

KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 56 Number 6

February 2021



Hammond's Flycatcher 📷 Rick LeBaudour



Next RROS General Meeting
February 10th // 7:00 pm



What's New on the RROS Website?

If you missed January's RROS meeting and "Wildlife of Paraguay" presentation by John Sterling, watch it all now at our "Virtual Meetings" page!

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SAVE THE DATE

February Virtual Membership Meeting: Wednesday, February 10th via Zoom , 7 pm

This month's presentation will be streamed live to all members with internet access. Streaming via Zoom will allow virtual attendance for many who otherwise could not attend in person, even pre-COVID!

This month's virtual program: Female Duck Identification with Lisa Hug



Winter is a fun time of year to look at ducks and other waterfowl. We love looking at colorful male Cinnamon Teal, and gaudy male Surf Scoters. But, do we take the time to study the female ducks? In this presentation, we will go over the confusing female dabbling and the female scoters.

About the speaker: Lisa Hug has been teaching birding classes through College of Marin, Petaluma Adult School, and various other venues throughout Sonoma and Marin Counties for over 20 years. Her proudest accomplishment is collaborating with RROS to form the youth group "YAMS" or Young Ancient Murrelets, which is now its own chapter in RROS.

TO "JOIN" THE ZOOM MEETING

- 1) click on the "Join Zoom Meeting" link provided in the email sent by RROS. To protect the security of the meeting, this link will not be posted on the RROS website. The meeting is open to both RROS members and non-members. A non-member MUST contact Anne O'Donnell (auodonnell@gmail.com) to "register" their email contact info for the meeting (will be used ONLY for the purpose of verifying a friendly person).
- 2) Follow the prompts to download and run ZOOM and/or to ensure that you have the current version of the ZOOM app.
- 3) Enter the meeting ID NUMBER*, if prompted. Enter the PASSCODE*, if prompted.
- 4) Click to "join the audio conference". Once in the meeting, you may click on the "START VIDEO" or "JOIN VIDEO" button to Zoom yourself into the conference.
- 5) Once the presentation starts, please select the "mute" button to block audio from your station. At any time during and/or at the conclusion of the presentation, click on the "CHAT" button at the bottom of the screen to type in any comments or questions.

Trouble Shooting:

If the presenter and slides are blocked by the "windows" of other participants, click on "hide video panel", on the TOP RIGHT of your screen.

If you find that you've reached the "waiting room" and can't get into the meeting, or if you've been dropped from the meeting, PLEASE contact Rob O'Donnell, identify yourself and we'll try to make sure you can join.

*More specific info will be sent in an email to all RROS members between now and the meeting time.

UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

Every year RROS sponsors a multi-day, camping birding trip outside the county in May or June. The last two years have been to Modoc County and to the Sierras in Fresno County. These trips have been great fun and have produced great birds. We're looking for suggestions where to go this year. If you have a secret birding spot you think is really great, or some place you've been wanting to bird, let us know. Anything within a day's drive.

Send your suggestions to Malcolm Blanchard at mab@mabco.com or text him at (707) 480-2210.

RROS Field Trips in the Time of COVID-19

RROS is committed to making our field trips as safe as possible and to comply with current COVID-19 regulations. One of which is to limit gatherings to twelve people or fewer. In order to guarantee that, we will be requiring reservations to attend field trips. Spaces will be allocated on a first-come basis. Priority will go to RROS members; non-members are welcome, if space allows. In addition, face masks and/or social distancing will be required.

RSVP's can be made by sending a request to Malcolm Blanchard via email at mab@mabco.com, or by texting or phoning him at (707) 480-2210.

February 27, 2021, Huichica Creek with Lucas Stephenson

Huichica Creek is a unit of the Napa-Sonoma Wildlife Area in Napa County on the border with Sonoma County. It hosts an abundance of wintering water fowl. We will be lead by Lucas Stephenson, one of the top young birders in the North Bay. Bring a mask.

For more information contact Malcolm Blanchard (707) 480-2210.

March 13, 2021, Salmon Creek Road Evening Owling

Evening owling on Salmon Creek Road with Ruthie Rudesill. Probable Northern Pygmy-Owl, Western Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Barn Owl and Saw-whet Owl. Possible Spotted Owl. There will be no calling or playing of Spotted Owl calls. Ruthie Rudesill will lead us. Ruthie has some of the best "bird ears" in the County and has great knowledge of owl calls. Owling is about hearing the birds, so please wear quiet clothing—nothing that makes noise as you move. Bring a mask.

To RSVP or more information, contact Malcolm Blanchard at (707) 480-2210.

 : Bring Lunch


 : Bring Water

 : Restrooms Not Available

 : Restrooms Available

 : Parking Fee



Short-eared Owl  Rick LeBaudour

YAMS Field Trip Report – Tolay Regional Park, January 16, 2021

On Saturday January 16th, six Young Ancient Murrelets (Johnny Urbanski, Lucas Stephenson, John King, Joseph Zeno, Bea Pezzolo and Aubrey Phipps) and a group of parents participated in an afternoon/evening field trip to Tolay Regional Park, south of Petaluma. We had an amazing time!

As we were gathering in the parking lot, Tony and Bea Pezzolo informed me that the barn door was open by a crack and they could see a **Barn Owl** in the rafters. Sure enough, the barn door was open just wide enough that we could peek through and see one perched in the rafters, without disturbing it.

That was an amazing start, and then we decided to look for the **Hammond's Flycatcher** that has been over-wintering near the yellow house. I was not very optimistic because it hadn't been reported in about six days and I looked for it briefly the day before without success. It only took a few seconds for Johnny Urbanski and Lucas Stephenson to find and identify the tiny flycatcher. Everyone got to see it.

Then, while we were happily strolling, the group was excited again. A **Prairie Falcon** was flying along the ridge and landed on a power structure for all to see! After satisfying looks at the uncommon falcon, we continued along the trail until we came

upon the sitting **Burrowing Owl** that we all hoped to see. Even if we did not see another bird, the field trip was already a roaring success.

We turned around and headed for the other trail to look for the **Mountain Bluebirds** which have delighted countless birders this winter by overwintering in the vineyard along the trail. But, they had become more secretive in recent weeks and spending more time away from the trail. So they were not guaranteed birds. But, nothing escapes this group of young eyes. We managed to see four individual – three males and a female.

Now, evening was arriving and the temperature was suddenly plummeting as the sun hid behind the western hills. But, we still wanted to see **Short-eared Owls**. As the temperature dropped, and the light dimmed, the field trip participant numbers dwindled. But those of us who stuck out the freezing temperatures in our afternoon attire of T-shirts were rewarded with the sight and sound of a Short-eared Owl. It was nearly too dark to see (in fact for some of us it was too dark), but worth shivering for in the last half hour.

Overall, it was one of my favorite field trips of all time.

- Lisa Hug, YAMS Coordinator

Sonoma Valley CBC #16, December 30, 2020 Species List (166 count day, + 4 Count Week)

Ninety-odd field observers, carefully observing Covid-19 precautions, surveyed the bird life within our 15-mile diameter circle centered off Sperring Rd. west of Sonoma. During our Zoom compilation conversation (coordinated -- thank you -- by Richard Dale of the Sonoma Ecology Center) we were certain of 158 count day species, a bit on the low side. However, in the interim as detailed reports came in from the hotspots of the Wingo-Donnell and Petaluma Wetlands-Tolay areas, plus Noah Arthur's late afternoon gull sightings and several count-week additions, we have now tallied a highly respectable 166 count-day species plus four additional Count Week species for a grand total of 170.

New for the circle: Red-necked Grebe (cw), Lesser-black-backed Gull, Hammond's Flycatcher, Mountain Bluebird.

As usual, each count records "winners" and "losers." I have taken the average of the first 15 SVCBCs (2005-2019) and the highest and lowest counts for each of the 223 (now up to 227) species recorded since 2005, then compared this year's totals by means of a ratio. A ratio greater than 1.00 indicates an above average tally; a ratio less than 1.00 a below average tally. Ratios above 2.0 are notably large (excepting species recorded in such small numbers as to defy statistical significance; these I ignore). Ratios below 0.25 are notably depressed. Numbers above the previous maxima or below previous minima (again ignoring very low incidence) are, of course, of special interest. Patterns in these statistics, however, are rarely obvious. Drought and fire likely involved somehow. You be the judge.

-Gene Hunn, CBC Coordinator

New maxima (N = 13)

Ring-necked Duck (755 v. 205), **Greater Scaup** (958 v. 624), **Common Goldeneye** (394 v. 282); **Acorn Woodpecker** (817 v. 715, perhaps the highest in the world!), **Hairy Woodpecker** (35 v. 25) [Nuttall's Woodpecker was also high but not a record, 150 v. an average of 111]; **Horned Lark** (41 v. 10, perhaps just a fluke of finding a large flock); **Oak Titmouse** (372 v. 328), **White-breasted Nuthatch** (171 v. 140); **Bewick's Wren** (89 v. 68); **Purple Finch** (81 v. 55), **Pine Siskin** (261 v. 102, not unexpected), **Lesser Goldfinch** (1189 v. 959); **Lark Sparrow** (156 v. 71).

New minima (N = 8)

Mourning Dove (108 v. 159; while collared-doves were above average at 157; competition?); **Killdeer** (111 v. 116), **Western Sandpiper** (2 v. 3 and v. an average of 352; **Least Sandpipers** were double their average at 1274; curious), **Hutton's Vireo** (6 v. 12), **American Crow** (515 v. 538), **Bushtit** (360 v. 468), **American Robin** (1466 v. 1507 and an average of 7388), and **Western Meadowlark** (544 v. 593). Other notable low counts were for **Bonaparte's Gull** (8 v. an average of 106), **Mew Gull** (17 v. 40), and **Western Gulls** (170 v. 511); **Rock Pigeon** (96 v. an average of 405; go figure); **Golden-crowned Kinglets** (3 v. an average of 20).

OBSERVATIONS

December 21, 2020 to January 20, 2021 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	I	Observer(s)
Ross's Goose	12/21/20	Ludwig Ave & S.Wright Road	SON	1	Eu&NaH
Ross's Goose	12/30/20	Ellis Creek ponds	SON	1	DaS, RoM photo
Eurasian Wigeon	12/27/20- 01/20/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	2m	BoT, JuC, RAR, ZeS, CoH, Ro&AnO, DeH, MarB, LiH, ScC, ChD, HBH, RoS, WeD, MalB, Eu&NaH photo WSCBC
Eurasian Wigeon	01/10/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trl to Delta Pd	SON	2m	MarB, BrW.StP photos
Eurasian Wigeon	01/04/21	San Pablo Bay NWR-Tubbs Is	SON	1m	WiA photo
Redhead	01/19/21	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1f	JeV
Long-tailed Duck	12/27/20- 01/18/20	Bodega harbor—Porto Bodega	SON	2	Eu&NaH, Ro&AnO, ScC, LiH, DaL, JaS, WeD, ZeS, IBM, TiE, JoK, JiK, DeS, Ma&LuS, MarB, EIL, MalB, DaS photos WSCBC
Barrow's Goldeneye	01/15/21	Porto Bodega	SON	1	TiE photos
Mandarin Duck	12/31/20- 01/02/21	Sonoma Crk-Boyes Hot Spings Riverside Drive	SON	4m 3f	Je&EvV, Ro&AnO, MalB photos
White-winged Scoter	12/26/20	Sea Ranch	SON	1	IrD
White-winged Scoter	01/11-19/21	Bodega harbor	SON	1	HBH, MalB, Ro&AnO photo
White-winged Scoter	01/15/21	Gualala Point Regional Park	SON	1	DaL
Black Scoter	12/31/20	Doran Regional Park	SON	1m	WeD
Sandhill Crane	12/21/20- 01/05/21	San Pablo Bay NWR-Tubbs Is	SON	4	ChN, MarB, Je&EvV, RoO Mal&BeB, LiH, WiA, Ri&AmB photos
Pacific Golden-Plover	12/21/20	South Salmon Creek Beach	SON	3	ZeS, DaM
Pacific Golden Plover	12/27/20	Salmon Creek mouth	SON	1	Eu&NaH photos WSCBC
Pacific Golden-Plover	12/27/20	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	RAR, BoT, JuC WSCBC
Marbled Murrelet	12/21/20- 01/20/21	Bodega Head State Park	SON	8	JoP, LiH, BDP, ScC, ZeS, IBM, Eu&NaH
Ancient Murrelet	12/23/20	Bodega Head State Park	SON	2	JoP, BDP
Rhinoceros Auklet	12/21/20- 01/15/21	Bodega Head State Park	SON	2	JoP, LiH, BDP, ZeS, IBM
Glaucous Gull	12/30/20- 01/08/21	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	NoA, WiA, NaP, MaW, LiH photos
Lesser Black-backed Gull	12/30/20	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	NoA
Northern Fulmar	12/21-23/20	Bodega Head State Park	SON	10	JoP, LiH, BDP
White-faced Ibis	01/07/21	Shollenberger Park	SON	6	WiA, NaP, MaW photos
Swainson's Hawk	01/12/21	Valley Ford- Freestone Rd	SON	1	JoS
Northern Saw-whet Owl	12/30/20	Trinity & Cavedale Roads	SON	3	RAR, DaL SVCBC
Red-naped Sapsucker	01/15/21	Forestville yard	SON	1	DaM
Red-naped Sapsucker	01/17/21	550 Salmon Crk Road	SON	1	MarB photo
Hammond's Flycatcher	12/28/20- 01/18/21	Tolay Lake Regional Park	SON	1	WeB, Eu&NaH, Ro&AnO, Je&EvV, MarB, CoM, WiA, Mal&BeB, RoS, LiH, DoK, EvV, GaP, DaL PaD, CaP, SyS, EIC, MaL, AIW, MarB, Ri&AmB, ChN, KarM, JiC, PeC, Ma&LuS, JoK, ErR, JoC, BeP, ScC, CaO photos YAMs field trip

Pacific-slope Flycatcher	01/16-19/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail-Delta Pd	SON	1	RoO, BrW
Mountain Bluebird	12/21/20-01/17/21	Tolay Lake Regional Park	SON	6	CIB, PaD, Mal&BeB, MaG, BaK, LaN, Ma&BoS, JaB, MiH, EmS, Ca&BoH, RiC, KatM, SeR, DeL, SeJ, LaR, JuC, BoT, DaS, MiB, JiT, MaW, CoM, AIW, TiE, ScC, DaW, WiA, ViV, PeC, EIC, ChN, Ri&AmB, RoS, DaS, Je&EvV, MarB, JiC, LaN, Eu&NaH, Ro&AnO, LiH, BeP, Ma&BeB, Ma&LuS, JoK, ViD, Ri&AmB photos YAMs field trip
Phainopepla	12/30/20-01/10/21	Westach Way-Schellville	SON		Ma&LuS, JuB, RAR, MarB, Mal&BeB, Eu&NaH, BoT, JuC, CoM, Ro&AnO, WiA. KeL AIW, BaK, MaG, ScC, LiH, EuH, DoK, GaP, ChN, JiC, JoS, RoS, ScT photo SVCBC
Phainopepla	12/30/20	Carriger Rd-Boyes Hot Springs	SON	1m	JuP, GoB, EuH photos SVCBC
Phainopepla	01/16/21	Sonoma Market—Sonoma	SON	1m	CaS
Red Crossbill	12/27/20	Upper Coleman Valley Road	SON	8	DaL WSCBC
Lawrence's Goldfinch	01/08/21	Jimtown-Hwy 128	SON	4	AIC
Swamp Sparrow	01/13-20/21	Ellis Creek ponds	SON	1	CrR, Eu&NaH, PeC, PaD, Ro&AnO, LiH, DaL, CoM, Mal&BeB, Je&EvV photos
Tricolored Blackbird	12/30/20-01/17/21	Mulas Dairy--Schellville	SON	1m	Ma&LuS, JuB, CoM
Rusty Blackbird	12/23-28/20	Devil Mtn Wholesale Nursery	SON	1m	ScC, JoP



OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Will Anderson • Noah Arthur • Mario Balitbit • Gordon Beebe • Wendy Beers • Rick & Ami Bergstrom • Michael Berry • Malcolm Blanchard • Malcolm & Beatrice Blanchard • Janet Bodle • Clayton Borzini • Junco Bullick • Scott Carey • Juli Chamberlin • Richared Cimino • Alex Clark • Peter Colasanti • John Colbert • Elizabeth Crouthamel • Jim Crumpler • Wendy Dandridge • Patricia DiLuzio • Iryna Dronova • Chris Dunford • Vikki Duree • Tiffany Erickson • Mary Grishaver • Connie Haile • Hugh B. Harvey • Carol & Bob Hasenick • Denise Herzberg • Michael Hingerty • Lisa Hug • Eugene & Nancy Hunn • Sean Jeane • Barbara Kendrick • John King • Jim Kirk • Don Kirker • John Klobas • Kelley Lamke • Matt Lau • Derek Lecy • David Leland • Elizabeth Lewis • Ron Mallory • Kate McCarthy • Karen Meredith • Colin Meusel • David Moring • Iza Bruen-Morningstar • Christian Naventi • Larry Nigro • Carol Oakes • Rob O'Donnell • Rob & Ann O'Donnell • Carla Parkinson • John Parmeter • Benjamin D. Parmeter • Steve Pearce • Julian Peet • Beatrice Pezzolo • Nathan Pieplow • Garrett Pierce • Sean Reynolds • Laura Revilla • Craig Roth • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Erica Rutherford • David Sexton • Des Shapiro • Dave Shuford • Sylvie Silverstein • Maria & Bob Smith • Zeke Smith • Jackie Sones • Marrk & Lucas Stephenson • John Sterling • Catherine Stone • Ron Storey • Emilie Strauss • Scott Terrill • Jim Thomason • Bob Toleno • Jeff Valfer • Eva Valfer • Jeff & Eva Valfer • Vicens Vila • Matt Walter • David Wayte • Brian Webb • Alan Wight • Matthew Willcox • Western Sonoma Christmas Bird Count • Sonoma Valley Christmas Bird Count

PISHING with PARMETER

LETICIA ON THE AMAZON RIVER : JULY 14, 1975



If you look at a map of South America, you'll notice that Columbia has a long slender strip of land that drops down to the north shore of the Amazon River. We spent close to two weeks in this area in 1975. This is the area where Van Rensen – now Professor Van Rensen of Louisiana State University – was doing his doctoral research, and we traveled with him. He knew the birds very well.

Leticia is a sleepy little city of about 5,000 people that is very close to both Brazil and Peru – from our hotel, we could easily walk to both countries. Birds seen in the city included **Neotropical Palm-Swift**, **Large-billed Tern** (on river), **Yellow-browed Sparrow**, **Dusky-headed Parakeet**, **Black-capped Mockingthrush** (now Black-capped Donacobius), **Canary-winged Parakeet**, **Scarlet-crowned Barbet**, **Cinereous Becard**, and **Black-throated Mango** (a hummingbird).

Also in the general area we saw **Short-tailed Swift**, **Chestnut-bellied Seedeater**, **Yellow-rumped Cacique**, **Black-fronted Nunbird**, **Orange-headed Tanager**, **Straight-billed Woodcreeper**, **Small-billed Elaenia**, **Sliver-beaked Tanager**, **Russet-backed Oropendola** (a large bird in the family Icteridae), **Short-crested Flycatcher**, **Gray-rumped Swift**, and **Gray-breasted Sabrewing** (another hummer).

Birding in the forest was a challenge. You could see nothing for extended periods, and then suddenly a mixed species flock with 2-3 dozen species would appear. One could not begin to identify everything. The light was poor, since very little got through the trees, and the birds were usually high and moving constantly. It was difficult birding.

Some forest and edge species included **Spot-crowned Woodcreeper**, **Tui Parakeet**, **Mouse-colored Tyrannulet**, **Spotted Tody-Flycatcher**, **Yellow-tufted Woodpecker**, **White-vented Euphonia**, **Glittering-throated Emerald** (hummingbird), **Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet**, **Ochre-bellied Flycatcher**, **Black-bellied Cuckoo**, **Plain-brown Woodcreeper**, **Paradise Jacamar**, **Magpie Tanager**, **Black-spotted Barbet**, **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Crowned Slaty Flycatcher**, **Southern Beardless Tyrannulet**, and **Red-stained Woodpecker** – all new to me.

The birding in South America is almost overwhelming. There are more than 3000 species. In 1975 there was no really good field guide. But Van Rensen seemed to know everything. I am certainly glad I kept daily notes!



2020 Year End Summary Report

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$11,363.16
INCOME	\$4,215.00
Membership Dues	\$1,045.00
Membership Donations	\$2,810.00
RROS Cap Sales	\$360.00
EXPENSES	\$5,739.39
Donation - Birdlife Australia	\$1,000.00
Donation - Audubon Canyon Ranch	\$500.00
Donation - Bird Rescue Center	\$500.00
Donation - Native Songbird Care	\$500.00
Donation - Tierra de Aves, Mexico	\$500.00
Education	\$850.00
Equipment	\$49.04
Food & Dining	\$84.75
Kite Tales Newsletter	\$463.60
Liability Insurance Policy	\$500.00
Office Expense	\$80.59
Postage	\$355.51
Quicken Software	\$44.99
Stationery	\$66.01
Taxes	\$100.90
Web Fees	\$144.00
TOTAL	-\$1,524.39
Ending Balance	\$9,838.77

📷 Rob O'Donnell

PHOTO GALLERY



Phainopepla // Town of Sonoma // Rick LeBaudour



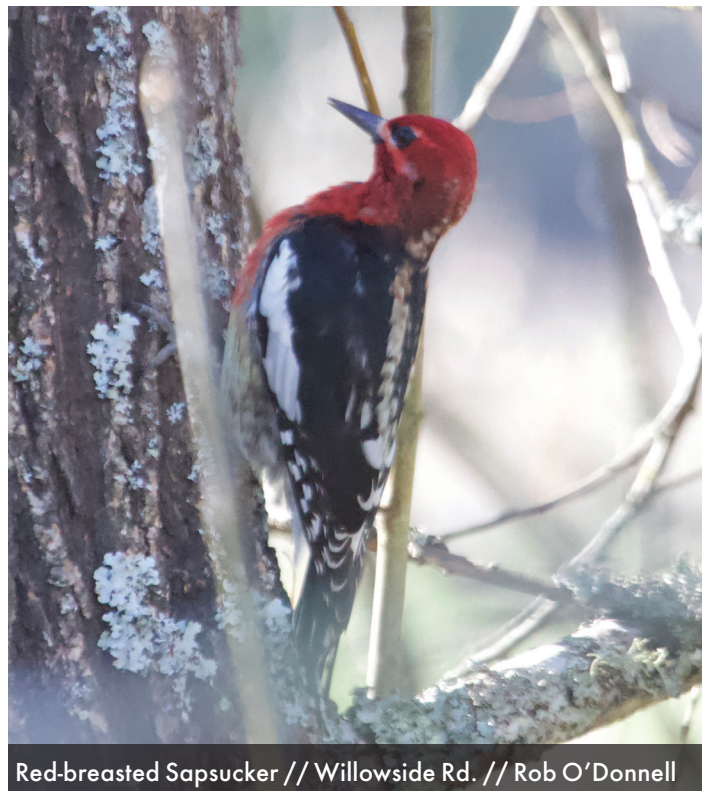
Hermit Warbler // Guerneville Yard // Teresa Tuffi



Eurasian Wigeon x American Wigeon (hybrid)
Sonoma Valley Regional Park // Malcolm Blanchard



American Bittern // Ellis Creek // Malcolm Blanchard



Red-breasted Sapsucker // Willowside Rd. // Rob O'Donnell



ABOUT RROS

Redwood Region Ornithological Society was organized in 1962 “to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitat.”

In compliance with local Sonoma County Covid-19 guidelines, meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month October through April, at 7 pm virtually via Zoom.

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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Kite Tales deadline is the 20th of each month. Observations may be sent to David A. Hofmann.
 All other content may be sent to Eva Valfer.