

KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 55, Number 4

December 2019



Red Crossbill // Courtesy of Jeff Valfer



Next RROS General Meeting
December 11th // 7 pm



What's New on the RROS Website?
Check out the Event Calendar for this year's
Christmas Bird Count dates in the area!

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SAVE THE DATE

Monthly Meeting: Wed, Dec 11th, First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr, Santa Rosa

This month's program: "Little Known Great Birding Spots in Northern California"

Ruth Rudesill will present "Little Known Great Birding Spots in Northern California". Most birders visit the famous spots: Pt. Reyes National Seashore, Bodega Bay, Golden Gate Park, Vic Fazio Yolo Wetlands, Klamath/Tulelake and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges, Monterey Bay, Arcata Marsh, etc.

But there is a growing number of lesser known spots, hidden gems for birding and scenery. Ruthie will share birding stories and discuss a few special places for those who want to travel to new exciting areas of Northern California

Some RROS'ers may know some of these spots, so bring your stories to help inspire other folks to new areas.

UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

- **Monday, Dec 2 - Point Blue Conservation "Soundscapes to Landscapes Bio Blitz" - Petaluma - 6:00pm - 8:00 pm**
Familiar with Sonoma County bird calls? Interested in learning bird calls? Comfortable using a computer?
If you answered "yes" to ANY of the above, this project is for you! We'll give you a template bird call and a batch of recordings that the computer thinks are matches, and you'll mark if the computer got it right. No experience necessary!
Monday, Dec 2nd and Tuesday, Dec 17th 6-8p.m. Point Blue Conservation Science 3820 Cypress Drive, Suite 11 Petaluma, CA 94954 Food & beverages provided!
More Information or RSVP:
Rose Snyder, Project Coordinator rsnyder@pointblue.org (707) 781-2555 x420 or visit www.soundscapes2landscapes.org
- **Monday, Dec 9 - "Birding Colombia" Special Presentation by Santiago M. Escrucerri - 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**
\$14 (non-refundable). Pre-registration required
Does December have you dreaming of a tropical birding trip, or better yet, planning one in the near future? Join us on Monday for a colorful international birding experience right at home in Heron Hall at the Laguna Foundation's facility at 900 Sanford Road with special guest Santiago Escrucerri. Santiago will share with the group a collection of photos of birds that can be seen in the areas of the Western and Central Cordilleras of Colombia, as well as discuss bird conservation and politics of conservation in Colombia
More information can be found at RROS.org
- **Saturday, Dec 14 - The CBC 4 Kids - Family Nature Walk - Spring Lake Regional Park - 10:00 am to 12:30 pm**
The CBC 4 Kids - Family Nature Walk at Spring Lake Regional Park is co-hosted by Sonoma County Regional Parks and Madrone Audubon Society. Free. Refreshments served at the Environmental Discovery Center after the walk. Dress warmly. Meet at Shady Oaks Picnic Area, 393 Violetti Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95409.
Questions: 707-241-5548 or email Susan Kirks at: susankirks@sbcglobal.net
- **Sunday, Dec 15 - The Santa Rosa Christmas Birdcount - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**
The 2019 Santa Rosa CBC will be held on Sunday, December 15.
Afterwards, everyone is welcome to attend the "no host" compilation dinner, starting around 5:00 PM at Mary's Pizza at 535 Summerfield Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95405.
For participation details, contact Bill Doyle, compiler, at shortbill@comcast.net
- **Thursday, Dec 19 - Cheep Thrills Christmas Bird Count - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**
Visit the Cheep Thrills CBC website for participation details
For participation details visit their website at cheepthrillscbc.blogspot.com
- **Friday, Dec 27 - Sonoma Valley Christmas Bird Count - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**
Contact Eugene Hunn for participation details: enhunn323@comcast.net
- **Sunday Dec 29 - Madrone Audubon's Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**
Visit Madrone Audubon Society for participation details
For participation details visit their website at madroneaudubon.org/birds-christmas-bird-count.php



PISHING with PARMETER

NEW GUINEA: TARI VALLEY AND AMBUA LODGE

We flew from Karawari Lodge to Tari valley. I was told that no westerner had been in the valley until 1937. It is located in the central highlands at an elevation

of approximately 4000 feet. After landing we proceeded over a very rough road to Ambua Lodge. This was a beautiful place located right in the rainforest. The lodge was roomy with a very nice dining room, a social room, and a drink counter. The gardens were impeccably cared for and contained many native plants. There were scattered huts which served as guest rooms. Birding on the lodge grounds was excellent.

Our first birding was in the valley, where we recorded **Great Wood-Swallow**, **Yellow-browed Melidectes**, **Rufous-backed Honeyeater**, **Slater's Whistler**, **Red-collared Myzomela**, **Friendly Fantail**, **Lawes's Parotia** (a bird of paradise), **Buff-faced Scrubwren**, **Oriental Hobby**, and **Glossy Swiftlet**.

At Ambua Lodge we observed **King-of-Saxony Bird of Paradise**, quite a bird with two long plumes coming out the back of its head. We also saw **Belford's Melidectes**, **Black-breasted Boatbill** (a flycatcher), **Blue-capped Ifrita** (acts like a creeper), **Black-throated Robin**, **Mountain Swiftlet**, **Ribbon-tailed Astrapia** (another bird of paradise), **Loria's Bird of Paradise**, **Mountain Firetail** (a finch), **Brown Quail**, **Regent Whistler**, **Wattled Ploughbill**, **Brehm's Tiger-Parrot**, and **Large Scrubwren**.

The following day we birded along a dirt road which went north through the wet forest. Birds here included **White-breasted Fruit-Dove**, **Yellow-billed Parakeet**, **Papuan Lorikeet**, **Papuan Treecreeper**, **Tit Berrypecker**, **Black-throated Honeyeater**, **Tawny Grassbird**, **Canary Flycatcher**, **Short-tailed Paradigalla** (a bird of paradise), **Plum-faced Lorikeet**, **Blue-gray**

Robin, **Madarasz's Tiger-Parrot**, **Black Fantail**, **Papuan King Parrot**, **Mountain Berrypecker**, and **Orange-billed Lorikeet**. The following day we went farther up the hill into some open grassland. This provided quite a vista of the central highlands. We saw **Dimorphic Fantail**, **Crested Berrypecker**, **Mountain Mouse Warbler**, **Superb Bird of Paradise**, and **Crested Bird of Paradise**. We then crowded into the forest in a brushy area, hoping to call in a **Chestnut-fronted Rail**. Despite the noise we made, the rail responded to a tape and promptly appeared. Also seen here were **White-winged Robin** and **Hooded Cuckooshrike**.

On the third day we went back down into the Tari Valley. The highlight of this trip was the **Blue Bird of Paradise**, one of the handsomest members of the family. Both a male and a female were seen. Other species noted were **Pygmy Honeyeater**, **Mountain Meliphaga**, and **Mountain Leaf Warbler**.

The following day we were back up at Ambua Lodge, observing **Island Thrush**, **Macgregor's Bowerbird**, **Princess Stephanie's Astrapia** (another bird of paradise), **Loria's Bird of Paradise**, **Black-billed Cuckooshrike**, **Lesser Melampitta** (at that time classified as a bird of paradise, but now in a separate family), **Papuan Logrunner**, **Black Sitella**, **Mountain Firetail**, and **Papuan Boobook** (an owl).

We flew back to Port Moresby via Mount Hagen. Our final day of birding was spent back at Virarita National Park, where we saw **Spotted Whistling-Duck**, **Rusty Mountain Warbler**, **Pale-billed Scrubwren**, and **Black Myzomela**. At the airport before leaving we spotted an **Australian Pratincole**.

The birding was so spectacular that I hated to leave. We saw 315 bird taxa, of which 185 were new for me. I had been concerned about accommodations, but all were excellent, and I got few insect bites. ■

FIELD TRIP REPORT

RROS Field Trip report - October 5th, 2019 - Pt. Reyes NS

It was a fantastic day for weather - which usually means not so good for vagrants. Eight birders participated (with two others tagging along from Virginia and Ireland!) We observed about 85 species. We had good numbers of **Townsend's Warblers** at every spot including a dozen at the Inverness Tennis Court. Lots of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** at outer point. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** as well as a cooperative **Great Horned Owl**. And excellent photo opportunities.

- Ruthie Rudesill, RROS Field Trip Coordinator



Pacific-slope Flycatcher at Drakes Beach

Editors Note: This month's newsletter features Observations spanning from September 21st through November 20th, 2019. The tables are broken up into part 1 & 2. A big thank you goes out to David A. Hofmann for handling such an extensive compilation!

OBSERVATIONS part 1

September 21, 2019 to October 20, 2019 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
White-winged Scoter	10/12/19	Bodega Head State Park	SON	3	Ma&LuS, mob (YAMS)
White-winged Scoter	10/14/19	Goat Rock Road	SON	2	LiH
Common Poorwill	10/15/19	Skaggs Island Base Housing	SON	1	MuB, mob
Common Poorwill	10/18/19	Bodega Bay yard	SON	1	BrO heard only
Blck-chnnd Hummingbrd	10/20/19	Batesole Ln Bennett Valley	SON	1f	RAR
Ridgeway's Rail	09/22/19	Hudeman Slough	SON	1	MiC heard only
Ridgeway's Rail	09/30/19	Port Sonoma	SON	1	WeD
Ridgeway's Rail	09/29/19	5686 Lakeville Hwy	SON	4	DoK, LiH, AIW, RiL
Ridgeway's Rail	10/14-18/19	San Pablo Bay NWR Rec- lamation Road	SON	1	Ma&LuS, ScS heard only
American Golden Plover	10/18-19/19	Bodega Dunes Beach	SON	1	EuH, ToB, DoK
Pacific Golden Plover	10/09/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	2	AIW, JoS photos
Pacific Golden Plover	10/17/19	Bodega Bay Tides Wharf area	SON	1	CoH
Baird's Sandpiper	09/25/19	Westside Regional Park	SON	1	JoS
Baird's Sandpiper	09/28/19	Porto Bodega, Bodega Bay	SON	1	LiH
Pectoral Sandpiper	09/21/19	Carmody Road-south pond	SON	1	CoM, EIL, Je&EvV
Pectoral Sandpiper	09/29/19	Hudeman Slough	SON	2	MaIB
Pectoral Sandpiper	09/30/19	Bird Walk Regional Park	SON	1	DoK, LiH, RiL, AIW
Pectoral Sandpiper	10/05/19	Shollenberger Park	SON	2	LiH, JiT mob photo
South Polar Skua	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	5	PeP
Parasitic Jaeger	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	1	PeP
Parasitic Jaeger	10/16/19	Bodega Head State Park	SON	1	ScC
Long-tailed Jaeger	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	1	PeP
Sabine's Gull	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	1	PeP
Common Tern	09/22/19	Bodega harbor	SON	1	MarB photo
Laysan's Albatross	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	3	PeP
Flesh-footed Shearwater	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	2	PeP
Short-tailed Shearwater	10/13/19	Pelagic trip	SON	8	PeP
Short-tailed Shearwater	10/06/19	Pelagic trip	SON	2	AlJ, mob photo
Brown Booby	10/06/19	Pelagic trip	SON	1	StH, mob poor photos
White-faced Ibis	09/22/19	Bodega Bay yard	SON	1	BrO fly-over
White-faced Ibis	09/25/19	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1	JeV
White-faced Ibis	09/29-10/15/19	Hudeman Slough	SON	3	MaIB, WeD, Je&EvV photos
White-faced Ibis	10/20/19	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	1	Mi&SuG photos
Black Vulture	09/24-10/09/19	Bodega harbor area	SON	1	Eu&NaH, MaD, JoS, JeV fly-over photo
Broad-winged Hawk	10/09/19	Jenner Headlands	SON	1	DaB photo
Barred Owl	10/05/19	Cazadero-Silvia Drive yard	SON	1	LiP
Barred Owl	10/19/19	Forestville Pocket Cyn Hwy	SON	1	JoS heard only

OBSERVATIONS part 1 continued

Burrowing Owl	10/18/19	Pepperwood Preserve	SON	1	NiB
Long-eared Owl	09/22/19	Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park	SON	1	RAR, EvV, MaIB
Long-eared Owl	10/14/19	Valley Ford-Freestone Rd yard	SON	1	JoS heard only
Short-eared Owl	09/29/19	Hudeman Slough	SON	1	LaN
Short-eared Owl	09/30/19	Cyprus Loop Bodega Bay	SON	1	BrO heard only
Northern Saw-whet Owl	09/22/19	Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park	SON	3	RAR, EvV, MaIB
Northern Saw-whet Owl	09/29/19	Salmon Creek Rd @ Fay Crk	SON	1	RiL, LiH, AIW, DoK
Lewis's Woodpecker	10/03/19	Coleman Valley Rd property	SON	1	ScC, DaS
Tropical Kingbird	09/29/19	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	DaS
Tropical Kingbird	09/29/19	Petaluma Wastewater T.Ponds	SON	1	LiH, DoK, AIW, RiL photo
Tropical Kingbird	10/07/19	Campbell Cove State Beach	SON	1	LiH, photo
Rock Wren	09/24/19	Jenner Headlands Preserve	SON	1	MiT
Red Crossbill	09/29/19	Salt Point SP-Woodside CG	SON	1	AdH
Red Crossbill	10/20/19	Valley Ford-Freestone Rd yard	SON	1	JoS heard only
Clay-colored Sparrow	09/24/19	Campbell Cove State Beach	SON	1	DaN
Clay-colored Sparrow	10/02-07/19	Valley Ford-Freestone Rd yard	SON	1	JoS, MaIB, BrO, Je&EvV, ReC, CoM photos
Scaly-breasted Munia	10/11/19	Sebastopol Cooper Road Laguna Farm	SON	1	JoS heard only
Black and White Warbler	10/14-16/19	Owl Canyon	SON	1m	DaE, ToB, EuH, ScC, DeF mob photos
Tennessee Warbler	09/21/19	Owl Canyon	SON	1	RoO, JeV
Tennessee Warbler	09/23/19	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1	EvV
Tennessee Warbler	10/08/19	Cotati @ work office	SON	1	DoK
Blackburnian Warbler	10/03/19	Moscow Road Bridge	SON	1	DaA
Chestnut-sided Warbler	09/21/19	Kenwood yard	SON	1	RAR
Palm Warbler	10/08/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	MaG, MaIB, BaK photos

.....OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD.....

David Assmann • Mario Balitbit • Nicole Barden • David Barry • Murray Berner • Malcolm Blanchard • Tony Briggs • Scott Carey • Micheal Carrozza • Reef Comer • Wendy Dandridge • Matt Davis • Daniel Edelstein • Dea Freid • Mike & Sue Gragg • Mary Grishaver • Connie Haile • Adrian Hinkle • Steve Howe • Lisa Hug • Eugene & Nancy Hunn • Alvaro Jaramillo • Barbara Kendrick • Don Kirker • Rick LeBaudour • Elizabeth Lewis • Colin Meusel • Dan Nelson • Larry Nigro • Brook O'Connor • Rob O'Donnell • Linda Petrulias • Peter Pyle • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Dave Shuford • Josh Snead • Scott Sorby • Mark & Lucas Stephenson • Jim Thomas • Teresa & Miles Tuffli • Jeff & Eva Valfer • Alan Wight

..... *Kite Tales deadline is the 20th of each month. Observations may be sent to David A. Hofmann.*

OBSERVATIONS part 2

October 21 2019 to November 20, 2019 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
White-winged Scoter	10/30/19	Bodega Head State Park	SON	1	LiH
White-winged Scoter	11/08-18/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	1f	EuH, MaB
Black Scoter	10/30/19	Bodega Head State Park	SON	1f	LiH
Tundra Swan	10/22/19	Bodega Bay-Cypress Loop	SON	5	BrO fly-over
American Golden-Plover	10/23/19	Salmon Creek Beach	SON	1	ToB
American Golden-Plover	10/21/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	De&DaH photos
White-faced Ibis	10/21/19	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	1	MaB, Te&MiT, DeS, MaG, mob
Red-shouldered Hawk	11/03/19	Bodega Bay Gafney Point with Burrowing Owl in its talons!	SON	1	MaD photo in flight
Long-eared Owl	10/30/19	Valley Ford-Freestone yard	SON	1	JoS heard only-recorded
Long-eared Owl	11/09/19	Kenwood yard	SON	1	RAR
Short-eared Owl	11/13/19	Pepperwood Preserve	SON	1	NiB photo
Northern Saw-whet Owl	11/20/19	Bodega Bay Cypress Loop	SON	1	BrO heard only
Tropical Kingbird	10/24/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	DaW
Tropical Kingbird	10/26-11/20/19	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	2	MaG, AnL, ReC, CoM, MaB, EIP, SyS, EuH, Te&MiT, WeD, BaK, MoF, EuH, WiG, CoH, RoS, MiR, Ro&AnO, EuH, DaLu, EIC, GaT photos
Tropical Kingbird	11/01/19	BML Entrance	SON	2	JoS photos
Tropical Kingbird	11/03/19	Petaluma LakevilleXMc-Dowel	SON	1	ChN
Rock Wren	11/05/19	Jenner Headlands Hawk Watch	SON	1	Te&MiT
Phainopepla	10/24-11/13/19	Sonoma Lomita Ave	SON	1m 1f	MiC, EvV, ToB, Ro&AnO, JeV, EuH, TiE, DaLe, DaLu, WiC photos
Evening Grosbeak	11/06/19	Occidental yard	SON	1m 1f	EmE
Evening Grosbeak	11/07-08/19	Keysite Technologies site	SON	4	AIW photo/audio
Red Crossbill	10/21-11/16/19	Many reports from western Sonoma County	SON	500	Many observers
Swamp Sparrow	11/03/19	Maxwell Farms Regional Park	SON	1	JeV
Palm Warbler	11/07/19	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	DeF

OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Gordon Beebe • Nicole Barden • Malcolm Blanchard • Tony Briggs • Michael Carozza • Reef Comer • William Corns • Elizabeth Crouthamel • Matt Davis • Wendy Dandridge • Tiffany Erickson • Emily Evans • Dea Freid • Mookie Fudemberg • Will German • Mary Grishaver • Connie Haile • Denise & David Hamilton • Diane Hichwa • Eugene Hunn • Barbara Kendrick • Andy Lacasse • David Leland • David Lumpkin • Colin Meusel • Christian Naventi • Brook Oconnor • Rob & Ann Odonnell • Elizabeth Peelor • Michael Rogner • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Deb Shepherd • Sylvie Silverstein • Josh Snead • Ron Storey • Gabriel Tarantino • Teresa & Miles Tuffli • Eva Valfer • Jeff Valfer • Chuck Vaughn • Danelle Waters • Alan Wight

Kite Tales deadline is the 20th of each month. Observations may be sent to David A. Hofmann.

PHOTO GALLERY



Red-breasted Nuthatch // Home Yard //
By Rob O'Donnell

"Red-breasted Nuthatches in our backyard have been very common this winter. The Red-breasted Nuthatch is an irruptive species, with obvious southward movements occurring in alternate years. Typically, the populations that breed the farthest north are the ones most likely to migrate on an annual basis, while the birds that breed further south may be resident year-round in non-irruptive years (Ghalambor and Martin 1999). Southward irruptions in Red-breasted Nuthatches have been linked to an inadequate supply of winter food due to poor cone crop production. It is not known to what extent climate affects the cone crop production on an annual basis. Info from PRBO."



Cooper's Hawk // By Rob O'Donnell



Palm Warbler // Doran Regional Park //
By Malcolm Blanchard



American Tree Sparrow // Campbell Cove, Bodega Bay //
By Rick LeBaudour



Marsh Wren // Shollenberger, Petaluma // By Teresa Tuffli



Ferruginous Hawk // Jenner Headlands // By Teresa Tuffli



▲ Snowy Plover // Doran Beach, Bodega Bay // By Dennis Luz



▲ Wilson's Snipe // Spring Lake Regional Park // By Dennis Luz



White-faced Ibis // Ellis Creek Petaluma // By Teresa Tuffli



Killdeer // Ellis Creek, Petaluma // By Rob O'Donnell



Northern Fulmar // October Pelagic Trip, Bodega Bay //
By Rick LeBaudour



Sooty Shearwater // October Pelagic Trip, Bodega Bay //
By Rick LeBaudour



Rhinoceros Auklet // October Pelagic Trip, Bodega Bay //
By Rick LeBaudour



Gadwall // Ellis Creek, Petaluma // By Teresa Tuffli



Red-footed Booby // Chrissy Field, SF //
By Rob O'donnell



Heermann's Gulls // Russian Gulch // By Teresa Tuffli



ABOUT RROS

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 Wednesday of each month October through April, at 7 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr, Santa Rosa.

Sept & May meetings are held outside at 5:30pm.

Annual dues are \$20 per individual, \$25 per family, and \$5 per student.

Dues can be sent to RROS Treasurer Rob O'Donnell, 421 St. Mary Place, Santa Rosa, CA 95409

Visit us on the web at www.RROS.org

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