

# KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the  
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 55 Number 9

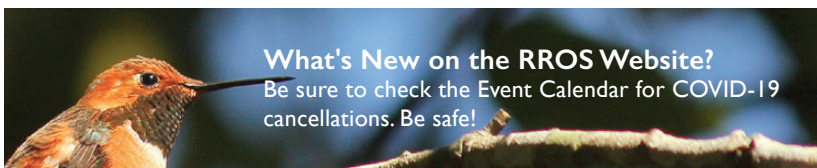
May 2020



Osprey, Guerneville  Teresa Tuffli



**RROS Annual FALL Potluck**  
September 16th // 5:30 pm



**What's New on the RROS Website?**  
Be sure to check the Event Calendar for COVID-19  
cancellations. Be safe!

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## SAVE THE DATE

### May Membership Meeting: Annual Spring Potluck - Cancelled

*Due to the continued restrictions on gatherings at area parks, the RROS May meeting has been cancelled.*

*The most recent guidelines for the limited reopening of Sonoma County parks still prohibit driving and parking at or near parks and prohibits gatherings with anyone outside your immediate household. "Those who drive, park, and then walk or bike into a park will be considered in violation of the order and subject to citation for a misdemeanor offense."*

*We hope to welcome all members back with our next meeting, also planned as a potluck in a park, in September.*

## UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

### June – Annual Overnight Trip High Sierra, Fresno County

Over the weekend of June 6-7 there is planned a trip to the Sierra Nevada in Fresno County in the Shaver Lake area. This will be a campsite based outing, likely at Midge Creek campground on Kaiser Pass Road above Huntington Lake. Participants requiring lodging will need to find it on their own. Priority sites to bird include Swanson Meadow near Shaver Lake, Huntington Lake, Mono Hot Springs area and Florence Lake.

Certain planning is currently impossible due to chaos, hopefully temporary, in all levels of government, especially at the federal level, and the areas are all in National Forest. As of now I expect to head up there as early as Thursday, June 4, Friday at the latest, to secure site(s) and determine feasibility. Please contact me if you wish to attend so that I'll be able to communicate with you as the situation develops. **Email: Peter\_Colasanti@yahoo.com Phone: 707.780.7296**

## CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Part of the mission of RROS is to support the birds. This year your membership dues and donations helped the following organizations. Here are portions of the letters we received from them:

### **Audubon Canyon Ranch, Modini Preserve, Jennifer Newman, Associate Director of Philanthropy:**

*"ACR received a check from the RROS to support ACR's and Modini Preserve. I understand that you made a presentation at a recent meeting about the Kincaid fire effect on the preserve prompting the support. How wonderful! On behalf of us all at ACR, I want to thank you for your generous spirit and support. We feel the love!"*

### **The Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County, Sam Marsh, Vice Chair, Board of Directors:**

*"We are so thankful for people and organizations like yours – especially in these uncertain times. Your gift makes such a difference to an organization like ours. With it we are able to continue caring for our native wild birds so they, in turn, can continue their positive impact in maintaining a healthy environment."*

### **Native Songbird Care & Conservation, Veronica Bowers, Director:**

*"We thank you for your very generous donation. With your support, we are able to care for over 1000 injured and orphaned songbirds each year and give them a second chance to fly free in the wild again."*

As you know, Australia was devastated by enormous fires last year. When Sonoma County experienced the Tubbs Fire in 2017, Australia sent a fire crew and truck to Santa Rosa to provide relief for our first responders. As the fires became contained, the crew visited Doran Regional Park. They provided education and plenty of photo opportunities for families and their children. We wanted to acknowledge their contribution and made a \$1,000.00 donation.

### **BirdLife Australia, Paul Sullivan, chief executive officer:**

*"Thank you so much for your generous donation, you're helping protect our most threatened birds. Together we can help native birds recover from devastating bushfires and protect their habitats from future fire threats. Without people like you, our work to protect Australia's birds would simply not be possible."*

Tierra de Aves, A.C. (TAV) was established as a civil organization in 2011, with the objective of developing conservation activities in Mexico with a special focus on birds and sea turtles.

### **Tierra de Aves A.C., Oaxaca, Mexico, Manuel Grosselet, President:**

*"Thanks a lot to all the RROS team...This helps us a lot...We will buy bird bands and mist nets to continue our work."*

# OBSERVATIONS

March 21, 2019 to April 20, 2020 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
Redhead	04/18/20	Bodega harbor	SON	1m	DoK
Long-tailed Duck	03/22/20	Bodega Head State Park	SON	1m	JaH, BoT, JuC
Eurasian Wigeon	04/06/20	Tolay Creek/Marsh @ Hwy 21	SON	1m	DoM photo
Eurasian Wigeon	04/13/20	Hudeman Slough	SON	1m	EuH
Sooty Grouse	03/31-04/18/20	King Ridge Road	SON	1	MarB, DoK photos
Calliope Hummingbird	04/02/20	Cloverdale Champlain House	SON	1m	GaN
Calliope Hummingbird	04/02/20	Rohnert Park yard	SON	1m	AIG photos
Calliope Hummingbird	04/09/20	Santa Rosa-Post Ranch Road	SON	1m	WeD photos
Calliope Hummingbird	04/13-20/20	Cloverdale--Champlain House	SON	1m 1f	GaN
Ridgway's Rail	04/17/20	Port Sonoma	SON	1	JoS, WeD heard & recorded
Solitary Sandpiper	04/08-12/20	Santa Rosa Crk Northwest Trail off Willowside Rd	SON	2	BrW, DeF, DoK, JoS, Ro&AnO, MalB, EuH, ScC, TiE, JeV, WeD, KeS, BiD, ScS, BoH. CoM, JoM, RAR, MarB, HeK, DeH mob photos
Red Knot	04/18/20	Bodega Bay—Porto Bodega	SON	1	ScC
Red Knot	04/19/20	Bodega Bay---Westside Park	SON	1	JoS photo
Red Knot	04/20/20	Port Sonoma	SON	2	MalB
Black-legged Kittiwake	03/21-24/20	Bodega Head State Park	SON	2	DoK, JaH, BoT, JuC, EuH
Black-legged Kittiwake	03/27/20	Jenner Overlook	SON	2	MarB
Black-legged Kittiwake	03/27/20	Porto Bodega	SON	1	MarB
Royal Tern	03/22/20	Bodega Head State Prk	SON	1	BoT, JuC fly-by
Black Vulture	03/31/20	Willow Creek Road	SON	1	JoS photo
Swainson's Hawk	04/13/20	Millerick Rd x SR 12	SON	3	EuH
Swainson's Hawk	04/14/20	Cooper Rd---Laguna Farm	SON	1	JoS photos
Common Black Hawk	04/02-19/20	Lynmar Winery	SON	1f	EtM, ScC, KeS, RoO, ZaP
Common Black Hawk X Red Shouldered Hawk	04/12-18/20	Piezzi Road, Santa Rosa	SON	1	LoB
Barred Owl	04/09/20	Guerneville yard	SON	1	Te&MiT heard only
Northern Saw-whet Owl	03/22/20	Salmon Creek Road	SON	1	JaH heard only
Red-naped Sapsucker	03/22/20	Salmon Creek Road	SON	1	JaH photo
Tropical Kingbird	03/23/20	Ellis Creek Ponds	SON	1	MalB photos
Purple Martin	03/27/20	Pine Flat Road Ferguson Sprg	SON	1	JoS
Townsend's Solitaire	04/16/20	R. L. Stevenson State Park	SON	1	KeS
Brown Thrasher	04/03/20	"undisclosed location"	SON	1	ScC photos "continuing"
Nashville Warbler	04/15/20	Santa Rosa Crk Trail west of Willowside Road	SON	1m	KuN
Hermit Warbler	04/19/20	Guerneville neighborhood	SON	1m	Te&MiT heard & recorded
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	03/27/20	Pine Flat Road	SON	2	JoS
Bell's Sparrow	03/27/20	Pine Flat Road	SON	1	LiF
Red Crossbill	03/27/20	Bay Hill Road	SON	2	Br&OrO
Red Crossbill	03/31/20	Sea Ranch	SON	?	DiH "a flock being heard"

## OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Mario Balitbit • Malcolm Blanchard • Lori Brendlinger • Scott Carey • Juli Chamberlin • Wendy Dandridge • Bill Doyle • Tiffany Erikson • Linda Fraley • Dea Freid • Alan Glazier • Bob Hasenick • Derek Heins • Diane Hichwa • James Holmes • Eugene Hunn • Don Kirker • Helen Kochenderfer • Colin Meusel • John Missing • Ethan Monk • Gary Nicholson • Kurt Niznik • Brook & Orion Oconnor • Rob and Anne O'Donnell • Zane Pickus • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Kevin Schwartz • Josh Snead • Scott Sorby • Bob Toleno • Teresa & Miles Tuffli • Jeff Valfer • Brian Webb

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



# PISHING with PARMETER

SOUTHEAST ARIZONA 1961

In the spring of 1961 I was a resident physician at the Sonoma County Hospital on Chanate Road in Santa Rosa.

I decided to take six days off to drive to southeast Arizona, bird there for four days, and drive home on the final day. Gordon Bolander and Duane Carmony, a graduate student in physics at UC Berkeley, joined me. We drove straight through to Tucson the first day, stopping only for gasoline and half a chilled cantaloupe at a town along the Colorado River in the middle of the night. One person drove, one kept the driver company, and the third slept in the back of my old station wagon.

We arrived at Tucson early the next morning and headed south to Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains. Our first lifer was a Caracara near the small town of Continental. We spent the rest of the day in Madera Canyon seeing new birds frequently. Sightings included **Harlequin (now Montezuma) Quail, Greater Roadrunner**, and a heard-only **Elf Owl** (which I did not see until seven years later in Big Bend National Park). Other noteworthy birds were **Rivoli's Hummingbird, Broad-billed Hummingbird, Arizona Woodpecker, Cassin's Kingbird, Wied's Crested (now Brown-crested) Flycatcher, Olivaceous (now Dusky-capped) Flycatcher, Mexican Jay, Bridled Titmouse, Cactus Wren, Curve-billed Thrasher, Vermilion Flycatcher, Phainopepla, Bell's Vireo, Lucy's Warbler, Painted Redstart, Scott's Oriole, Bronzed Cowbird, Blue Grosbeak, Rufous-winged Sparrow, and Black-throated Sparrow.** This was quite a start!

We spent the night sleeping on the ground at Patagonia and birded there the next day. Birds noted included **Gray Hawk, Common Black-Hawk, Scaled Quail, Common Ground-Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Gila Woodpecker, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Rose-throated Becard** (a famous spot for this species), **Beardless Flycatcher (now Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet), White-necked (now Chihuahuan) Raven, Canyon**

**Wren, Rock Wren, Boat-tailed (now Great-tailed) Grackle, Northern Cardinal, Varied Bunting, Lark Sparrow, and Five-striped Sparrow.**

We spent the following night again sleeping on the ground, this time at the entrance to Guadalupe Canyon. In the morning there was a strange bird walking about and wagging its tail. None of us knew the bird. After much observation and discussion, we realized it was a **Fan-tailed Warbler**, a vagrant from Mexico. This was quite a surprise! Other birds in Guadalupe Canyon included **Zone-tailed Hawk, Lesser Night-hawk, Crissal Thrasher, Summer Tanager, Pyrrhuloxia, and Botteri's Sparrow.**

That night we slept in Cave Creek Canyon – I slept on a picnic table. We birded there the next morning. Highlights were **Whip-poor-will (now Mexican Whip-poor-will), Blue-throated Hummingbird, White-eared Hummingbird, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Coue's Flycatcher (now Greater Pewee), Coppery-tailed (now Elegant) Trogon, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Grace's Warbler, Hepatic Tanager, and Chipping Sparrow.** Higher up the canyon at Rustler's Park we added **Spotted Owl, White-throated Swift, Clark's Nutcracker, Mexican Chickadee, Olive Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, Red Crossbill, and Mexican (now Yellow-eyed) Junco.**

There is an interesting story about the **Fan-tailed Warbler**. Forty-nine years later, my son, living in Albuquerque, asked me if I had any notes on this observation. I did, and I forwarded these to him. He submitted the report to the Arizona Bird Records Committee, which accepted the record 50 years after the fact based on my written description.

A couple of years after my Arizona trip, The Condor published an article by a professional ornithologist about two **Fan-tailed Warblers** he had collected in Guadalupe Canyon about two weeks prior to our observation. In the article he stated that these two birds represented the first US record, and thus our bird was the second US record.

Seeing as our regions Shelter-in-place orders are slated to continue into May - here are a few extra resources to help stay connected to our wonderful birding community. First up are two new Facebook groups started by RROS Members Lisa Hug and Lucas Corneliusen. (Click the links to join in!) Followed by a contribution from Dennis Luz. Enjoy!

### Social-Distance Birding : 1-mile Radius Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2870385119708206/>

Welcome to Social-Distancing 1-mile radius birding! I created this group to be a fun way for birders to keep from going insane during the month of April. To start, draw a 1-mile radius around your place of residence using the provided web app. Then, take walks or ride your bike around your neighborhood to see how many species you can come up with during the month of April and beyond. You may find some interesting places that you never knew existed! - Lisa Hug

### Flycatcher ID

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/613214792597077/>

The purpose of this Group is to share photographs and audio recordings of Tyrannid Flycatchers from across the United States and Canada in order to help in the process of identifying and understanding the complex nature of the species within this family.

- Lucas Corneliusen

## BACKYARD BIRDING : an alternative to field trips

During such challenging times of self-imposed isolation and social distancing, birders can be missing out on a most important seasonal avian event: that of nesting activity. Short of exposing ourselves to the coronavirus or social criticism from flaunting the recommended rules, birders can still find a way to enjoy their feathered friends. Try backyard birding.

For those lucky enough to have a garden or backyard (and most of us do) there is a wealth of birding activity in such places if one musters the patience and time to observe them.

Although birds are now able to find food more readily available from the emerging supply of seeds, berries and insects during Spring, it still helps to supplement their diet with store bought seeds. A few strategically placed seed or nectar feeders should be deployed under trees. A bird bath provides welcome drinking water as well as —you guessed it— a place to cool off on hot dry days. I use two kinds of feeding dispensers: one is a simple open tray and the other is a “caged” seed feeder to protect those smaller birds from the harassment of larger birds such as scrub jays which I consider backyard bullies. And since I like to photograph birds, I usually set up my camera with a long telephoto lens inside the house. Vertical drapes screen off full exposure of my body and equipment. Some birds are more skittish than others.

The types of birds one attracts will largely depend on the type of vegetation and flowers available. There's lots of literature on this so i won't dwell on that topic.



**Goldfinches enjoy seeds from seedpod of liquidamber tree**



**Salvias (shown) as well as brightly colored tubular flowers attract hummingbirds**



My neighbor's apple tree left a few apples for the Red Breasted Sapsucker. It returned the next day to continue feeding

Robins and Waxwing scold each other over drinking water. Around February/March, pyracantha and privet berries ripen, thus attracting many birds. The birdbath gets heavy use. At one time over 12 Waxwings converged on the birdbath.



Flickers eat berries too. These are from my adjacent neighbor's tree. Cedar Waxwings and Robins gorge on the same berries (and in the process mess up my brick patio with their droppings)



The most frequent visitor to my backyard is a pair of Titmouse. A couple of years ago the pair nested in one of our nestboxes. The resident scrub jay tried, unsuccessfully, to get into the next box but I added an attachment that prevented the bully from entering yet allowing the Titmouse to fly in. These days Golden Crowned Sparrows are daily visitors.

Predictably, most birds come and feed in the early morning and return for a last meal around our dinner time before dark.

# PHOTO GALLERY



1.



2.



3.

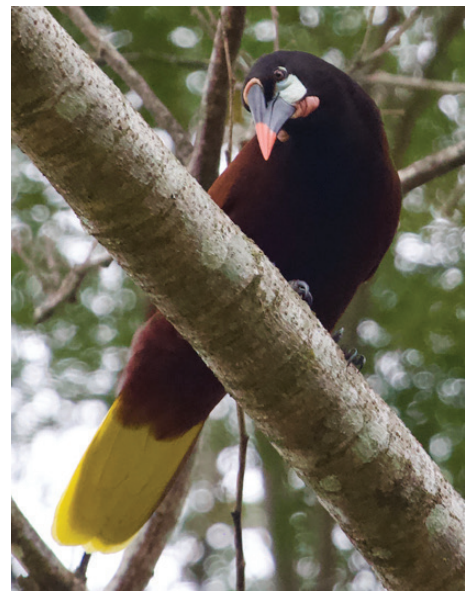


4.

*This month's gallery opens up with a selection of the exotic species seen during last years RROS Oaxaca trip.*

*Seeing as travel is currently on hold, we invite you to take a virtual trip and use whatever resources you have at hand to match the species to the picture.*

- Cinnamon-rumped Seedeater
- Rufous-capped Warbler
- Berylline Hummingbird
- Gray Silky-flycatcher
- Squirrel Cuckoo
- Montezuma Oropendola
- Red Warbler



5.



6.



7.



8.

Answers on page 9

📷 Bob Hasenick & Rob O'Donnell



Western Blue Birds



Allen's/Rufous Hummingbird



Townsend's Warbler



American Bittern

📷 Tom Reynolds



Hairy Woodpecker // Guerneville



California Towhee // Guerneville

📷 Teresa Tuffli



**On the cover:**

"While birding-by-foot minutes from our front door, we stopped at an overlook of the Russian River. We suddenly heard the snap of a breaking branch behind us and turned in time to watch this majestic Osprey fly overhead with a lichen-covered branch in tow. The Osprey headed upriver and was quickly joined by its mate! The pair disappeared from sight - presumably to a known nest at a nearby beach." - 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](http://www.RROS.org)**

## RROS STAFF

### OFFICERS

President: Anne O'Donnell.....auodonnell@gmail.com // 707-312-2376  
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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.*

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Answers to the Oaxaca Bird Match :

1. Rufous-capped Warbler
2. Red Warbler
3. Squirrel Cuckoo
4. Gray Silky-flycatcher
5. Montezuma Oropendola
6. Cinnamon-rumped Seedeater
7. Berylline Hummingbird
8. Jetlag travelers