



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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Cyanotoxins focus of February meeting

Although the blue green algae (cyanobacteria) problem has plagued Clear Lake for decades, a more recent concern is the presence of cyanotoxins, present in and beneath algae mats that can prove poisonous to both humans and animals.

Since the Fall of 2014 Big Valley Rancheria and Elem Indian Colony have been conducting regular

testing for cyanotoxins produced by the "algae" blooms that have plagued the lake annually.

Environmental Directors Sarah Ryan, and Karola Kennedy will present the results of the Tribes' Cyanotoxin Monitoring Program and the ways it affects both recreational use of the lake and drinking water at the February Redbud

FEBRUARY MEETING

Thursday, Feb. 18

- * Sarah Ryan and Karola Kennedy will present study on Clear Lake Cyanotoxin
- * Refreshments: 7 pm
Announcements: 7:15 pm
Program: 7:30 pm
- * Methodist Church Social Hall,
16255, Second St. Lower
Lake

Audubon Society program meeting.

Ryan and Kennedy will discuss the cyanotoxin "hot spots" as well as show examples of how toxin levels aren't necessarily linked to what the water quality looks like. The presentation will provide a good background to an important issue that is being dealt with worldwide.

Sarah Ryan has worked for the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians since 2001 and has headed their Environmental Protection Department since 2006. Sarah works with environmental staff to respond to current environmental conditions and to protect natural resources which support the health and wellbeing of the Tribe. Sarah has worked on and chaired pertinent committees, both

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Samples of water are taken to test for Cyanotoxins in Clear Lake.

Please note meeting place change

In January Redbud Audubon started meeting at the Methodist Church Social Hall, 16255 Second St. in Lower Lake as we did last year. The hall is across the parking lot from the Methodist Church. If you are coming through Lower Lake, turn left on Lake Street and then right on Second St. The church is on the right. We feel that moving our meetings to the south end of the county for half of our year is a way to accommodate all of our Redbud Audubon members county wide.

President's Message

by Roberta Lyons

For those of us who did not, or do not, live on Cobb Mt. it might be easy to put the devastation of that area out of our minds. I don't drive up there because I don't want to get in the way and I know there is a tremendous amount of truck traffic because of the clean-up; they don't need any sight-seers on the roads.

I am concerned about the cleanup, however, and as time goes on the law of "unintended consequences," seems to be taking hold. There was an article in the Record Bee about the shutdown of the temporary mill that was set up at Hobergs Resort. Apparently the scale of the operation was overwhelming the area and creating a real nuisance for neighbors and impacting the roads. Now, there is talk of moving the sight down to Crazy Creek soaring property on Highway 29 near Middletown which alarms me because the fields in that area contain some of the most astounding wildflower

blooms in the county.

It was made clear at one meeting I attended that although the chipped wood might be good for temporary erosion control, spreading the wood chips on the ground will also prevent anything from growing. In fact, it was recommended against doing this in some areas for this very reason.

It seems petty to be concerned about wildflowers when people are desperately trying to clean up a devastated area that was once home to hundreds if not thousands of people. If I needed to clean my lot, I would probably not want to hear "outsiders," complaining about the destruction of some obscure native lupine.

On the other hand, we do need to keep a long range vision in mind and consider the environmental impacts of everything that is done to clean up after the Valley Fire. I hope we can trust that our County leaders are doing this.

Redbud Audubon Chapter Only Membership is now available

If you are a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically a member of your local chapter. Although National Audubon provides minimal financial support to the local chapters, it is important to continue your renewals with them to fund the many ways that National contributes to the preservation of our birdlife.

We could use your support

If you wish to support our local Redbud Audubon chapter, one way is to donate on a regular basis. Online donations are available by visiting our website at www.redbudaudubon.org and clicking on "DONATE NOW".

Another option is to become a Redbud Audubon Chapter-Only member. In the past, we did not have

the staff to manage the renewal process. We have now enrolled the services of Member Planet which has the ability to automate the membership renewal system. You can enroll online through our www.redbudaudubon.org website and click on "JOIN US". By law, Member Planet must ask for your date of birth to prove that you are an adult. Other than that, all that is required is your name, email address and payment information. Any other information you provide is optional.

This system is new to us, but should work pretty seamlessly. If you do have any problems or concerns, please email us at redbud.audubon@gmail.com. Your feedback is important to us.

Christmas Bird Count Tallies 139 species

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Dec. 19, saw 52 local Audubon folks out in the count circle participating in this fun annual event. The Redbud Audubon Society's tally was 139 separate species; the most numerous species was the Western Grebe with 25,389 birds. In second place was the Ruddy Duck with 4,897.

Participants were lucky to see 11 Bald Eagles and one Golden Eagle. Total number of birds of all species added up to 49,079 according to count organizers Brad and Kathy Barnwell.

The Annual Christmas Bird Count in Lake County is usually held on the third Saturday in December. Redbud Audubon has been participating in the bird count for over 30 years.



A typical Cyanobacteria, or blue-green algae bloom on Clear Lake.

Cyanotoxins focus of February meeting

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local and statewide including the Clear Lake Advisory Committee, the CA Invasive Species Advisory Committee and the CalEPA Tribal Advisory Committee. She attended the College of William and Mary in Virginia and obtained a Bachelor's in Government.

Karola Kennedy works for the Elem Indian Colony of Pomo Indians as the Environmental Director. She has been in the position and living in Lake County for two years. She is very passionate about the environmental issues in Lake County and Clear Lake. In her previous career she gained extensive experience in developing constructive and cooperative working relationships with others as well as maintaining them over time. She attended the University of Nevada, Reno and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering and received designation as an Engineer in Training.

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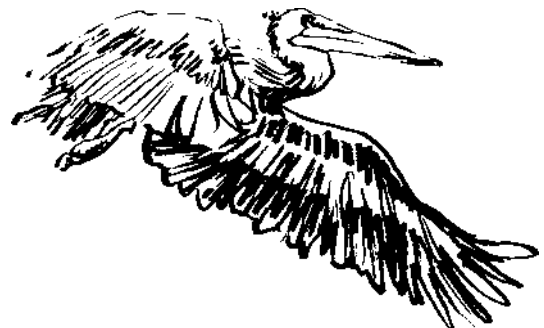
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Photos by Roberta Lyons



Janet Swedberg and Kathy Barnwell look up a bird.



Pat Harmon, left; Kathy Barnwell and Jeannette Knight get a bead on the Cinnamon Teals at the Sacramento NWR.



The view from the Sacramento NWR.

Field trip to NWRs wonderful as usual

The annual January field trip to the Colusa and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) was a great day, as usual. Fifteen people carpooled over to the Sacramento Valley to enjoy a day of birding and fellowship. First stop was the Colusa NWR where in the beginning, only Redbud Audubon folks were there. A good sighting was the Eurasian Widgeon, along with the usual Greater White-fronted Geese, lots of White-faced Ibis, Widgeons, Gadwalls, Shovelers, Green-winged Teal, and more.

Next came the Sacramento NWR where the group was treated to an unusual Redhead duck (only one) and again, beautiful Cinnamon Teals, a variety of wading birds including a flock of Dowitchers and a Bald Eagle.

Please join us on this adventure next year. It is always exciting to travel with a group of expert birders who can point out birds that you may otherwise not be able to identify. Besides, it is just a lot of fun.

Many thanks to Kathy Barnwell for keeping track of just about all of the birds we saw. Because we go in several cars, not every species that was sighted by others appears on her list (published in this newsletter) but she did a great job of tallying most of them. Outstanding were the number of Harriers and Red-tailed Hawks Kathy noted.



On the viewing platform at the Colusa NWR.

Following is a list of birds spotted January 23, 2016 at the Colusa and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges. There were 57 species sighted for a total of 17,700 individual birds. Photos from the Sacramento and Colusa NWRs by Bonnie Thompson. See more photos page 6.



Snow Geese



Northern Pintail

1	Greater White-fronted Goose.....	1,010
2	Snow Goose	5,700
3	Gadwall	200
4	Eurasian Wigeon	2
5	American Wigeon	200
6	Mallard	175
7	Cinnamon Teal	12
8	Northern Shoveler	2,000
9	Northern Pintail	2,400
10	Green-winged Teal	16
11	Ring-necked Duck	30
12	Bufflehead	10
13	Hooded Merganser	2
14	Ruddy Duck	200
15	Ring-necked Pheasant	9
16	Pied-billed Grebe	1
17	Eared Grebe	1
18	American White Pelican	45
19	American Bittern	1
20	Great Blue Heron	2
21	Great Egret	9
22	Snowy Egret	7
23	Black-crowned Night-Heron	40
24	White-faced Ibis.....	37
25	Turkey Vulture	11
26	Northern Harrier	9
27	Cooper's Hawk	1
28	Bald Eagle	3
29	Red-tailed Hawk	12
30	Common Gallinule	4
31	American Coot	500
32	Black-necked Stilt	56
33	Killdeer	9
34	Greater Yellowlegs	1
35	Long-billed Curlew	2
36	Least Sandpiper	4
37	Long-billed Dowitcher	20
38	Wilson's Snipe	2
39	gull sp.	6
40	Belted Kingfisher	1
41	Nuttall's Woodpecker	1
42	Black Phoebe	4
43	American Crow	2
44	Common Raven	5
45	Tree Swallow	12
46	Marsh Wren	2
47	American Pipit	5
48	Yellow-rumped Warbler	3
49	Dark-eyed Junco	2
50	White-crowned Sparrow	43
51	Golden-crowned Sparrow	14
52	Song Sparrow	1
53	California Towhee	3
54	Red-winged Blackbird	88
55	Western Meadowlark	42
56	Lesser Goldfinch	6
57	House Sparrow	3



White-faced Ibis



Great Egret



Red-tailed Hawk

**Photos from the
Sacramento and Colusa
National Wildlife Refuges
by Bonnie Thompson.**



Black-crowned Night Herons

Would you like to receive the Western Grebe by email?

If you have looked at our newsletter, The Western Grebe, on our website where it is published in color, you probably have noticed how great it looks! If you send us your email, we can add you to our email list to send you the Grebe newsletter every month so you can enjoy the beautiful photos and graphics in color. Also, receiving the Grebe by email provides a substantial savings to the Redbud Audubon Society as we do not have to pay the mailing cost. Please let us know if you would prefer to receive your grebe electronically and we will take you off of our "hard," mailing list and add you to our email list to receive the Grebe. If we already have your email, but have not heard from you that you would like to receive the Grebe by email instead of through the mail, please let us know!!! You can accomplish this by emailing us at redbud.audubon@gmail.com. Thank you!

Olympic BirdFest April 15-17

Grab your binoculars and join the 12th annual **Olympic BirdFest 2016** celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, April 15-17, 2016.

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours; and a gala banquet. Featured speaker this year is noted artist Tony Angell, "Revealing the Secret Lives of Owls".

Experience with others the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ...you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings by going online (www.olympicbirdfest.org).

Contact us by phone, at 360-681-4076, E-mail us at info@olympicbirdfest.org, Or write to us at: **Dungeness River Audubon Center P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382.**



February Field Trip planned for Clear Lake State Park

The Feb. 20 Field Trip will be at the Clear Lake State Park on Soda Bay Road. This is always a great walk with the likelihood of seeing numerous songbirds and wildfowl as well as raptors, Great Blue Herons, and egrets.

Please check in at the gate and pay the entry fee. We will meet in the parking lot area near the visitor's center and begin the walk at 9 a.m.

If by any chance you can't make this walk, on Feb. 27 Clear Lake State Park docent Brad Barnwell will also be leading a walk, preceded by a presentation on one of our favorite birds here in Lake County, the Osprey. Or, better yet, come on both of these field trips!

As with all Audubon events, the public is cordially invited to join us.

Field Trip Calendar 2015-16

Following is the field trip calendar for the Redbud Audubon Society for 2015/16. Prior to each field trip a description will appear in the *Western Grebe* and on our website with more information about the upcoming outing. You can also call Pat Harmon at (707) 263-4977 for information. Outings start at 9 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

Feb. 20 - Clear Lake State Park, Kelseyville

March 19 - Highland Springs Reservoir

April 23 - Laguna de Santa Rosa. Hwy. 12 near Sebastopol

May - Heron Festival - TBA



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New Member Introductory Rate — \$20 for the first year

- ☐ **YES** Enroll me in both the **National Audubon Society** and local chapter **Redbud Audubon**. Start my subscription to **Audubon Magazine**, and **The Western Grebe** chapter newsletter.
- ☐ From time to time, National Audubon may share its mailing list with other environmental organizations. If you do not wish to be contacted, please check this box.

- ☐ Save printing and mailing costs by sending my newsletter to my email address.
- ☐ I want to receive the newsletter by regular mail, but please email notifications to me.

My Email Address is:

- ☐ In addition to my membership, I would like to make a contribution to the local work of Redbud Audubon Society:
____ \$10 ____ \$20 ____ \$50 ____ \$100 ____ Other

Name _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to Redbud Audubon Society.

Mail your application and check to POB 5780, Clearlake, CA 95422

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