



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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“Dragonflies” with Kathy Biggs

Redbud Audubon welcomes Kathy and Dave Biggs on Thursday, March 16, as they share their passion for dragonflies. Kathy Biggs has been a nature lover all her life. When she built a wildlife pond in the backyard, dragonflies arrived and she found her true passion.

Early on and wanting to share her passion, Kathy developed websites for her wildlife ponds, California Dragonflies and Southwest Dragonflies. The websites matured and grew into Kathy's becoming the author of California's first Dragonfly Guide, *Common Dragonflies of California*, the Southwest's first dragonfly guide, *Common Dragonflies of Southwest*, a dragonfly color and learn

book and her latest publication, *Dragonflies of the Greater Southwest*. She has also authored titles on ponds for wildlife and how that differs from Koi/Tropical lilies ponds. We have asked Kathy to

MARCH MEETING

Thursday, March 16

- * “Dragonflies” with Kathy and Dave Biggs
- * Refreshments: 7 pm
Announcements: 7:15 pm
Program: 7:30 pm
- * Methodist Church Social Hall,
16255 Second St, Lower Lake

bring copies of her books should you wish to purchase.

Kathy is a member of several other Odonate groups and tracks flight data and distribution for California and the greater southwest. She teaches a 2-day workshop for the Siskiyou Field Institute,

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Dragonflies and Damselflies are the focus of the March presentation by Kathy Biggs.

President's Message

by Co-President Bonnie Thompson

Looking forward to dragonflies and spring

As I sit to write this, I know that someday soon I will be back on my kayak on clear waters in Hidden Valley Lake. There is nothing like searching for the bald eagle, egret, heron, and turtles while tooling around the lake.

I can't wait for the warmth of the sun when the blue and orange dragonflies land on my toes! And after our March 16th presentation by Kathy and Dave Biggs on "Dragonflies", I may even have a name for those fun little blue and orange ones that I remember from my kayak trips last year!

We've been lucky to have superb weather (breaks in the storms) for our January trip to the National Wild Life Refuge and in February to Bodega Bay. I'm keeping my fingers crossed for our March 18th bird walk at Clear Lake State Park. Should there be any last minute weather issues, please check the website as well as Facebook for a cancellation notice.

I hope to see you at our March "Dragonfly" presentation as well as at our bird hike in Clear Lake State Park.



Lake County Ag and Natural Resource Day

The Lake County Fairgrounds will be hosting the 1st Annual Ag & Natural Resource Day on March 16, 2017. Students in grades K-6 are invited to come see agriculture in action through tours, displays and hands-on activities. In addition, students are encouraged to enter the essay, poster and mural contests.

Redbud Audubon will be represented by Marilyn Waits at this event and hopes to see many future birders! For more information, please visit http://www.lakecoe.org/departments/program_subpages/rop_in_lake_county/746

This Year's Heron Days

By Vivian McFarling

This year's Heron Days will take place over two days at each of the locations listed below. The 90-minute tours will leave between the hours of 8:00 am and 11:00 am. The tour fee is \$30. If the level of the water in Cache Creek comes down enough to permit Ed Legan to take his boat under the bridge east of Hwy 53, he will be providing 2-hour tours down the creek, and perhaps to the dam. His tours will be \$45.

Tours from **Lakeside County Park** will take place on Saturday and Sunday, **April 29 and 30**. April 29 is also the date of the Wildflower Brunch at Clear Lake State Park, so you can take advantage of both events on the same day.

The dates for **Shady Acres Campground** are Saturday and Sunday, **May 6 and 7**. Some of you may want to camp there the night before or after. RVs are welcome. Shady Acres Campground is right on Cache Creek north of Anderson Marsh State Park.

Registration will open March 10 through our Redbud Audubon website, www.redubdaudubon.org. Mark your calendars.

Welcome new and retiring members

Welcome new and returning members: Judy Noell, Clearlake Oaks; Cynthia Field, Cobb; Donald G. Donaldson, Kelseyville; Karen Weston, Lakeport; Marilyn Corley, Hidden Valley Lake; and Jane Ahrens, Upper Lake.

Meet Board Member Vivian McFarling



Vivian McFarling and her husband, Tom, moved from Santa Rosa to Lake County in 2005. She joined the Redbud Audubon board in 2014. She is the Volunteer Coordinator, and has organized the boat tours, now called Heron Days, for the past ten years. She was instrumental in setting up and managing Redbud Audubon's gmail account.

Vivian McFarling In 1983 Tom and Vivian founded Coastwalk, a non-profit, that started with a one-county guided walk in Sonoma County, and grew to cover all of California's coastal counties. In 1996, they organized a 120-day border-to-border complete California coastal walk, an endeavor that eventually helped lead to the designation of the California Coastal Trail.

Vivian has one son and two teenage grandchildren who live in Kirkland, WA. In addition to bird watching, Vivian enjoys, hiking, kayaking, gardening, cooking, basket making, and traveling around the countryside in their cozy travel trailer.

"It's a privilege," says Vivian, "to be part of such a wonderful organization."

Legislative Help Needed!

Some of our members who are also members of National Audubon may be receiving email from National on legislative issues that affect our birds. National Audubon (as well as California Audubon) makes it easy to click on a link to locate your representative in Congress along with a link to their email. Your voice is important! Our voices together can make a difference.

In the future, Redbud Audubon plans on forwarding some of these pertinent legislative notices via email to you. We hope you will not mind if you receive them both from National Audubon and us. The protection of our bird life is extremely important at this time.

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To contact a board member:

Phone 707/ 263-8030

Email: redbud.audubon@gmail.com



Expect to see Great Blue Herons and many other types of birds during the walk at CLSP.

Join Redbud Audubon for bird walk through Clear Lake State Park

The Redbud Audubon Saturday bird walk will be held on March 18. Our 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.

At the time of newsletter publication, we have been informed the park is officially closed; however, it is OK to walk in the park. Carpooling is encouraged as we must park on Soda Bay Road. Should this change, 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. This is an easy walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch for after the walk! As with all Audubon events, the public is cordially invited to join us.

“Dragonflies” with Kathy Biggs

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and has taught other workshops and seminars for the Point Reyes Field Institute, the Laguna Foundation, Footloose Forays, Pepperwood Preserve, Salmon Festivals in Sacramento and Happy Camp and several state and national parks. She often presents and/or leads field trips on dragonflies and wildlife ponds at numerous Audubon Society and CNPS Chapters and Gardening clubs throughout the state.

Kathy has worked with the BLM in particular in protecting habitat for the rare Black Petaltail dragonfly and has discovered new breeding areas for the rarest dragonfly in North America: the San Francisco Forktail. She hopes she can inspire you to get to know the dragonflies and the wetlands that support them.

Olympic Birdfest

SAVE THE DATE: The Olympic Birdfest is set for April 7-9, 2017. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. Featured speaker is noted nature photographer Bonnie Block. Sign up for the festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 4-6, 2017. Register separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon. Extend your festival with the Neah Bay post-trip on April 9-11, 2017 that includes two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. Register for BirdFest by visiting www.olympicbirdfest.org.

Field Trip Calendar 2016-2017

Following is the field trip calendar for the Redbud Audubon Society for 2016/17. 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.

March 18

Clear Lake State Park,
Kelseyville

April 29-30; May 6-7
Heron Days



Kathy Barnwell, Brad Barnwell, Pat Harmon, Janet Swedberg, Susanne Scholz, and Darlene Hecomovich spotted 35 species during the February field trip to Bodega Bay.



Kathy Barnwell and Pat Harmon study various shorebirds at Bodega.

Trip to Bodega Bay

By Pat Harmon

Once again, we were fortunate to have the rain subside for our monthly Redbud Audubon field trip. Nine participants enjoyed a sunny day at Bodega Bay.

In some locations, we did have some wind and particularly off Bodega Head where we felt we might be blown off. However, it was much less in other locations.

The group got a good species count of 35 with good viewing. We saw mostly water birds and a few **Passerines**. A notable feature of passerines compared to other orders of Aves is the arrangement of their toes, three pointing forward and one back, which facilitates perching. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passerine>).

We were able to view a large number of Marbled Godwits, Black Turnstones as well as **Brant**. The Brant is an abundant small goose of the ocean shores; it breeds in the high Arctic tundra and winters along both coasts. The Brant along the Atlantic have light gray bellies, while those off the Pacific Coast have black bellies and were at one time considered a separate species. (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Brant/lifehistory>)

We also saw more than the usual number of common loons. All in all, it was a magnificent day and trip to Bodega Bay!



Susanne Scholz and Dave Kestenbaum.

Redbud Audubon's Christmas Bird Count Results

Making Sense of the 2016 Numbers

One hundred and twenty-eight species of birds were seen on the Redbud Audubon 2016 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, December 17, 2016. The 128 count is down from the previous 5-year average of 135 birds but considerably higher than the all-time low count of 122 birds tallied in 2003. The 48,957 total number of birds seen, however, was higher than the previous 5-year average of 37,610.

Highlights of the count were the Yellow Warbler and Black-throated Gray Warbler that are considered extremely rare in Lake County in the winter but fairly common the rest of the year.

Again, as in the 2014 CBC report, the sighting considered to be the most unusual was an Iceland Gull, a gull that has been seen only once before in Lake County.

The Ruddy Duck wins the prize for the most individuals tallied with a high of 16,259 outranking the 11,818 Western Grebes, the species that had this distinction for the previous two years. Several species hit record high counts including the Herring Gull with a count of 4,007 outdoing its previous high of 541 in 2015; the Bonaparte's Gull had a high count of 191 where only 6 were seen the previous year. However, in 2004, the Herring Gull count was 12,508 and the Bonaparte's Gull was at 4,014.

On the other side of the spectrum, only 1 Golden-crowned Kinglet was seen, a species that is often missed entirely. The European Starling registered a high count of 1,121 an increase from the previous two years; a dismay to birders as the Starling is a non-native species that has a significant negative impact on native cavity nesters that compete for the same nesting sites. We can no longer report that the Brewer's Blackbirds appear to be diminishing in numbers over the history of the CBC in the County. In 2014, the 257 birds counted was a registered a low. The count for 2016 jumped to 820. The previous 10-year average of this species is 600, a figured remarkably lower than the high count of 2,558 in 1992 at a time when the Brewer's often garnered 1,000 or more on

the CBC. The American Crow was another surprise at a count of 185 down from the past 3-year average of 357.

Forty-two individuals participated in the count, which is down from the average of 52 over the previous 3 years. The Lake County count began in 1975. The previous high was 57 participants in 2014 and the all-time low was only 10 participants in 1993. Nevertheless, those 10 participants found 129 species, still one more species than from this year's total. Consider this a challenge for next year's Count!

Summary of Christmas Bird Count, December 17, 2016

SPECIES	TOTAL
1 Canada Goose	176
2 Mute Swan	1
3 Wood Duck	9
4 Gadwall	14
5 Eurasian Wigeon*	1
6 American Wigeon	19
7 Mallard	453
8 Northern Shoveler	76
9 Green-winged Teal	5
10 Canvasback	6
11 Ring-necked Duck	51
12 Greater Scaup	5
13 Lesser Scaup	9
14 Bufflehead	612
15 Common Goldeneye	111
16 Hooded Merganser	5
17 Common Merganser	540
18 Red-breasted Merganser	2
19 Ruddy Duck	16,259
20 California Quail	211
21 Ring-necked Pheasant	3
22 Wild Turkey	59
23 Common Loon	3

24 Pied-billed Grebe 76
 25 Horned Grebe 34
 26 Eared Grebe 423
 27 Western Grebe 11,818
 28 Clark's Grebe 526
 Aechmophorus sp. 568
 29 Double-Cr Cormorant 645
 30 American White Pelican 462
 31 Great Blue Heron 29
 32 Great Egret 30
 33 Snowy Egret 9
 34 Green Heron 1
 35 Black-cr Night Heron 13
 36 Turkey Vulture 130
 37 White-tailed Kite 5
 38 Bald Eagle 17
 39 Northern Harrier 1
 40 Sharp-shinned Hawk 4
 41 Cooper's Hawk 3
 42 Red-shouldered Hawk 19
 43 Red-tailed Hawk 35
 44 Golden Eagle 1
 45 Sora 1
 46 American Coot 882
 47 Killdeer 13
 48 Spotted Sandpiper 3
 49 Wilson's Snipe 2
 50 Bonaparte's Gull 191
 Mew Gull cw
 51 Ring-billed Gull 181
 52 Western Gull 1
 53 California Gull 2,023
 54 Herring Gull 4,007
 55 Thayer's Gull 3
 56 **Iceland Gull*** 1
 57 Glaucous-winged Gull 8
 Gull sp. 2,177
 58 Rock Pigeon 37
 59 Eurasian Collared Dove 65
 60 Mourning Dove 137
 61 Great Horned Owl 5
 62 Northern Saw-whet
 Owl 1
 63 Anna's Hummingbird 35
 64 Belted Kingfisher 15
 65 Lewis' Woodpecker 2
 66 Acorn Woodpecker 187
 67 Red-breasted Sapsucker 5
 68 Nuttall's Woodpecker 31

69 Downy Woodpecker 7
 70 Hairy Woodpecker 1
 71 Northern Flicker 59
 72 Pileated Woodpecker 2
 73 American Kestrel 15
 74 Merlin 2
 75 **Pacific-slope
 Flycatcher*** 1
 76 Black Phoebe 52
 77 Say's Phoebe 5
 78 Steller's Jay 36
 79 California Scrub-Jay 150
 80 American Crow 185
 81 Common Raven 92
 82 **Violet-green Swallow*** 1
 Swallow Species 8
 83 Oak Titmouse 70
 84 Bushtit 45
 85 White-breasted Nuthatch 40
 86 Pygmy Nuthatch 4
 87 Brown Creeper 4
 88 Marsh Wren 4
 89 Bewick's Wren 13
 90 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 5
 91 Golden-crowned Kinglet 1
 92 Ruby-crowned Kinglet 58
 93 Wrentit 10
 94 Western Bluebird 97
 95 Hermit Thrush 5
 96 American Robin 600
 97 California Thrasher 3
 98 Northern Mockingbird 48
 99 European Starling 1,121
 100 American Pipit 2
 101 Cedar Waxwing 1
 102 Phainopepla 3
 103 Orange-crowned
 Warbler 2
 104 **Yellow Warbler*** 1
 105 Yellow-rumped Warbler 98
 Yellow-rumped (Myrtle's) 2
 Yellowrumped(Audubon's) 16
 106 **Black-throated Gray
 Warbler*** 1
 107 Townsend's Warbler 4
 108 Spotted Towhee 56
 109 Rufous-crowned
 Sparrow 2
 110 California Towhee 89

111 Lark Sparrow 12
 112 **Bell's Sparrow*** 1
 113 Savannah Sparrow 10
 114 Fox Sparrow 3
 115 Song Sparrow 24
 116 White-throated Sparrow 3
 117 White-crowned Sparrow 221
 118 Golden-crowned Sparrow 341
 119 Dark-eyed Junco - OR 178
 120 Red-winged Blackbird 392
 121 Western Meadowlark 54
 122 Brewer's Blackbird 820
 Blackbird Sp. 79
 123 House Finch 66
 124 Purple Finch 5
 125 Lesser Goldfinch 187
 126 Lawrence's Goldfinch 1
 127 American Goldfinch 6
 128 House Sparrow 41

TOTAL BIRDS 48,957

128 TOTAL SPECIES 128

**Rare Bird Form*



Redbud Audubon
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Joint Membership Application

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.

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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** _____

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