



Kite Tales

Volume 50 Number 9

May 2015



Ash-throated Flycatcher, Pine Flat Rd., by Will German

**RROS General Meeting,
May 13, 2015 5:30 p.m.,
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park,
Picnic Area**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2015- Annual
Spring Potluck:** Sugar Loaf Ridge State
Park. Take Adobe Canyon Rd. off Hwy
12, south of Oakmont, into the park.
Meet at the picnic area across from the
main parking lot at **5:30 pm.**

Save the date: Join us on Wednesday, September 9, 2015, for the fall season kickoff meeting and potluck, at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park, at 5:30 pm. See directions in May potluck announcement, above.

FIELD TRIPS – May 2015, and beyond:

May 9, 2015, Saturday: King Ridge Road. Leader is Bill Doyle. Meet at the bakery on the south side of Hwy 116 in Duncan's Mills at 7:30 a.m. This is a great spring trip which should have some nice wildflowers. We'll be on the lookout for all land birds. Possible highlights are American Dipper, Mountain Quail and Sooty Grouse. Bring lunch, snacks, optics, sunscreen, layers, hats. We can carpool from Duncan's Mills. Heavy rain cancels.

May 23, 2015, Saturday: Pine Flat Road. Leader is Don Kirker. This is our last official field trip of the season. Pine Flat Road has wonderful rare wildflowers, great butterflies and terrific birds. All the spring nesting species should be in. Meet 7:30 a.m. at Pine Flat Road, on the side of the road, near the bridge. From Hwy 101, take Dry Creek exit to Healdsburg Av to Alexander Valley Road, past the Jimtown store, to Pine Flat Road. Bring optics, field guides, water, lunch, sunscreen, hats. Heavy rain cancels.

June 5-7, 2015, Friday through Sunday: Sierra Valley and Yuba Pass. This area is one of the most diverse and birdy areas of the California Sierra Nevada. The first weekend in June should be optimal for singing montane nesters, given the drought. There is an excellent NFS campground at Cottonwood Creek, 4.5 miles south of Sierraville, along CA-89 and just 20 miles north of Truckee and I-80. We prefer the rightmost campsite loop from the entrance. The campground is usually quiet and very birdy, with Common Nighthawks and a nice mix of montane birds, including Calliope Hummingbird, Hammond's and Dusky Flycatchers, pewees, warblers, and woodpeckers, to greet you at dawn or dusk. Last year a Flammulated Owl called all night near our campsites.

Hotel accommodations in the Sierra Valley area are limited. Two very rustic options are the Sierra Valley Lodge, in Calpine, and the Golden West Saloon and Motel, in Loyalton. There are also many options in all styles and price ranges around Graeagle, in the north end of the valley, which can be accessed through Google. It would also be possible to stay in Truckee and commute via CA-89 to Sierra Valley (30 minutes). The café in Sierraville is excellent for breakfast and dinner. There is also a decent Mexican restaurant in town, the Dos Hermanos, which would be a convenient gathering point at the end of the day, with an evening campfire gathering for campers.

The official tour will begin at the Donner Camp Historical Site, on Hwy 89, just north of Truckee, at 9 AM Friday, and will conclude in the early afternoon Sunday near Truckee.

Key birding areas we plan to explore include:

- 1) We plan to begin at the Donner Camp Historical Site, 2.8 miles north of Truckee (Williamson's Sapsuckers nest here); a side trip to Perezzo Meadows might turn up nesting Willow Flycatcher and certainly the *oriantha* race of the White-crowned Sparrow.
- 2) Then the Sierra Valley marshes (nesting Sandhill Crane, White-faced Ibis, American Bittern, Willet, Yellow-headed Blackbird) and adjacent sagebrush flats (Swainson's Hawk, Mountain Bluebird, Sage Thrasher, Brewer's and Vesper Sparrow).
- 3) Mountain Quail Road, a side road to the west from Sierra Valley where Gray Flycatcher is possible.

- 4) Laytonville, Smithneck Road, and the Antelope Valley loop, a good spot for Lewis's Woodpecker and riparian species.
- 5) We will devote most of Saturday (meet at the Cottonwood Campground at 8 AM) to exploring the Yuba Pass area where such montane rarities as Pine Grosbeak and Black-backed Woodpeckers are possible (but by no means guaranteed). Mountain Quail, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Townsend's Solitaire, Cassin's Finch, Red-Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak are likely prospects, plus various woodpeckers and singing Fox and Lincoln's Sparrows.
- 6) We will drop down to the west from Yuba Pass to Bassett's Station to check the hummingbird feeders for Calliope's and hike the Sand Lake Loop where Green-tailed Towhee and several warbler species are likely. We might spot an American Dipper along the creek near the San Francisco State University field station just above Bassett's.
- 7) On Sunday morning (meet at Cottonwood Campground at 8 AM) we explore Frenchman Lake Road (Dipper, Canyon Wren) or we could bird our way south and east towards I-80 via Kyburz Road, Sardine Valley, and the Little Truckee River. If you plan to join us please RSVP via e-mail to Gene Hunn at enhunn323@comcast.net.

UPDATE: PELAGIC TRIPS, FALL, 2015: All Aboard! This year RROS is running two pelagic trips to the deep water hotspots of Sonoma and Marin counties, one on either end of high season. Sunday, September 6 is prime time for migrant tubenoses and Sunday, October 25 could produce some seldom seen winter specialties. To reserve space, members can send their **check, for \$140.00** per person, **to Peter**, made **payable to Don Howard**. Don won't deposit the check until after the trip. If you have any questions call or email me, though details concerning logistics and expectations will naturally be sent to all who join. **Peter Colasanti**, peter_colasanti@yahoo.com 524 East D Street, Petaluma, CA 94952-3212, (707) 763-2450

Last Call for First Pelagic Trip, September 6, 2015: Since this is the last issue of Kite Tales before our first pelagic trip of the year, it will also be the last notice sent to members at large. We've got the OK from the moderator to put out a notice on North Bay Birds, and will be seeking same from County Birders. So if you want to make sure you're on the Sunday, September 6 ride, make out a check for \$140, to our esteemed Treasurer Don Howard and send it off to me:

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Field Trip Report April 21, 2015: Six enthusiastic birders joined me on a fantastic day starting at Del Puerto Canyon Rd (Stanislaus County) ending up at Del Valle Regional Park (Alameda County) outside Livermore. The weather was awesome! We ended up with 69 species. Participants: Bill & Rita Bevans, Gary & Terry Haag, Mookie Fudenberg, Will German. Best bird of the day happened at the very beginning of the trip about 150 yards down Del Puerto Canyon Rd – CASSIN'S KINGBIRD which was a lifer for some on the trip!

Other Highlights: singing Horned Larks, Rock Wren, Lark Sparrows, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, many Western Kingbirds, nesting N Rough-winged Swallows, a singing Gr ROADRUNNER (but was unseen,) White-throated Swift, PHAINOPEPLAS, Canyon Wren and Bell's Sparrows. The Tricolored Blackbird colony was thriving once again at the pond near the top of the road.

On San Antonio Rd. we saw 2 LAWRENCE'S GOLDFINCHS and 2 LEWIS'S WOODPECKERS plus Yellow-billed Magpies. Along Mines Rd, we had more Phainopeplas. and a PRAIRIE FALCON flyover. At Del Valle Regional Park - nesting BALD EAGLE with one chick! An immature Golden Eagle and then an adult flew over being harassed by a Red-tailed Hawk.

Mookie counted 39 California Ground Squirrels too! ~**Ruthie Rudesill**

Field Trip Report, Mitchell Canyon, April 25, 2015: Seven lucky birders met leader Rick LeBaudour on a cool, cloudy morning in the Mitchell Canyon parking lot, where the action began immediately, with a lot of bird activity, and song. We moved up the trail into the canyon, stopping often to observe the many birds present, and to listen to the constant chorus of song. The birds of the day, a pair of Hammond's Flycatchers, came early, followed immediately by the first pair of many Ash-throated Flycatchers seen during the day. Other highlights were singing California Thrashers, Lazuli Buntings, and MacGillivray's Warbler. A new bird for the Mitchell Canyon list was a fly-over Double-crested Cormorant. The total species seen was 50. ~**Ed.**

RROS thanks the following members for their recent, generous donations:

Gary and Terry Haag,

William German

John & Cynthia Rathkey

Carmen Patterson

Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena

Observations: Mar. 21-Apr. 20, 2015

Compiled by David A. Hofmann

Species	Date/s	Location	County #	Observer/s
Ross' Goose	3/23-4/18/15	Ellis Crk/Shollenberger Pk	SON 2	JuE, mob
Cackling Goose	4/04/15	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON 10	BoD
Blue-winged Teal	4/06/15	Carmody Road pond	SON 1m	EuH
Harlequin Duck	3/29/15	Bodega Head St. Park	SON 1f	Dan Williams
Long-tailed Duck	3/23-4/02/15	Bodega Bay	SON 1f	DaW, WiG, mob
Red-necked Grebe	3/29/15	Bodega Head St. Park	SON 2	Dan Williams
American Bittern	4/02/15	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON 1	DaN
Swainson's Hawk	4/10/15	Laguna de Santa Rosa	SON 1	ScC
Swainson's Hawk	4/19/15	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON 1	LiH, mob
Solitary Sandpiper	4/17-19/15	No. Petaluma pond	SON 1	RoW, AlW
Sooty Grouse	3/23/15	17021 Rockpile Road	SON 1m	EuH heard only
Sooty Grouse	3/30/15	King Ridge Road	SON 1m	DaN heard only
Blck-chnnd Humm'bird	4/16/15	Petaluma yard	SON 1f	EuH
Blck-chnnd Humm'bird	4/20/15	Santa Rosa/Bennett V.	SON 1m	MoS, mob video
Calliope Hummingbird	4/03-05/15	Santa Rosa yard	SON 1m	AnO, RoO early date
Calliope Hummingbird	4/11/15	Petaluma yard	SON 1m	DaN
Rufous Hummingbird	3/30/15	Diekmann's Store	SON 1m	DeF, mob
Rufous Hummingbird	3/25/15	Petaluma yard	SON 2	DaN
Rufous Hummingbird	4/05-12/15	Occidental yard	SON 1+	MiH

Lewis' Woodpecker	3/21-4/14/15	D St. X San Antonio Rd	SON	1	DaS, mob
Lewis' Woodpecker	3/25-26/15	Oak Hill Pk/Petaluma	SON	1	DaN
Lewis Woodpecker	4/06/15	El Verano yard	SON	1	KaP
Sage Thrasher	3/29-4/03/15	Salt Point State Park	SON	1	PhB, DoS, DaN, ToB
Bell's Sparrow	4/15/15	Sugarloaf Ridge St. Pk	SON	3	DoS
Grasshopper Sparrow	4/04/15	Crane Creek Reg. Park	SON	1m	GoB, mob
Lazuli Bunting	4/16-19/15	Pine Flat Road	SON	2m	DeF, BrO, Je&ShO
Great-tailed Grackle	3/30/15	Spring Lake Reg. Park	SON	1m	EuH
Great-tailed Grackle	4/07/15	Lake Raphine	SON	1m	DeD

Observers for this period: Philip Barlow, Gordon Beebe, Tony Briggs, Debbie Drechsler, Bob Dyer, Jules Evens, Dea Freid, Will German, Mike Heffernon, Lisa Hug, Eugene Hunn, Dan Nelson, Brook O'Connor, Anne O'Donnell, Rob O'Donnell, Jeff & Sherri Oster, Kathi Province, Ruth Ann Rudesill, Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena, Doug Shaw, Dave Shuford, Dave Weber, Alan Wight, Dan Williams, Robin Winning

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

Pishing with Parmeter~ MORE ABOUT THE 1976 NE TRIP TO PERCE AND BONAVENTURE ISLAND

Our trip to the NE included a drive across Quebec to Bonaventure Island, the home of a very large breeding colony of Northern Gannets. Along the way, we picked up Pine Grosbeak, and Gray-cheeked Thrush (later Bicknell's Thrush).

To reach Bonaventure Island, we had to take a small boat from the town of Perce. As the boat pulled onto Bonaventure, there was a bird singing which I did not recognize. Gordie Bolander called out, "Mourning Warbler." When we tracked down the singer, we found that Gordie had indeed correctly identified the bird. It was a lifer for me. When I asked Gordie how he identified it (it was also a lifer for him), he said that the song so closely resembled MacGillivray's Warbler that it had to be a Mourning Warbler.

We had to hike up a cliff, and then walk across the flat top, to get to the gannet area. The great mass of birds was fenced off so that it couldn't be disturbed. There were several thousand birds! All were courting or incubating eggs, or flying to and from the island. Some young were already present; they were being fed fish which the adults brought back from the sea. It was a most impressive sight.

Other birds seen that day on the island and the nearby Perce peninsula include: Great Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Black Guillemot (then a separate species), Common Murre, Razor-billed Auk, White-winged Scoter, Atlantic Puffin, Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Eider, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, White-tailed Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee, Blackpoll Warbler, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Bay-breasted Warbler, Long-tailed Duck, Swainson's Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, and Wood Thrush.

Wonderful list of birds, enjoyed by all!

Mike~

Redwood Region Ornithological Society (www.rros.org) was organized in 1962 "to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitat." Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month September through May, at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 1515 Montgomery Ave, Santa Rosa California. Dues are \$20 per individual or family, and \$5 per student for a one-year membership. Send dues to RROS Treas. Don Howard, 979 Hogwarts Circle, Petaluma CA 94954.

RROS Officers

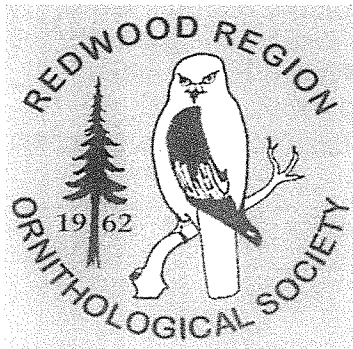
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Treasurer - Don Howard	979 Hogwarts Circle, Petaluma 94954	binkybunji2@comcast.net	637-0868

Committee Chairs

Field Trips - Gene Hunn,	204 Fair Ave., Petaluma, 94954	enhunn323@comcast.net	981-7301
Observations- David Hofmann	2021 Pioneer Wy #47 Santa Rosa 95403	nnamfoh@comcast.net	546-0325
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Kite Tales - - Bill Doyle	1966 Belmont Ct., SRosa, 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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