

KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 55, Number 7

March 2020



Short-eared Owl, Tolay Regional Park ☑ Jeff Valfer



Next RROS General Meeting
March 11th // 7 pm



What's New on the RROS Website?
Check out the Event Calendar for newly added
spring field trips!

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SAVE THE DATE

Monthly Meeting: Wed, March 11th, First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr, Santa Rosa 7pm

This month's program: Uganda; The Jewell of Africa, with Ken Wilson



Uganda lies in the East-Central African interior. Ken will take us on a brief tour of some of the highlights of this beautiful country. 85% of the country lies between 3000 feet and 5000 feet above sea level, dropping to 2000 feet at its lowest and almost 17,000 at its highest point. The country includes parts of Lake Victoria, The Rwenzori Mountains, the Albertine Rift Valley and Murchison Falls, reputed to be the most powerful falls in the world.

Uganda is home to most of Africa's large mammals including a growing population of Mountain Gorilla. It also has a large diversity of birds with 1,075 species recorded and is the best place in Africa to see the Papyrus associated Shoebill.

Join us for a viewing of this special part of Africa.



About the speaker:




Ken is a resident of Sonoma County, arriving here in 1980. He began birding in the mid 80's and soon began volunteering with many of the local organizations including RROS, Madrone Audubon Society with bird walks, breeding bird atlas's and Christmas bird counts, Co-compiling the West Sonoma County Count for 9 years, Audubon Canyon Ranch censusing in Tomales Bay and The Mayacamas Mountains, Golden Gate Raptor Organization counting migrating raptors for over 20 years and with California State Parks counting Peninsular Bighorn Sheep for the past 20 years. Ken started Talon Tours in 1995 with a tour to Mexico followed by tours to Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Panama, Guyana, Brazil, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia and most recently to Uganda in Africa.

UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

- **Sunday, March 8 – Riverfront Regional Park - 8:00 am**    

This park has several different habitats - redwood grove, riparian forest, open water. Look for late wintering and early migrants. Has flat trails. Meet at the large parking lot off Eastside Rd. From 101 take River Road and turn right on Trenton -Healdsburg Rd veer right on to Eastside Rd. Park entrance on left. Will have lunch after the hike. Has good bathrooms. There is a fee - can use County park pass.

Leader: Ruth Rudesill 707-833-6026 cell 707-481-0768 ruthier@sonic.net

- **Sunday, March 22 – YAMS Field Trip to Bodega Bay - 8:30 am - 12:30 pm**   

Meet either at Port o Bodega at 8:30am, or at the Sebastopol Community Center paved parking lot at 8:00am to carpool. We will focus on waterbirds and shorebirds and whatever else we can find. Bring layered clothing, comfortable footwear, binoculars, field guide, water, snacks and a packed lunch.

Leader: Lisa Hug Lisa_Hug@sonic.net

- **Sunday, April 19 - Bohemia Ecological Preserve - Occidental 8:30 am - 1:30 pm**   

Join Miles and Teresa for a special birding trip to Bohemia Ecological Preserve (BEP) - not open to the general public, and only accessible through docent-led hikes. **Note: This field trip involves hiking up steep gravel inclines and along unpaved trails, and all participants will be required to sign a LandPaths liability waiver. Due to the nature of the gated property, early departures cannot be accommodated, so we will stay as a group until the listed end time. Parking is limited, so PLEASE carpool to the property, if possible.**

BEP is a gorgeous 1,000-acre property, home to a variety of habitats, multiple creeks, and stunning views. We'll bird on foot, looking for raptors, woodpeckers, swallows, and many singing passerines. Wilson's Warblers and Pacific-slope Flycatchers should be back in town. Perhaps we'll spot a cooperative Pileated Woodpecker, and maybe Pygmy Nuthatches will reveal themselves in the overstory. We'll eat lunch at picnic tables on the property. For a peek at BEP, check out a recap of birding the Preserve last January: <https://imbirdingrightnow.com/2019/01/30/bohemia-ecological-preserve/>

Directions: The entrance to BEP is located at 6773 Bohemian Highway, Occidental, CA 95465 - approximately 3.4 miles north of the town of Occidental. From Occidental town center, drive north on Bohemian Highway for ~3.4 miles, and look for a straight stretch of road with a row of large boulders on your right. The entrance to the property is immediately before the row of boulders. If you pass an area that looks like a quarry on your right, you've just missed the property entrance. The property can also be found using standard GPS.

Portable restroom available halfway through the hike. Heavy rain cancels. Bring binoculars, layers, sunscreen, water, lunch, and snacks. Given the steepness of some areas, you may also want to bring hiking poles.

For more information, contact Miles & Teresa: imbirdingrightnow@gmail.com

■ **Sunday, April 26 – YAMS Field Trip to Sonoma Valley Regional Park- 8:30 am - 12:30 pm**    

Meet at Sonoma Valley Regional Park parking lot on Highway 12 (near the dog park). We will focus on spring migrants, but we will also look at wildflowers and butterflies, so bring some extra field guides. Bring layered clothing, comfortable footwear, binoculars, field guide, water, snacks and a packed lunch. Parking fee (\$7) waived if you have a county parks pass. Contact me close to the field trip date if you want to arrange carpooling.

Leader: Lisa Hug Lisa_Hug@sonic.net

■ **Saturday-Sunday, June 6-7 – Shaver Lake, Fresno - Overnight Trip**

Save the date! This year's overnight field trip will be held at Shaver Lake in Fresno. More details will be included in next month's Kite Tales. Until then ... Interested parties can contact Peter Colasanti for more info.

email : peter_colasanti@yahoo.com phone: 707-780-7296

 : Bring Lunch

 : Bring Water

 : Restrooms Available

 : Parking Fee



PISHING with PARMETER

OAXACA, MEXICO: March 19, 1968

Further Notes along the Road from Oaxaca to Puerto Escondido

On` March 19, 1968, we stopped at km 136 headed south on the dirt road to Puerto Escondido. There was a small stream at this point. The best bird was a **Green Kingfisher** (lifer). I later saw this species on the Rio Grande on a trip to Texas in 1972 with Gordon Bolander, Dr. John Arnold, and my son John. A lady from Oklahoma joined us in the search. Despite searching for two hours, the bird was not seen. We headed back to the car for lunch, but John stayed at the river to continue the search. We had barely gotten to the car when John came running, saying "The bird is here!". Gordie went to get the lady from Oklahoma and all of us returned to the river where the bird was still in view. We kept in touch with the lady over the years, usually through Christmas cards. In 1982 we received no reply. Her son wrote, saying she had died. A few weeks later, John received a registered letter and a check for \$1000, with a note saying that this was for the boy who had found the Green Kingfisher. But I digress.

Back to the Puerto Escondido Road – I also saw a **Green-fronted Hummingbird**. Between kms 140 and 162 we added several lifers to the list: **Green Parakeet**, **Green Jay** (Dr. Arnold had done his doctoral thesis at Cornell on jays and was pleased to see this species), **Black-cheeked Woodpecker**, **Orange-fronted Parakeet**, **Magpie Jay**, **Social Flycatcher**, **White-fronted Dove**, **Scarlet-headed** (now **Streak-backed**) **Oriole**, and **Great Kiskadee**. We were seeing many Middle American species.

At km 184 we stopped at a spot called La Cima, which is the highest point along the road at ca. 7000 feet. Here there was a dark, wet cloud forest – my first experience with this habitat. We stayed here for three days.

There were lots of birds to look at: **Spot-crowned Woodcreeper**, **Mexican Becard**, **Tufted Flycatcher**, **Gray Silky Flycatcher**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Red-faced Warbler**, **Hepatic Tanager**, and **Black-headed Siskin** – more Middle American species.

The next day, March 11, 1968, I birded all day in this area. Highlights included **Coue's Flycatcher** (now **Greater Pewee**), **Brown-backed Solitaire**, **Black-headed Oriole**, **Green Jay**, **Cinnamon Hummingbird**, **Common Bush-Tanager** (lifer), **Painted Redstart** (common), **Collared Towhee** (lifer), **Red-crowned Ant-tanager** (lifer), **Russet Nightingale-Thrush** (lifer), **Black-capped Vireo**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Olive Warbler**, **Scrub Euphonia**, **Rufous-capped Warbler**, **Red-headed Tanager** (lifer), and **Mexican Whip-poor-will** which sang in the evening.

In the final day at La Cima, additional species were seen, including **Blue Mockingbird**, **Wagler's Oriole**, **Gray-breasted Wood-Wren** (lifer), **Chestnut-crowned Brush-Finch** (lifer), and **Zone-tailed Hawk**.

To be continued ...

OBSERVATIONS

January 21, 2019 to February 20, 2020 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
Tundra Swan	01/21-22/20	Sebastopol Community Center—in north field	SON	1m	LiH, JoS photos
Tundra Swan	01/27/20	Reclamation Road	SON	4	TiE fly-by
Eurasian Wigeon	01/24/20	Santa Rosa—Ludwig Ave	SON	1m	JoS
Eurasian Wigeon	01/26-02/20/20	Doran Regional Park	SON	1m	NoO, JuD, BrO, WeD, EuH, LiH, BDP, DAH, Ch&TeW, WiDA, RiC, Te&MiT, DeH, JoH, JeV, mob photo
Eurasian Wigeon	01/26/20	Shollenberger Park	SON	1m	RoO, AnO
Eurasian Wigeon	02/02/20	Viansa Winery & wetlands	SON	1m	Ma&LuS photos
Redhead	01/25-02/14/20	Bodega harbor	SON	1m	ChB, DAH, CoH, JoS photos
White-winged Scoter	01/25-02/03/20	Doran Regional Park	SON	2f	ChB, JoS photo
White-winged Scoter	02/15/20	Sea Ranch	SON	10	IrD
White-winged Scoter	02/17/20	Doran Regional Park	SON	1m	TiM
Black Scoter	01/00/20	Shell Beach	SON	1f	ReC
Black Scoter	02/12/20	Off outer jetty @ Doran	SON	1m	WiDA
Black Scoter	02/15/20	Sea Ranch	SON	1m	IrD
Black Scoter	02/20/20	Tides Wharf area	SON	1	JoH
Barrow's Goldeneye	01/25-27/20	Bodega harbor	SON	1f	DoK, EuH, BrO, RoO, JoS photos
Lesser Black-backed Gull	01/24-25/20	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	Ma&LuS, GaT, NoA
Glaucous Gull	01/31/20	Shollenberger Park	SON	2	NoA photos
Nothern Fulmar	02/13/20	Salt Point SP-Gerstle Cove	SON	5	ChV
White-faced Ibis	01/23/20	Shollenberger Park	SON	1	CoM
White-faced Ibis	02/07-11/20	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	1	MaG, GaT, JeV, JuH, ScS, LuC photos
Common Black Hawk	01/24/20	Laguna de Santa Rosa	SON	1f	JoS
Barred Owl	02/06/20	Pocket Canyon Road	SON	1	JoS heard only
Short-eared Owl	01/27/20	Bodega Head State Park	SON	2	MoF, BrO, JoS photos
Short-eared Owl	01/30/20	Valley Ford-Freestone Road	SON	1	JoS heard only
Short-eared Owl	02/01-20/20	Tolay Regional Park	SON	1	CoM, MaB, MaG, EuH, JeV, mob photos
Red-naped Sapsucker	02/02/20	Westside Farms	SON	1	CIR photos
Tropical Kingbird	02/09-12/20	4091 Lakeville Highway	SON	1	AIW, JoS
Townsend's Solitaire	02/14/20	Robert Lewis Stevenson SP	SON	2	GeG photos
Grasshopper Sparrow	02/15/20	Tolay Regional Park	SON	2	MiC photos
Swamp Sparrow	02/13/20	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1	JeV
Black-and-white Warbler	02/20/20	Stony Point Pond-Creekside Trl	SON	1f	Te&MiT

OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Noah Arthur • Malcolm Blanchard • Chesta Buckley • Michael Carozza • Richard Cimino • Reef Comer • Lucas Corneliussen • Willie D'Anna • Wendy Dandridge • Iryna Dronova • Judith Dunham • Tiffany Erickson • Mookie Fudenberg • George Gibbs • Mary Grishaver • JoAnn Hackos • Connie Haile • Justin Herrell • Denise Herzberg • David A. Hofmann • Lisa Hug • Eugene Hunn • Don Kirker • Tim Mangum • Colin Meusel • Benjamin D. "Mike" Parmeter • Brook O'Connor • Rob O'Donnell • Anne O'Donnell • Norm Ortman • Claire Ramey • Josh Snead • Scott Sorby • Mark & Lucas Stephenson • Gabriel Tarantino • Teresa & Miles Tuffli • Jeff Valfer • Chuck Vaughn • Alan Wight • Chris & Teri Wills

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

YAMS REPORT - Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland

The YAMS (Young Ancient Murrelets) opened their field trip on February 8th to all RROS members. We decided to take advantage of a late morning weekend to travel to Oakland to try and observe rails and possibly even a rare sparrow or two. Eight of us met at the Petaluma Park and ride and condensed into two cars – Bea Pezzolo, Clayton Rucker, Mike Parmeter and I in one car; and Peter Colasanti, Ruthie Rudesill and Malcolm and Beatrice Blanchard in the other. Only one car got lost – mine, but we eventually made it there. We were met at the site by Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena, and Brian and Junco Bullick.

The weather was fantastic! There were many birders there and a few field trips there as well, but there was plenty of room for everyone to spread out and give the rails plenty of space to be in the marsh without being disturbed. We saw several **Ridgway's Rails** at close range and a **Sora** was delightfully cooperative, feeding in the open for hours right next to the boardwalk. The **Black Rails** were more challenging to see, but with patience, one could get quick glimpses of them as they fluttered through the marsh. Junco spotted a **Nelson's Sparrow** at the peak of the high tide.

In addition to the sought-after rails, we also enjoyed views of lots of shorebirds and ducks. It was a very fun day and I believe everyone left happy!

Lisa Hug – YAMS (Young Ancient Murrelets) Coordinator



If you know a young person between 10 and 18 years old who is interested in birds, please let me know, YAMS could use more members!

PHOTO GALLERY



▲ Ridgeway's Rail ▶

With a combination of a high King Tide and clear sunny skies, the YAMS field trip to Arrowhead Marsh yielded excellent views of otherwise elusive birds. Luckily for us, Malcolm Blanchard was able to capture great pictures of the excellent views!



Blue-winged Teal



Sora

Malcolm Blanchard

This next set of images were captured by Teresa Tuffli. Along with being the RROS webmasters, Teresa and Miles Tuffli have been leading field trips all over the northbay. This April they will be leading a RROS field trip through the enchanted Bohemia Ecological Preserve in Occidental. Join us there for a day of beautiful spring birding.



Western Meadowlark // Jenner Headlands



Merlin // Cloverdale Riverpark



Varied Thrush // Milt Brandt Visitors Center

Teresa Tuffli



Canvasback // Ellis Creek, Petaluma  Rick LeBaudour



Storm Wigeon // Shollenberger, Petaluma / Malcolm Blanchard

Critter Cam!



"In my 1 acre yard I have a Bushnell "Aggressor" Trail cam that cost about \$150. It is currently located on a game trail near the creek at the back of our place. I have had photos of Deer, Turkeys, Puma, Bobcat, Fox, Raccoon, Coyote, Skunk, Possum, Gray Squirrel, Otter, Barn Owl, Red Shouldered Hawk, Crow, a Jay or two, an occasional rat and of course neighbors' pets. The Pumas show up periodically, and P1 (Mama) and P19 (grown-up cub) have been around lately. It is always a thrill to take out the chip and see who has been by. If the Pumas are collared I can find out which one it is, but some of them aren't collared and remain a mystery. I had no idea we had Mountain Lions walking along our fence until I got the camera. It made me less fearful of them, as clearly they have no interest in us!" - Monica Shwalbenberger-Pena



On the cover:

"At about 4:30pm on February 8th at Tolay regional park, I witness at Short-eared owl hunting. Standing motionless in the middle of the trail, I watched the bird for about five minutes from over a 100 yards away when it began to turn towards my direction. I thought, "its going to fly right over me!" To my complete excitement, it did! One of my new favorite experiences with nature and I even got a photo." - Jeff Valfer



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

RROS STAFF

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 YAMS Coordinator: Lisa Hug.....lisahug@sonic.net // 707-535-9370
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