headlands), Fort Bragg, and MacKerricher State Park. We have high hopes for Gray Jay, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Black Scoter, Rock Sandpiper, and Ancient Murrelet. It is a two hour drive to our starting point. Meet 7:30 AM to carpool at Sebastopol P&R; meet Ron at Punta Arena Cove ca. 9:30 AM. Added bonus: visit Ron's photography studio in Fort Bragg. Return via SR 20 or 128 through Cloverdale. Heavy rains cancel.

January 25, 2014: Willowside Trail and Delta Pond and, if it can be arranged, Guy Smith's "Georgetown" movie set and resident **Black Hawk.** Meet at south side of Willowside Rd. bridge, Santa Rosa, at 8:00am. Bill Doyle, leader. Heavy rains cancel.

February 1, 2014: Wintering Raptors and Waterfowl of Solano and Yolo, 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM, Terry Colborn, leader. The open agricultural lands of Solano and Yolo Counties provide excellent foraging habitat for scores of wintering raptors, while the wetlands of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area are the winter home for thousands of waterfowl including ducks, geese, swans and many shorebirds. This all-day field trip will visit several local winter habitat search of Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Merlin, Prairie Falcon, Burrowing, Barn and Great-horned Owls, Long-billed Curlews, as well as the elusive and threatened Mountain Plover. We also expect to see a representative sampling of waterfowl and a variety of shorebirds at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, a.k.a. the Vic Fazio Refuge. Participants meet the leader at 8:00 AM in Dixon in the southwest corner of the Wal-Mart parking lot located on East Dorset Drive at the Hwy 113 exit off I-80. Bring a lunch/snacks and liquids; dress in layers. Heavy rains cancel. For questions or more info, contact Terry Colborn, field trip leader at 916.705.8991; www.TLCBirding.com.

Forthcoming for spring: Gulls of the Sonoma County coast; Armstrong Redwoods/King Ridge Rd.; Pine Flat Rd./Mayacamas Sanctuary.

Your additional suggestions are most welcome (contact Hunn at enhunn323@comcast.net).

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:**Bodega Bay, September 28th**, led by Dan Nelson-

This very well-attended field trip, led by one of our most respected local birders, covered the Bodega Bay environment thoroughly, and produced nearly 85 species seen. Stand out birds were **Northern Waterthrush**, and **Tropical Kingbird**.

Participants: Dan Nelson (leader), Bob McLean, Orion O'Connor, Brook O'Connor, Don Simborg, Madeleine Simborg, Mookie Fudenberg, Don Kirker, Jean Futzhand, Len Blumen, Patti Blumen, Rita Bevans, Bill Bevans, Gloria Markowitz, Richard Merriss, Art Sturgis, Denise Herzberg, Ellen Bingel, Helen Kochenderfer, Steve Kenyon, Grace Harris, and Fernando Dizon.

Pope Valley, November 19th, Leader, Ruth Rudesill

Despite the reports of rain, we didn't have ANY from the time we left the meeting spot until the mid-afternoon when the trip ended (the sun even showed briefly). Everyone who feared the weather missed a fantastic field trip! We observed over 80 species from Lake Hennessey, along Chiles-Pope Valley Road. Lake Berryessa and East Side Road was awesome!!

Thank you to Gene Hunn and Don McCarthy for braving the weather for this great trip!

Highlights: over 2 dozen Lewis's Woodpecker, 3 Yellow-billed Magpies, Cackling Geese, 4 adults Bald Eagles, adult Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Rock Wrens, Loggerhead Shrikes, White-throated Sparrow, Redhead, and Hooded Mergansers.

Species: Cackling Goose, Canada Goose, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, California Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Double-cr Cormorant, Am White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Coot (zillion), Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Acorn Woodpecker, Lewis's Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Am Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Mockingbird, Hutton's Vireo, American Pipet, W Scrub-jay, Yellow-billed Magpie, Am Crow, Common Raven, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, Wh-breasted Nuthatch, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren, Ruby-cr Kinglet, Wrentit, Am Robin, Hermit Thrush, Western Bluebird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-cr Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Western Meadowlark (many), Purple finch, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch.

Sonoma Coast, Saturday, November 23, 2013. Leader, Gene Hunn

Participants:



The Redwood Region Ornithological Society gull id fieldtrip started off with a bang as a juvenile YELLOW-BILLED LOON was spotted about 8:15 AM opposite the horse trailer lot on Bay Flat Road. I got a good look just before the crowd showed up for the field trip. It had meanwhile drifted south into the distance but we were able to relocate it about 9:30 AM visible from the Pot-o-Bodega lot across the harbor near the Westside Marina. We attempted to get a closer look but it could not be relocated on that side of the harbor. Hope it will stick around. Lots of Common Loons in the harbor and dozens or more Pacific Loons and quite a few Red-throated Loon offshore.

Lots of other winter waterfowl had returned to Bodega Harbor, including Greater and Lesser Scaup, Buffleheads, and Ruddy Ducks, plus a few Common Goldeneyes.

We then birded Bodega Head (Surfbirds, Black Turnstones, and oystercatchers), where we all gathered for a group photo shoot, which should allow an accurate count of participants, which seem to number well above twenty! Next stop: the beaches at the mouth of Salmon Creek where a few hundred gulls had congregated, allowing close studies.

We then enjoyed a scenic lunch stop at Duncan's Landing, which provided more oystercatchers and Surfbirds, many more Pacific Loons and Surf Scoters, a Red-necked Grebe or two, a few Common Murres, a Pigeon Guillemot, and a pair or two of Marbled Murrelets offshore. After lunch we continued north to Goat Rock beach at the mouth of the Russian River opposite Jenner for more gulling.

Our total list for the trip included eight gull species including excellent looks at adult and 1st cycle individuals of Western, Glaucous-winged, California, Ring-billed, Mew, Herring, and Thayer's Gulls plus hybrid Glaucous-winged x Western and Glaucous-winged x Herring Gulls. These were best studied standing on the sand at the two river mouths. One immature

Heermann's Gull was spotted flying south off Bodega Head. Also four Forster's Terns were a bit of a surprise at the end of the trip off Doran Spit.

We enjoyed a clean sweep of the grebes (six species) and cormorants (three species), a single latish flock of Brown Pelicans cruised south and a distant Ancient Murrelet was spotted off Bodega Head. Lots of Brant had just returned to Bodega Harbor and there were two Snow Geese at Jenner, a possible female Barrow's Goldeneye on the Russian River, and a few Red-breasted Mergansers here and there.

Scans of the ridges at our back turned up a distant Ferruginous Hawk and a Peregrine Falcon among the Turkey Vultures.

A fine day to be birding!

Observations: 10/21 - 11/20, 2013

Compiled by David A. Hofmann

Species	Date/s Location	County.	#	Observer/s	Notes
Snow Goose BDP	10/23-11/16/13	Salmon Creek area	SON	1	BiG, Br&OrO, LiH,DAH,
Snow Goose	10/25/13	Kenwood Winery	SON	4	KaM
Ross's Goose	10/24/13	Lucchesi Pk	SON	1	EuH, mob 14 yrs res
Redhead	10/28/13	Bodega harbor	SON	1 m	EuH
Redhead	10/29-11/9/13	Salmon Crk ponds	SON	1 m	Br&OrO, LiH, BDP,
Redhead	11/3-9/13	Hudeman Slough	SON	1-2	BiD, HeK, AlH, AlW
Black Scoter	10/21/13	Bodega Head	SON	1 f	ScC
Black Scoter	11/15/13	Bodega Head	SON	2	ScC
Black Scoter	11/20/13	Campbell Cove	SON	1 m	LiH
Long-tailed Duck	11/8/13	Bodega Head	SON	1	ScC
American Bittern	10/27/13	Tolay Lake RP	SON	1	EuH, mob
American Bittern	10/29/13	Spring Lake RP	SON	1	BiD, HeK, CoT
Ferrug. Hawk	10/20-30/13	Delta Pond	SON	1	BrW
Ferruginous Hawk	10/25-11/18/13	E. Railrd Ave	SON	1-3	KeW, BeO, , mob
Ferruginous Hawk	11/5/13	Hwy 116	SON	2	JaH
Ferruginous Hawk	11/6/13	Jenner Headlands	SON	14	DaB, mob
Rough-legged Hawk	11/6/13	Jenner Headlands	SON	1	DaB, KaM, mob
Prairie Falcon	11/2-13/13	Hudeman Slough	SON	1	EvC, DaW, mob
Prairie Falcon	11/7/13	Riverside RP	SON	1	CoT, MAS Fld Trp, mob
Pacific Golden Pl	10/26-11/2/13	Doran RP	SON	1	JaS, BDP, DAH, MaB
Ruff	10/31-11/9/13	Hudeman Slough	SON	1	EuH, mob
Parasitic Jeager	10/21/13	Bodega Head	SON	2	ScC
Heermann's Gull	10/24/13	Lucchesi Pk	SON	1	EuH unusual location
Caspian Tern	11/6/13	Doran RP	SON	2	LiH, mob 1ad ljuv late
Elegant Tern	10/26/13	Doran RP	SON	1	BDP, JaS, DAH, MaB
Ancient Murrelet	11/15-19/13	Bodega Head SP	SON	8	ScC, ROD, JeL
Ancient Murrelet	11/18/13	Doran RP jetty	SON	1	LiH, DeF, RuT
Lewis's WP	10/20-11/5/13	Crane Creek RP	SON	1	CrR, EuH, JaH
Western Wood-Pewee	10/26/13	Campbell Cove SP	SON	1	DAH, BDP, MaB late
Tropical Kingbird	10/26-31/13	Campbell Cove SP	SON	1	MaB, BDP, DAH, DeF
Palm Warbler	10/22/13	Bodega Head SP	SON	1	JaS
Palm Warbler	11/8-10/16	Salmon Cr, Bean Ave	SON	1	ScC,RAR,DAH,BDP,MaB
Blck-thrtd Bl WA	10/21-22/13	Owl Canyon	SON	1 m	ScC, JaS, mob
Clay-colored SP	11/12/13	Salmon Cr, Bean Ave	SON	1	LiH, mob

Swamp Sparrow	11/16/13	Salmon Cr, Bean Ave	SON	1	LiH, DAH, BDP, MaB
Swamp Sparrow	11/16/13	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	1	CoT, MAS Field Trip,
Tri-colored Blackbird	11/14-16/13	Chanslor Ranch	SON	9	AIW, BDP, MaB, DAH
White-thrted SP	10/21-11/5/13	Owl Cyn	SON	1-2	ScC, DAH, mob

Observers for this period: Dave Barry, Margaret Barson, Tony Briggs, Scott Carey, Bill Doyle, Jules Evens, Dea Freid, Bill Grummer, Al Hesla, David A. Hofmann, Jared Hubbell, Lisa Hug, Eugene Hunn, Helen Kochenderfer, Jeri Langham, Kathy Mugele, Rob ODonnell, Becky Olsen, Brook and Orion O'Connor, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Ruth Ann Rudesill, Jackie Sones, Colin Talcroft, Ruth Tonascia, Brian Webb, Alan Wight, Dan Williams, Ken Wilson,

The compiler apologizes and takes full responsibility for omissions or errors regarding this list.

"PISHING with PARMETER" SOOTY (BLUE) GROUSE

During the late 1960's and early 1970's I heard rumors of Blue Grouse (now Sooty Grouse) in the area of Skaggs Springs Road, but had never actually spoken to someone who had seen or heard the bird. Jack and Betty Guggolz, while doing a botanic survey west of Cloverdale for the Corps of Engineers prior to the filling of Lake Sonoma, heard grouse. This was at Thompson Ridge, 4/19/79. They returned to the same area on 4/15/80 and heard 3 birds "booming", and saw an additional bird.

It wasn't until 4/4/81 that son, John, and I went to Thompson Ridge with Jack Guggolz. Three birds were heard "booming." I looked west and saw Rock Pile Road. On the same day we birded Rock Pile Road and recorded 6 birds. A trip to the same place on 4/9/83 showed 14 birds. Doug Ellis took up the challenge, began surveying for this species, and found it to be present on Meyers Grade, King Ridge Road, Tin Barn Road, and the areas of Seaview, Annapolis, and Skaggs Springs Road. The earliest day it has been noted "booming" is 2/14/95, and the latest is 6/27/88. Both the latter records are by David Hofmann. The Sonoma County Breeding Bird Atlas lists no confirmed nesting, 1 probable, and 2 possible.

Grinnell and Wyeth, in The Directory to the Bird-Life of the San Francisco Bay Region, note birds occurring in Bodega (1854), in the "Russian River Mountains" (1860), and near Seaview (1915).

The best way to locate the bird is to drive along King Ridge Road and listen near the Douglas Fir trees at the top of the ridge. The voice is very low pitched and difficult for some people to hear.

As recently as 9/26/09, while doing a PRBO Big Day, we recorded a female with 3 grown young, 3 birds together, and another 2 together, for a total of 9 birds. My most recent observation was on 3/10/12 when a bird was heard on King Ridge Road just before the farm.

Solstice Tale

It was December 22, 1926. Sammy Linder stepped out of the warm kitchen into the mudroom, on his way out to the wood shed. He checked the outdoor bulb thermometer through the frosted window...16 below...about normal for Northern Montana at the end of December. He pulled on his jacket, fur hat, and gloves, and stepped into his pacs. The air outside was still and clear; the sun just rising through the bare trees across the lake.

Reaching for the door latch of the shed, he noticed a fluffy lump in a small depression, below the birch that guarded the door. A redpoll on its side, still, dead or alive, Sammy couldn't tell. He put the tiny bird in his pocket, and picked up an armload of wood. Back in the kitchen, he dropped the wood into the bin, and held the bird out to his mother, who was rolling out a pie crust on the big kitchen table.

"Oh, the sweet thing", she said, "put it in a little box on the hearth, and see if we can warm it back to life."

Three hours later, the redpoll was not only alive, it was lively, hopping around in the box, and even pecking at the bit of seed that Sammy had sprinkled in. Sammy knew from long training that his family did not make pets of found wild animals, and that it was time for the bird to go back outside to fend for itself. Back out at the birch, he opened his hands; the bird looked back at him, and then flew strongly up to a high branch and began to chip. Sammy smiled, but as he turned toward the house, he was startled by a close swooshing of wings, and spun around to see a pygmy owl snatch the redpoll off its perch, and fly with it to an old snag by the lake shore. Sammy, shocked, burst into tears, and ran for the house.

His mother was just slipping the huckleberry pie into the oven. She hugged Sammy into her flour-dusted apron, then sat in front of him, holding both his hands. Sammy's dad had heard the teary story, and stood listening by the door of the den

"Sammy", she said, "I know it seems unfair. You can't help feeling that that lovely little bird was yours, after you coaxed it back to life. But what do you suppose that owl would think, if he could think the way we do? Don't you think that you might be its hero just now, and that he might think that that redpoll was the best solstice gift he could ever get?"

Sammy looked at his mom, and tried to smile, but couldn't bring it off. He hugged his mom again, and wandered into the front room, to sit in front of the fire. He didn't see his dad's wink above his head, as he passed by.

At the table, after grace, Sammy watched his dad carve the solstice goose, and a thought came to him.

"So, Dad," he said, "is it like we're the owl, and the goose is the redpoll?"

"You got it, Sam," said his dad, "how 'bout a leg for you?"

~Bill Doyle

RROS Raffle:

Grand Prize is a limited edition, numbered and signed print by wildlife artist Keith Hansen from his book, "Birds of the Sierra Nevada." The winner may choose the print. Other prizes

include a photo by Tom Reynolds, Lisa Hug's "Feather Watcher" DVD and Percy Taverner's "Birds of Western Canada."

The drawing will be held December 15th at the Christmas Bird Count dinner. You need not be present to win.

Tickets are \$5 each and 5 for \$20. To order tickets, send a check to Don Howard, Treasurer; 979 Hogwarts Circle; Petaluma, CA 94954. Tickets will also be available at RR0S meetings and at the bird count dinner.

Redwood Region Ornithological Society (www.rr0s.org) 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, at 7:00 pm at the Laguna Waste Water Treatment Plant, 4300 Llano Road, Santa Rosa California, unless otherwise announced. Dues are \$20 per family, \$15 per individual or \$5 per student for a one-year membership. Send dues to RR0S Treas. Don Howard, 979 Hogwarts Circle, Petaluma CA 94954.

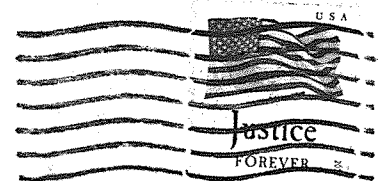
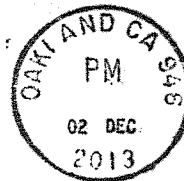
RR0S Officers

President - Bill Doyle-	1966 Belmont Ct, Santa Rosa, 95404	shortbill@comcast.net	483-8773
Vice Pres - Terry Haag-	1340 Big Plum Dr, Sebastopol, 95472	teresitahaag@comcast.net	823-8527
Secretary - Mike Nelligan-	4663 Sullivan Way, Santa Rosa, 95409	mnbudymn@sonic.net	539-1897
Treasurer - Don Howard-	979 Hogwarts Circle, Petaluma, 94954	binkvbunji2@comcast.net	637-0868

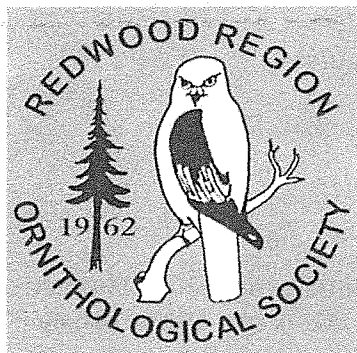
Committee Chairs

Field Trips - Gene Hunn	Petaluma, 94954.....	enhunn323@comcast.net	981-7301
Observations- David Hofmann	2021 Pioneer Wy #47, Santa Rosa, 95403	nnamfoh@comcast.net	546-0325
Christmas Bird Count - Bill Doyle-	1966 Belmont Ct, SRosa, 95404	shortbill@comcast.net	483-8773
Kite Tales - Bill Doyle	1966 Belmont Ct, Santa Rosa, 95404	shortbill@comcast.net	483-8773

Kite Tales Deadlines: Submit observations to David Hofmann, all other items to Bill Doyle by the 20th of the month.



KITE TALES
979 Hogwarts Circle
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