


KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 57 Number 2

October 2021



River Otter  Tom Reynolds



Next RROS Virtual Meeting
October 13th // 7:00 pm



What's New on the RROS Website?
If you haven't yet, check out the treasure trove of historical information at the brand new History & Archives page!
[Read more at www.RROS.org/kitetearchives](http://www.RROS.org/kitetearchives)

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SAVE THE DATE

September Membership Meeting: Wednesday, October 13th via Zoom , 7:00 pm

This month's meeting and presentation on the River Otter Ecology Project 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: Megan Isadore, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the River Otter Ecology Project, will speak about river otters in our local watersheds.



About the speaker: I'm all about conservation based on science, community, and public education. I graduated from the College of William & Mary with a degree in English, never suspecting I would spend my career in one kind of science or another. I began as a medical writer, then produced continuing medical education programs and publications in medical risk management. After moving to Marin in 1998, I turned my attention to watershed ecology while working with the critically endangered coho salmon of Lagunitas Creek. The intensity and beauty of salmonid lives led me to an abiding interest in watershed ecology. After beginning to delve into the webs of inter-relations that make up our beloved watershed ecosystem, river otters swam into my view in Lagunitas Creek. River otters as the flagship species for conservation are a natural fit. Their charm, playfulness, and their remarkable ability to touch hearts are among the many attributes that make them ideal ambassadors for watershed conservation and wetland restoration.

For more info on the River Otter Ecology Project visit: <https://riverotterecology.org/>

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 (jivalfer@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 - October 9, 2021, 5:45AM-10:00AM, morning owling at Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park

Early morning owling along the entrance road to Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park. Possible Northern Spotted Owl, Long-eared Owl, or Saw-whet Owl. Probable Northern Pygmy-Owl and Western Screech-Owl. **Ruthie Rudesill** will lead us. Ruthie has some of the best "bird ears" in the County and great knowledge of owl calls. We'll meet on Adobe Canyon Road near the intersection with Highway 12 (38.4251438, -122.5559084) at 5:45AM. Owling is about hearing the birds, so please wear quiet clothing—nothing that makes noise when you move. Carpooling among vaccinated birders is encouraged. After sunrise (7:15AM), those who wish to, may join us birding the Meadow/Hillside trails loop. Sugarloaf requires a \$10 parking fee (\$8 senior) or annual pass.

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

• Saturday - October 23, 2021, Willow Creek Road 8:30 - 12:30

Join **Teresa and Miles Tuffli** for a morning of birding along Willow Creek Road in Jenner. During raptor migration season, we'll have the potential for multiple species - Ferruginous Hawks, American Kestrels, Bald Eagles, and more. Many wintering and year-round passerines will be frequenting the willows, alders, and scrub. With a view of the Russian River, we'll look for some water birds as well.

We'll meet at Russian House #1 restaurant, and bird the road's entrance on foot. We'll then move all cars down the road to a large pullout. We'll bird the willows, creek area, and river view on foot before continuing down the road (vaccinated birders are encouraged to carpool from there), stopping to bird various sections.

No bathrooms. Heavy rain cancels. Bring layers, water, lunch or snacks, and sunscreen.

Location & Directions: The address for Russian House #1 is 9960 CA-1, Jenner, California 95450. If coming from Bodega Bay, it's 9 miles north directly along CA-1 (15-20 mins), on the right just before the Russian River bridge. If coming from River Road/Highway 116, take Highway 116 west through Guerneville, Monte Rio, and Duncans Mills until you reach the Y-intersection w/ CA-1. Head left (south) on Highway 1, and Russian House #1 is on your left immediately after crossing the Russian River bridge.

• 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, San Pablo Bay shore sites

We'll bird the north shore of San Pablo Bay, south of Highway 37. **Gene Hunn** will lead us checking out the large concentrations of raptors, shorebirds and other waterfowl. Meet at the Port Sonoma parking lot next to the Petaluma River (38.1166961, -122.5031966) at 8:00AM. We will check the abandoned docks for Ridgway's Rail and the mouth of the Petaluma River for shorebirds and waterfowl before heading east to Reclamation Road, the Tubbs Island trail near the mouth of Tolay Creek, and the wetlands at the Skaggs Island spur off Highway 37. Finish by 1:00PM. Expect a fair bit of walking. Bring your lunch. Carpooling among vaccinated birders is encouraged.

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



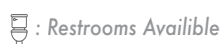
Bring Lunch



Bring Water



Restrooms Not Available



Restrooms Available



Parking Fee

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 - October 10, 2021, YAMS "Y" Las Gallinas Water Treatment Facility - 8:00 am - Noon

This field trip is designated as "Y." Meet at 8:00 AM at the Petaluma Park & Ride at the corner of Hwy 101 and Hwy 116.

■ Saturday - October 16, 2021, YAMS "O" Point Blue Rich Stallcup Bird-A-Thon - starts at 6:45 am

This field trip is designated as "O." Meet at Sebastopol Community Center at 6:45 AM. This will be a very long day with lots of driving. This is a fundraiser for Point Blue Conservation Science: <https://www.pointblue.org/engage-with-us/events/>

■ 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.

Field Trip Report : Point Reyes, Led by Lucas Corneliussen Saturday September 11th

Lucas Corneliussen led a group of nine birders to Pt. Reyes in search of fall vagrants. Unfortunately, the vagrants failed to appear. Our first stop was at the Light House, which was welcome to visit after its closure for the last few years. On our way back, a Barn Owl announced its presence with the deposit of guano among us and then posed beautifully. While, off the coast, two Sunfish (Moola Moola) basked in the sun, a rare site from land.


Stops at Nunes and Mendoza Ranches produced little. Lunch at Drakes Beach was also unproductive other than great views of an Osprey. A trek down the beach to Horseshoe Pond revealed a large flock of Red-necked Phalarope. An estimated 220 birds covered the pond.

On our way out, we stopped at Drakes Corner to look for the Pacific Golden-plover that had been reported there. Ruth Rudesill spotted it quickly, and all had good looks. A beautiful bird in mostly breeding plumage.


While few vagrants, a beautiful day at Pt. Reyes.

-Malcolm Blanchard, Field Trip Coordinator



A post-potluck sunset stroll up Sugar Loaf  Garrett Pierce



Red-necked Phalarope, Doran Entrance Ponds  Rob O'Donnell

OBSERVATIONS

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

Species	Date(s)	Location	Cty	#	Observer(s)
Common Poorwill	09/08/21	Sugarloaf Ridge State Park	SON	1	RAR heard only
Ruff	08/28/21	Doran Regional Park entrance pond	SON	1	ToB, LiH, PeC, DoK, DaM, DeL, MaIB, RAR, EuH photos
Baird's Sandpiper	08/21/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail---Delta Pond	SON	1	JeV
Pectoral Sandpiper	08/30-09/19/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	2	LiH, MaB, RoO, BoH photo
Pectoral Sandpiper	08/31/21	Salmon Creek ponds & bridge	SON	2	LiH
Sabine's Gull	08/21/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail—Delta Pond	SON	1	DoK, RoO, CoM, BrM, WeB, LiD, ChC, NiW, JeV photos
Franklin's Gull	08/30/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	AneB photos
Laysan Albatross	08/29/21	Bodega Bay pelagic--31 observers	SON	1	EuH
Least Bittern	08/26-09/09/21	Ellis Creek ponds	SON	1	ErJ, EIC photos
Short-eared Owl	08/22/21	Napa-Sonoma Marshes WA	SON	1	Ma&BeB
Northern Saw-whet Owl	09/08/21	Sugarloaf Ridge State Park	SON	1	MaB, RAR heard only
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher	08/22-26/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail---Delta Pond Continuing bird	SON	1	DeF, KuN, De&DaH, ReC, BrW, MaIB, JoR, PaS, DaS, ScC, MaP, KaK, PaD, LeHC, BoT, JuC, DaL, ChC, SeS, ErS, PhB, RaH, JeK many photos
Purple Martin	08/21/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail---Delta Pond	SON	1	RoO, Eml, HoC
Black-throated Sparrow	09/11/21	Napa---Browns Valley yard	NAP	1im	De&DaH photos
Green-tailed Towhee	09/17/21	Riverfront Regional Park	SON	1	DaM
Green-tailed Towhee	09/17-19/21	Sebastopol---Barnett Valley Road yard	SON	1	TeL, JeJo, Je&EvV, LiH photos
Yellow-breasted Chat	09/04/21	Sea Ranch---Salal Trail	SON	1	DaL
Yellow-breasted Chat	09/06/21	Wrights Beach Campground	SON	1	LiH photo
Yellow-breasted Chat	09/13/21	Riverfront Regional Park	SON	1	DaM
Tricolored Blackbird	09/05-06/21	Hwy 1---Chanslor Ranch	SON	2m	ScC, LiH
Northern Waterthrush	09/02-06/21	Campbell Cove-Hole-in-the-Head	SON	1	ThB, ZaM, LiH, DoK, JoS, DaN, ChN
MacGillivray's Warbler	08/22-09/04/21	Bodega Head SP---Owl Canyon	SON	1	BDP&JoP, LiH, RAR, DeL, ThB, ZaM photo
MacGillivray's Warbler	08/25/21	Shollenberger Park	SON	1m	RoS photos
MacGillivray's Warbler	09/02-07/21	Campbell Cove State Park	SON	2	ThB, ZaM, ZaW, DaN, DeF
MacGillivray's Warbler	09/19/21	Doran Regional Park	SON	1	AIW photo
Hooded Warbler	08/21-23/21	Santa Rosa Crk Trail---Delta Pond Continuing bird	SON	1	ChC, ScC, ReC heard only
American Redstart	09/05/21	Russian Gulch State Beach	SON	1	Ma&LuS, BrB
American Redstart	09/07/21	Campbell Cove State Park	SON	1	ZaW, DaN
Northern Parula	09/05/21	Russian Gulch State Beach	SON	1	Ma&LuS, BrB, ScC
Blackpoll Warbler	09/13/21	Riverfront Regional Park	SON	1	DaM
Canada Warbler	08/27-29/21	Forestville yard---Hwy 116	SON	1m	JoS

OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD

Wendy Beers • Phred Benham • Anonymous eBirder • Malcolm Blanchard • Malcolm & Beatrice Blanchard • Theadora Block • Tony Briggs • Brian Browne • Scott Carey • Juli Chamberlin • Lee-Hong Chang • Holly Coates • Peter Colasanti • Reef Comer • Chris Conard • Elizabeth Crouthamel • Patricia DiLuzio • Lily Douglas • Dea Freid • Denise & David Hamilton • Bob Hasenick • Rachel Hazlett • Lisa Hug • Eugene Hunn • Emmett Iverson • Jeff Johnson • Eric Jones • Jered Karr • Karen Kenney • Don Kirker • Derek Lecy • David Leland • Terry Loveton • Bruce Mast • Colin Meusel • Zack Mikalonis • David Moring • Christian Naventi • Dan Nelson • Kurt Niznik • Rob O'Donnell • Benjamin D. "Mike" Parmeter & John Parmeter • Marjorie Powell • John Robinson • Ruth Ann Rudesill • Paul Saraceni • David Schmidt • Sebastian Schmid • Eric Schroeder • Sylvie Silverstein • Josh Snead • Mark & Lucas Stephenson • Ron Storey • Bob Toleno • Jeff Valfer • Jeff & Eva Valfer • Nils Warnock • Brian Webb • Zack Weinstein • Alan Wight



An Interview with Mike Parmeter *Part I*

Gene Hunn (G:) interviewed Dr. Benjamin "Mike" Parmeter (M:) at his home in Napa May 28, 2021, talking about how things first got started with RROS. (There is a brief history of RROS published in Kite Tales Volume 26, number 5, January 1992.)

Dr. Benjamin "Mike" Parmeter is one of the founding members of the Redwood Region Ornithological Society, along with Gordon Bolander and Jack Arnold. Gordon Bolander was the first president, 1962-1963, followed by Eric Spalding, Ray McDuffee, John "Jack" Arnold, Mike Parmeter, and Jack Guggolz. See Kite Tales 5.2 – 5.5 for biographical sketches of Bolander, Arnold, Parmeter, and Guggolz,

Mike saved every issue of the Kite Tales since the first mimeographed monthly reports in 1967, Volume 1. With the able assistance of Anne O'Donnell and Jeff Valfer we have now scanned every issue since, which may be consulted at the RROS website archive. To follow up on that bit of historic digging, I set up an interview with Mike to provide his personal perspective on how, when, and by whom RROS was started. I recorded our one-hour interview on my phone and Anne transcribed it. Highlights of that interview are printed below.

I planned to ask him how RROS got started, who designed

the logo, the history of early pelagic trips out of Bodega Bay, how RROS relates to Madrone Audubon, and how the early RROS crew interacted with the big names in early [ca. 1960's] California birding circles, such as, Guy McCaskie, Rich Stallcup, Dave DeSante, Jon Winter, Paul DeBenedictis, and, of course Jon Dunn and Dick Erickson somewhat later, people I knew when I was getting started birding in the late 1960's.

I discovered birding while in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia in 1965 (not coincidentally that is when and where I met my wife Nancy). Nancy and I got married in 1967 and settled in San Francisco and shortly thereafter, moved to Berkeley. We got involved banding birds at Palomarin, the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, which offered a springboard for some birding up the coast in Sonoma County. I crossed paths with Mike and Gordon on a number of occasions in the late 1960s, as they are mentioned in my earliest bird notes. Also, it turns out that I was listed in the 1969 RROS membership list, published in Kite Tales. I was one of 43 members at that time, with a home address in Berkeley. (By January 1971 membership had increased to 97.) I moved to Seattle in 1972 and lost touch with the local birding community until Nancy and I moved back on my retirement in 2010, to find Mike Parmeter still active in the thick of all things birding in the North Bay.

Parmeter's early birding:

G: So when did you and Gordon start birding? How old were you when you got started? Were you like these kids today?

M: I was birding in the 50's and 40's, I got the Bird Study merit badge for Boy Scouts

G: I did too, but I almost failed the test. (Gene laughs)

M: Failed the test. I knew more than the examiner.

G: I bet ... So that would have been when you were like 14 or 15 [ca. 1946], something like that?

M: About like that, early High School. And then I stopped when I went to Berkeley. And I didn't bird again until 1956. A friend and I took a trip around the country to look at Internships, which were coming up the next year. ... So, in 1956 I took a month trip around the country. Dick Levy. I just talked to him recently, he's still living, a psychiatrist. And we hiked in the Tetons and he had binoculars. And I borrowed the binoculars and I said "You know what? You can see the birds with binoculars."

G: Is that the first time you used binoculars?

M: Yeah. Came home, went to a Sporting Goods Shop. Bought a pair of 8 x 32 binoculars and I'm gone since. I got notes from Day 1 back there.

G: 1956?

M: 1956.

G: So how old were you then?

M: Well, I'd be 24. But I had bird watched before, as I say, I got the bird merit badge. When I came to the Residency Program in 1960, I'd heard of Gordon Bolander, so I looked up in the phone book and there was Bolander. So, I gave him a call and he said "You're a bird watcher?" And I said, "Yeah, I'm pretty serious".

And he said, "So am I". And he says, "Let's go bird watching". And I said "OK, when?" and he says "This Saturday." So we started and we went all the ...

G: He lived, what, Timber Hill then? Out there, on the Laguna [de Santa Rosa]?

M: Timber Hill, yeah he lived in Timber Hill

G: So, you were born out there in Duncans Mills or someplace, weren't you?

M: My parents were living in Guerneville when I was born. I was born at the Shafon Maternity Home in Santa Rosa. My mother went into it and came back. But I was born out in Guerneville. My mother was born in Guerneville, my father was born in Cazadero. I'm a 4th generation Sonoma Countian.

G: Yeah, I see the name out there. I see [the] Parmeter name out there on one property or another.

M: My kids were all born in Sonoma County.

G: So you weren't related to Duncans?

M: No, Duncans was a guy who had a big mill out there. Big mill pond. The mill pond was still there when I was a kid.

G: Is that where the Wood Ducks are? No, that's the campground out there.

M: Casini's.... Well, I went to school two years in Duncans Mills, grammar school. My mother was a teacher, and she came from Guerneville every day. I came down Monday and stayed 'til Friday, and went back for the weekend. She used to give me half days off to study birds and wildflowers. She'd

say, "You don't have to just go out and look. You've got to write it up."

M: She'd say to me "You seem to be caught up on your work today. Why don't you take a half day off and go bird watching or collect wildflowers." So I did that. That's how I got interested in ... Kept it up 'til I was in High School. And then when I went to Berkeley I kind of gave up and didn't start again 'til 1956 when I was in the Tetons.

G: So what birds do you remember from the Tetons?

M: I have a Day List. I bought a little book on the birds that there could be in Yellowstone and the Tetons. There's some blank pages. Here is the first log book I ever kept: 7/1956: Trip to pond and area surrounding the pond at Duncans Mills. There's a nice pond at Duncans Mills up in the canyon and not many people know about it. It's a wonderful place for bird watching. Here's a trip to Doran Park, my first trip to Bodega Bay. That was 1960. I moved here to take a two-year residency. I called Bolander and he said "Let's go bird watching." Bolander was a terrific bird watcher.

G: His uncle was a botanist, Bolander?

M: Yeah, was the state, the official state botanist for years.

G: So, what did Gordon do for a living?

M: He taught grammar school. He worked for the Fish and Game before the war. Then he went to war, in Europe, came back, and went back to San Francisco State and got a Teaching Credential and an Administrators Credential, but he ended up teaching at a grammar school in Santa Rosa. I forget the name of it, in eastern Santa Rosa. But he bird watched on his own. And I went and met him on that Saturday and we went bird watching and he was a hell of a bird watcher. He knew all his sounds, boy. He taught me so much about bird identification and sounds. He, he found a lot of birds there at that Timber Hill, you wouldn't believe. ... Yard list, 228 species on his yard list.

G: I guess you can't get in there now, it's somebody else owns it, ...

M: He called me and said "I've a Parula Warbler singing up here." I said, "I ought to come up and hear that." He said "Yeah, why don't you do that." So, I went up. I was living in Cotati. I'd finished my Residency and I was living in Cotati, and I went up and got the Parula Warbler. And about a week later he said "I got another Parula Warbler singing." I said, "How do you know it's not the same bird?" and he said "Well, I shot the first one." He said "I'm sure this is a different bird." Gordy and I birded together. We went to Arizona together [with a third birder] Took six days. One drove, one kept company and one slept. We drove straight through, birded one day at Madera Canyon, one day around the town, then we birded a day down at [Patagonia], went up to the Huachucas a couple of days. We did a lot of birding, big list of birds...

****Stay tuned for more RR0S history and the rest of Gene and Mike's conversation in next month's Kite Tales***



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.