

KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 57 Number 3

November 2021



Black-throated Green Warbler 📷 Levi Rehberg



Next RROS Virtual Meeting
November 10th // 7:00 pm



What's New on the RROS Website?
If you missed last month's River Otter Presentation
the video recording is available to stream on our
website at
www.RROS.org/virtualmeeting

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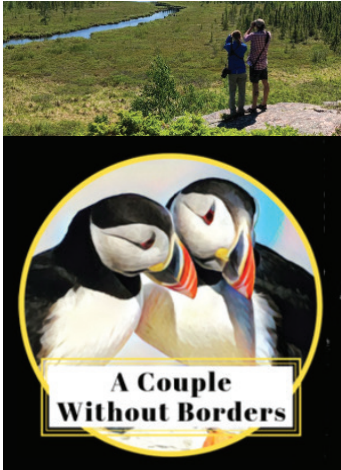
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SAVE THE DATE

September Membership Meeting: Wednesday, November 10th via Zoom , 7:00 pm

This month's meeting and 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: **Birding and Jaguars in Pantanal, Brazil with Robyn & Paul of @acouplewithoutborders**



About the speakers: We're Robyn & Paul of @acouplewithoutborders . We're birding the world – one meetup at a time!

Through work and travel, we're together 24/7 and our life has become an incredible adventure. because of YOU! Through Instagram, we have been fortunate to connect, learn from and meet so many amazing followers (now friends!) throughout our own country and the world.

Our passion is birding and wildlife and we bring our followers on our journeys both in person and through our Daily IG Stories, as well as provide REAL & HONEST detailed information & insider tips on all our destinations in our weekly newsletters.

The world is an incredible place and we hope you join us in exploring it.

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 Jeff Valfer (jhvalfer@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 Jeff Valfer, identify yourself and we'll try to make sure you can join.

*More specific info (including ID NUMBER and PASSCODE) will be sent in an email to all RROS members between now and the meeting time.

UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

RROS Field Trips in the Time of COVID-19

This last year, due to Covid, we required field-trip attendees to make reservations in order to limit the size of the group. We will not be doing that this year, unless a specific trip needs to be limited due to physical restraints. However, you are encouraged to RSVP for all trips. In return, you will receive a reminder of the trip and automatically be shared on the group eBird list.

To RSVP, contact Malcolm Blanchard by email at mab@mabco.com or text at (707) 480-2210.

.. Saturday -November 13, 2021, 8:00AM – 1:00PM, Sonoma Valley Regional Park

Join **Malcolm Blanchard** for a trip to Sonoma Valley Regional Park. We'll first tour the Oak Woodlands in the Park. Expect a lot of woodpeckers, including possible Pileated. We'll then walk around Lake Suttonfield on nearby Sonoma Developmental Center land. Meet at the main parking lot off of Highway 12 (38.3643337, -122.5122477) at 8:00AM. Bring lunch. \$7 parking fee or Free with County Parks Pass.

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

.. Saturday -November 27, 2021, 8:00AM – 1:00PM, Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility (led by Andy LaCasse)

Ellis Creek is one of the best birding hotspots in central Sonoma County, where many rare birds have been documented over the years. We will be led by Andy LaCasse, who has led the Petaluma Wetland Alliance's surveys to this spot for many years. Expect waterfowl and shorebirds. Least Bitterns were thought to have bred here this year, though they have probably gone quiet by now.

Meet in the parking lot off Cypress Drive, Petaluma, (38.2268466, -122.5850014) at 8:00AM.

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

A Note on YAMS Field Trips ...

All field trips meet at 8:30 am at the site unless otherwise denoted. Most are half-day excursions ending at 12:30pm with a group lunch and field trip bird list compilation. As always, bring binoculars, water, snacks, lunch, plenty of layered clothing, and field guides.

A "Y" indicates that the field trip is suitable for younger YAMS members (one site, half day).

An "O" indicates that it is more suitable for older members (multiple sites, driving in-between, all-day excursions).

All field trips are open to all YAMS members and parents can judge whether each field trip is appropriate for their child.

Questions: Contact Lisa Hug at lisahug@sonic.net.

■ Sunday - November 7, 2021, YAMS "Y" Lake Sonoma - 8:00 am - Noon

This field trip is designated as "Y." Meet at 8:30 AM at the Milt Brandt Visitor Center.

■ Sunday - November 21, 2021, YAMS "Y" Foothill Regional Park - 8:00 am - Noon

This field trip is designated as "Y." Meet at 8:30 AM at Foothill Regional Park.



A NEW BIRD!!! A first-hand account of the first county sighting of a Black-throated Green Warbler

“ At first it was just another sunny day at our house. I was looking out the window at our bird feeder, which was a small dish in which we poured wild bird seeds, and next to that feeder was a tree that the birds liked to hang out in. At the certain time of year in which I saw the warbler, most of the birds that came to the feeder were house finches, so I didn't expect to see anything cool till winter, when the sparrows came. So as I was saying there was a tree next to the feeder and that was where I saw it. All I saw at first was a small yellow bird jumping around in



words and photo by Levi Rehberg

the tree. My first thought was A NEW BIRD!!!! So I rushed out side with my camera to get a closer look, and hopefully get a good picture. After about half an hour of chasing the warbler around I went inside to finally identify the bird with my Field Guide, and was very excited to find that the details most matched the Black-throated Green Warbler, which is only established in the east states, and was even more excited to later find that it was the first recorded Black-Throated Green Warbler sighting in Sonoma County.”

Field Trip Reports

RROS Bodega Bay Pelagic Trip on the New Sea Angler, October 3, 2021:

We opted for our traditional route westerly from Bodega Head to Bodega Canyon and on to the continental shelf, thence southward to the Cordell Banks (Marin County), then straight home to the ENE. The weather was nearly perfect as we watched the sun rise behind the harbor (7 AM). We had some swells but no wind. Near the shelf edge we encountered a bank of fog which hindered visibility until on our southward track we burst free of the fog once again. It was clear sailing the rest of the long day (5:30 PM).

Outbound was a bit frustrating as, despite the fine weather, there were few birds beyond the cormorants, pelicans, and murre of the nearshore. Our first excitement came with a large foraging pod of Risso's Dolphins, a.k.a., "Grampus," accompanied by a goodly number of **Sooty, Pink-footed**, and graceful **Buller's Shearwaters**. These last have been scarce to non-existent on our previous offshore trips. A few **Sabine's Gulls, Cassin's** and **Rhinoceros Auklets**, and **Northern Fulmars**, plus spotty reports of storm-petrels (**Fork-tailed, Ashy, and Black**) kept us on our toes. However, we began to wonder where the albatrosses were, as we had dozens by this time on our August trip. Curiously, of the total of three albatrosses for the day, two were the usual **Black-footed** while the third was a **Laysan**, a young bird from the colony off Baja California.

Then into the fog bank. The captain turned toward Cordell Banks and by the time we crossed into Marin County waters we were surrounded by jaegers, mostly **Pomarine** (with tails or without, adults and immatures at various stages). Several Parasitics could be distinguished, as well as the more delicate Long-tailed "hunters" (from the German, "jaeger"). At one point, half-a-dozen of these pelagic pirates were terrorizing a **Sabine's Gull** that had had the misfortune to pick up an anchovy in their midst. Before the day was out we tallied well over 100 jaegers. Best of all, were the dozen-odd **South Polar Skua** that arrived to check out the action. A close view of a winter adult **Tufted Puffin** kept us awake for the long journey home.

Also noted: right whale dolphins, **Dall's Porpoises, Steller's** and **California sealions**, gangs of the latter "porpoising," either in play or flight from some unseen predator. A **fur-seal** or two and a small but close-in family of **humpback whales**, a **mola-mola (Ocean sunfish)**, and a **moon jelly** entertained.

- Gene Hunn, for RROS Pelagics

Willow Creek Road, October 23, 2021:

On Saturday, October 23, nine birders braved the rain forecast and gathered at Willow Creek Road in Jenner. Luckily, the rain didn't materialize until the last half hour of the field trip!

The group observed a nice selection of raptors, beginning with a **PEREGRINE FALCON** flying overhead and then perching while the group was still exploring the road's entrance. Shortly after, we discovered a pair of **BALD EAGLES** perched atop power poles on the ridge across the river! Also along the same ridge, a **FERRUGINOUS HAWK** landed on a pole -- distant but scopeable. Later in the day, a dive-bombing **AMERICAN KESTREL** noisily alerted us to the presence of a perched **COOPER'S HAWK**.

Glimpses of the Russian River throughout the morning yielded views of a variety of ducks (though only in small numbers): **AMERICAN WIGEON, GREATER SCAUP, SURF SCOTER, BUFFLEHEAD, COMMON GOLDENEYE, COMMON MERGANSER**, and **RUDDY DUCK**. In the newly flooded field near the State Parks house were **MALLARDS** as well. A distant, tucked-away grebe confounded the group until it revealed its head and neck and was identified as a **HORNED GREBE**.

Some other fun sightings were a **RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER**, a small group of **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS** zipping overhead, two **BELTED KINGFISHERS**, and a **WRENTIT** moving boldly out in the open. Other than **SONG SPARROWS**, sparrows were noticeably absent and we only encountered one small flock of **WHITE- and GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROWS** and two **FOX SPARROWS**.

Although the number of individual birds was on the low side, the group still ended up with a species count of 62. Thanks to all who made it out on this mostly rain-free excursion!

- Teresa & Miles Tuffli

OBSERVATIONS

September 21, 2020 to October 20, 2021 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
Eurasian Wigeon	09/29/21	Salmon Creek Community	SON	1m	EuH, ScC
Eurasian Wigeon	09/29/21	Ellis Creek Water Recycling Ponds	SON	1m	ScC
White-winged Scoter	10/16/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	AiB
Black Scoter	10/17-18/21	Bodega Bay---north shore	SON	1f	EuH, AiB, TiE
Long-tailed Duck	10/15-18/21	Bodega Bay---north shore	SON	1f	EuH, IaM, AiB, MaB, ScC
Mountain Quail	09/25/21	King Ridge Road	SON	1	DoK, RiL, LiH, AIW
Sooty Grouse	09/25/21	King Ridge Road	SON	3	DoK, AIW, LiH, RiL photo
Black Swift	09/23/21	Bay Hill Road	SON	6	ScS
Black Swift	09/25/21	9643 Pocket Canyon Hwy #116	SON	4	JoS
Black Swift	10/13/21	Jenner Headlands Hawk Overlook	SON	1	DaB, mob
Pacific Golden Plover	10/15/21	Bodega Dunes Beach	SON	1	JaS, AiB photos
Short-tailed Shearwater	10/03/21	Pelagic trip---32 observers	SON	1	LuC, mob
Least Bittern	09/29/21	Ellis Creek Water Recycling Ponds	SON	1	LiH heard only
White-faced Ibis	10/10/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	2	ToB, Je&EvV, ScC, DeF
White-faced Ibis	10/13/21	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1	MiG
Broad-winged Hawk	09/22/21	Jenner Headlands Hawk Overlook	SON	1	DaB, MSP, ShA, LiC, JaC, JeM, DaM, BiP, KaR, AIW, RoO photos
Broad-winged Hawk	09/23/21	Bay Hill Road	SON	1	ScS
Broad-winged Hawk	09/24/21	Jenner Headlands Hawk Overlook	SON	1juv	LiH, Te&MiT, LaB, MaB, KaM photos
Broad-winged Hawk	09/24/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail & Delta Pond	SON	1	BrW photos
Broad-winged Hawk	09/27/21	Jenner Headlands Preserve	SON	6	LaB
Broad-winged Hawk	09/30/21	Bay Hill Road	SON	1	DaN, To&ReB
Swainson's Hawk	09/29/21	Bodega Bay	SON	2	EuH
Swainson's Hawk	10/01/21	Napa Sonoma Marshes	SON	1	MaB
Spotted Owl	09/25/21	Salmon Creek Road	SON	1	DoK, RiL, AIW, LiH
Barred Owl	09/25-10/14/21	9643 Pocket Canyon Hwy #116	SON	2	JoS heard only
Barred Owl	10/10/21	Salmon Creek Road	SON	2	LuC, LuS, CoC, heard only
Barred Owl	10/16/21	Guerneville---River Road	SON	1	ScC heard only
Northern Saw-whet Owl	09/25-10/17/21	Salmon Creek Road	SON	1	DoK, LiH, AIW, RiL, ScC, DaS, AiB
Northern Saw-whet Owl	10/04/21	Sugarloaf Ridge State Park	SON	1	JeV
Northern Saw-whet Owl	10/06-10/21	9643 Pocket Canyon Hwy #116	SON	1	JoS
Tropical Kingbird	10/05/21	Bodega Bay---Owl Canyon	SON	1	DaN, ToB
Tropical Kingbird	10/14-16/21	Bodega Bay---Spud Point	SON	1	ToB, LiH, JaS, De&DaH, IaM, AiB photos
Phainopepla	10/10/21	Private Property---Russian River near vineyards	SON	1m	CoT photo
Red Crossbill	10/16/21	Sea Ranch---Shell Beach	SON	1	CoM
Lawrence's Goldfinch	10/08/21	Campbell Cove State Beach	SON	1	DaN
Clay-colored Sparrow	09/26-28/21	Sea Ranch	SON	2	KaW photo

Clay-colored Sparrow	09/29/21	Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail	SON	1	ScC, DaS
Clay-colored Sparrow	10/08-10/21	Campbell Cove State Beach	SON	1	JoS, AlH, Je&EvV, EuH, ScC
Baltimore Oriole	09/22-23/21	Bodega Bay---Diekmann's Store	SON	1m	ChD, SaL, JMS, MaB, LiH, TiE, Je&EvV, JoE, MaK, SuG, MiH, DoK ScS, JoS photos
Tricolored Blackbird	09/29/21	Chanslor Ranch---Hwy 1	SON	5m	EuH
Tricolored Blackbird	10/11/21	Sonoma Coast-	SON	1m	LiH
Black-and-white Warbler	10/06/21	Bodega Dunes Campground	SON	1m	DaN
MacGillivray's Warbler	09/24/21	Bodega Bay---Diekmann's Store	SON	1	DaL
Magnolia Warbler	10/07/21	Owl Canyon	SON	1	DaN, DeF, LiH, MaM, LyC
Magnolia Warbler	10/08/21	Campbell Cove State Beach	SON	1	BoT, DaN, LaS photos
Blackburnian Warbler	10/07-09/21	Owl Canyon	SON	1	DaN, DeF, LiH, MaM, LyC, JoS, LaS, DaL DoK, laM photo
Chestnut-sided Warbler	09/26/21	Campbell Cove & Hole-in-the-Head	SON	1	RAR
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10/03-05/21	Occidental Arts & Ecology Center	SON	1f	BrD photo
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10/13/21	Stony Point Christian Fellowship	SON	1	WeD
Blackpoll Warbler	10/10/21	Jenner gas station	SON	1	LuC, LuS, CoC
Palm Warbler	10/02/21	Campbell Cove & Hole-in-the-Head	SON	1	JoS, JeV photo
Palm Warbler	10/09/21	Petaluma---Wiseman Park	SON	1	AlW
Palm Warbler	10/13/21	Spring Lake Regional Park	SON	1	MiG
Palm Warbler	10/16/21	Bodega Bay---Gafney Point	SON	1	Je&EvV, AiB, DaM
Black-throated Green Warbler	09/28/21	Petaluma---North Petaluma Blvd first confirmed sighting for Sonoma County	SON	1	LeR photos

OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Shelly Anderson • David Barry • Malcolm Blanchard • Tony & Rene Briggs • Larry Broderick • Aidan Brubaker • Lisa Camp • Scott Carey • Jan Casavant • Connor Cochran • Lyann • Comrack • Lucas Corneliusen • Wendy Dandridge • Brock Dolman • Chris Dunford • John Ehrenfeld • Tiffany Erikson • Dea Freid • Mike Gragg • Susan Greef • Denise & David Hamilton • Alex Henry • Michael Hingerty • Lisa Hug • Eugene Hunn • Donald Kirker • Marilyn Kinch • Sami LaRocca • Rick LeBaudour • David Leland • Mark Martucci • Jerry Meshulam • Colin Meusel • David Moring • Ian Morrison • Kathleen Mugele • Dan Nelson • Rob O'Donnell • Bill Perry • Levi Rehberg • Kathleen Robbiano • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Laura Schachterle • Dave Shuford • John Mott-Smith • Josh Snead • Jackie Sones • Scott Sorby • Lucas Stepnenson • Monica Swallbenberg-Pena • Colin Talcroft • Bob Toleno • Teresa & Miles Tuffli • Jeff Valfer • Jeff & Eva Valfer • AlVega • Brian Webb • Alan Wight • Karen Wilkinson



An Interview with Mike Parmeter Part 2

The Redwood Region Ornithological Society gets off the ground:

G: So, you were saying about the first Christmas Bird Count.

M: We had the first Christmas Count in 1960.

It was January 16 and the round-up and the compilation was at my house on Strawberry Drive up near the county hospital [in Santa Rosa], a little street that goes down there. I lived two years there when I was a resident physician. Gordy Bolander and I were already birding together all the time. And about the same time Jack Arnold arrived at Sonoma State College and set up the Department of Natural Resources at which the Ornithology was one.

G: I don't think I ever met him.

M: Nice guy. He had a Masters in Ornithology from the guy at Berkeley, [J.] Grinnell [cf. J. Grinnell and A.F. Miller, "Distribution of the Birds of California," Pacific Coast Avifauna. No. 27, 1944]. And he had a PhD at Cornell. So, he had about the best [training]....

G: So then RROS, you started meeting at Sonoma State?

M: Well, when Jack Arnold came, he was very interested in the bird society and he and I and Gordy organized it and got it together. And then when Jack arranged for us to meet at Sonoma State, which we did for many years.

G: The Darwin Room.

M: Darwin Room. Man, it was a wonderful room, the Biology room with all these specimens, you know. [After] Jack died, and they kicked us out.

G: Yeah, I wonder when, I know we were out there at the Laguna Waste Water Plant. I moved back here in 2010, so

M: That's where we moved to from Sonoma State. Darwin Hall. We went to the Water Treatment Plant, and they finally kicked us out of there, I guess.

G: I guess they raised the rates or something

M: Because of, I think it was because of liability.

G: Was there somebody, a member, that worked there?

M: No, we just went and asked somebody. The guy who was running the place was very much in favor of bird watching. He thought that was a good use of the place. But they kicked us out of there. And then we moved to where we are [now].

G: So, RROS got started somewhere along there.

M: Well, we decided after that first Christmas count, we thought we're going to have a bird club.

G: How many people did you have on the Christmas count? How many people?

M: Twenty?

G: Is it the same circle that they have now?

M: Yeah, I think it is. We had 124 species.

G: It's not too far off the mark now, it's a struggle to get to 140 now. A lot of the wetlands are gone. Lisa Hug is very upset about it. I heard their area is

M: She's over there in west Santa Rosa. It's all built over and dried up.

M: RROS. I'm very partial to the RROS.

G: Yeah, why Redwood Region? Was there a reason?

M: No, we just picked that name. And we picked that White-tailed Kite for our [logo]...

G: Yeah, when did that happen, who designed that?

M: Gordy Bolander drew it. I have the originals.

G: People have been asking about that. When that was, who created it?

M: That was back in the '60's, '62 or '63? Early.

More recollections of the old timers:

G: So, let's see. ... Jack Guggolz?

M: Jack Guggolz had a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from UC. He was a bird watcher; he was pretty good. He had a couple of first state records. And he was President, an early

president; came and took the reins. He was around, came and did a lot for the group.

G: Yeah, there's a number of memorials in the Kite Tales of past presidents, and I think Jack Guggolz was one of the first.

M: ... Gordon Bolander, Eric Spalding ... Ray McDuffee, he was a retired Air Force colonel and he had served in the Air Force, but his jobs were always in the diplomatic centers. But he was pretty good. He and his wife were good bird watchers. They lived right there in Cotati. We had a couple of round-ups at their house.

G: That was ?

M: Ray McDuffee, 1964

G: Eric Spalding?

M: Eric Spalding had a PhD in Botany or something and he was interested in bird watching. Bob Failing. There was a group called the OOC, Oakland Ornithological Club. A young high school kid who had formed a club, and met regularly 'til the last member died here a few years ago. And Failing was one of those members and Bolander was one of the members. And they only ever took in one additional member. And that was I. They took me in as an official member. I had to pay the dues. The dues were a nickel.

G: A nickel. Can't afford that....

M: McLean, he was a clergy man. ... Clarence Tucker. He was a bird watcher, but he worked at it hard, but he never got really good at it. But he was a nice man. Bud Gralapp was a professor of Art, a professor at Sonoma State. David Hanes was a professor. Lynn Stafford ... I took a course in Mineralogy at Berkeley. His brother, Stafford, was my lab partner. And he and I got the only two A's in the course. Wayne Tillay was a professor up at the Pacific Union College, a chemist. Died here about two years ago. And, ... I know them all. Betty Burrige. Doug Ellis

G: ... Doug Ellis I never met but Ruthie Rudesill is always talking about Doug and his owling adventures.

M: He was a good owler.

G: Nobody's really picked up on that. I'm too old to get out there early in the morning.

M: I'm not going to get up that early. ... Baron McLean. Bob McLean was the son of Baron McClean. And Bob was a better bird ... photographer than his dad. ... He took a lot of detailed plumage pictures. He had a very fast camera. It wasn't like we use now. It was the old-fashioned camera. He had some wonderful pictures. ... Betty Burrige, Doug Ellis, Hal Corey, Dan Nelson.

G: I saw that a Wini Nelson was an officer early on? I thought that was Dan Nelson's wife; but, no, it was his mother. [Dan's] not that old, obviously.

M: They were on a bird watching trip to Australia, the mother, Dan, his brother. And the mother died down there.

G: Really?

M: In Australia.

*Stay tuned for the final installment of Mike and Gene's conversation in December's Kite Tales

YAMS Participate in Rich Stallcup Bird-a-thon

words by Lisa Hug



Charlie Melin, Lisa Hug, Bea Pezzolo, and Clayton Rucker

A little before 7:00 am. Bea Pezzolo, Brandy Rucker, Clayton Rucker, Charlie Melin and myself met in the cold half-light at the Sebastopol Community Center. Bea and the Ruckers have been regulars on YAMS field trips for a few years. Charlie was a special guest – a family friend of the Ruckers from Jamestown in the Sierran foothills. We were excited to do the bird-a-thon in person this year. But, as we set out to do our normal hike from the Community Center to the pond on the Laguna Trail, we discovered that the seasonal bridge across the Laguna had already been taken down for the winter. We had to drive around to the Chevron gas station on Highway 12. We walked the frigid loop from there. We didn't make it all the way to the pond, but we picked up over 40 species to start the day off. The highlight was a beautiful male NORTHERN HARRIER that hunted the over meadow as it glowed in the light of the morning sun.

We then decided to visit Ragle Ranch Regional Park, mainly for a bathroom stop, but also to pick any odds and ends that we may have missed. This paid off, as we added TOWNSEND'S WARBLER and BAND-TAILED PIGEON to our already substantial list. But the price was high as there was a huge soccer tournament at Ragle which limited our parking possibilities and slowed us down considerably.

I then made the decision to drive past Salmon Creek Road and go straight to Bodega Bay. I was concerned about getting to the coast too late and Doran Regional Park being full of visitors and therefore closed. We were in luck. The park was open and not too crowded. The tide was slightly high for shorebirds, but we picked up birds on the ocean side of the spit – including SNOWY PLOVER. We then had a comfortable lunch break in perfect temperatures, sunshine and no wind. There were surfbirds on the jetty as we dined. We also found more birds on the mudflats on our way out and as the tide dropped.

We all knew about 3 possible "lifers" that awaited most us on the north shore of the harbor – long-tailed duck, tropical kingbird and palm warbler. First, we scanned the large scap flock a few times, but couldn't find the long-tailed duck. The light was glary, the ducks were distant, and time was short. We weren't too discouraged though as we looked twice for the tropical kingbird. I knew the exact location of this bird, but it just didn't show itself in the time we allotted for its search. We were starting to feel just a little down at this point. But the PALM WARBLER saved the day! It took a while to find it, but when we did, it was cooperative. In

typical palm warbler fashion, it alternated between foraging on the ground and in the low bushes as it merrily bobbed along. While we were enjoying these views, we received a text from Josh Snead and the Valfers informing us that there was a Nashville Warbler under Diekmann's Store. We went to Diekmann's but by the time we got there, the Nashville Warbler had either just left, or simply did not want to be seen. It can be especially difficult to search for rare birds during a bird-a-thon because of the time element involved.

By this time, we had been at Bodega Bay for quite a long while. Bird-a-thon days are not just about how well you bird, but it is also about time-budgeting, knowing when to cut your losses and move on, when and how far to travel. We usually go up to the Chanslor Ranch to see the tricolored blackbirds, but we still hadn't been to Salmon Creek Road. So, again, we decided to start heading south, or we might not get to Petaluma before dark and there were birds waiting for us there.

We eventually did get to Salmon Creek Road and there we added STELLER'S JAY, PACIFIC WREN, PYGMY NUTHATCH, PINE SISKIN, FERRUGINOUS HAWK, HAIRY WOODPECKER and WILD TURKEY.

We were very happy now as we headed further south. We made a fruitful stop along Carmody Road. We had nice looks at LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS and GREATER YELLOWLEGS. We were lucky with LARK SPARROW, and the larger north pond gave us our only CANADA GEESE and a WILSON'S SNIPE.

We made it to Shollenberger Park while the light was still bright enough to see LONG-BILLED CURLEW, AMERICAN AVOCETS and LEAST SANDPIPERS. As we retreated from the levee, the sun got lower and it started to feel dusky. We arrived at Ellis Creek Recycling Facility at twilight. We had just enough light to find a SORA walking around only a few feet from us. As we hiked around the ponds, we picked up several species of ducks including CINNAMON TEAL, NORTHERN SHOVELER, and GADWALL.

It felt very special to be able to have our traditional pizza party at Mountain Mike's at the end of our long day. Tony Pezzolo joined us there, and we had someone to tell all about our day. We tallied up a total number of 111 bird species for the day. We did A-OKAY! Our guest, Charlie, got over 70 life birds for the day! I think his cheek must have been sore the next day from smiling so much. YAMS have had bird-a-thons with higher species totals in previous years, but I don't think we have ever had a bird-a-thon where we all had so much fun!!

It is still possible to donate to the Point Blue Conservation Science Rich Stallcup bird-a-thon by going to <https://pointblue.securesweet.com/>



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. Location TBA. The most current info can be found at www.RROS.org.

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

RROS STAFF

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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.