



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

Volume 41—Issue No. 9—MAY 2016

Annual Audubon picnic May 19

Redbud Audubon Society members and guests are welcome to join us on Thursday, May 19 for our annual end-of-the-year picnic and installation of officers.

The event will be held at Lakeside County Park on Park Dr. off of Soda Bay Road. The picnic is a potluck, but Audubon supplies hotdogs, buns and condiments. You are welcome to bring an alternate meat or meat-substitute to grill if you prefer. Sodas and water will also be provided.

MAY MEETING

Thursday, May 19

- * EVENT: Annual Audubon Picnic
- * PLACE: Lakeside County Park, 1985 Park Dr.
- * TIME: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Participants are encouraged to bring salad, beans, chips, or dessert to share. Please arrive at 5:30. Look for us down by the lake to the left of the launch ramp.

The event will include installation of our officers: Co-Presidents: Roberta Lyons and Bonnie

Thompson; Vice-president, Tina Wasson; Treasurer, Nichola Selph; and Secretary, Marina Vedovi. The picnic is a nice way to visit with and get to know chapter members.



A juvenile Bald Eagle was a great sighting.



This year's Heron Days was held on two different weekends: April 30 and May 7. The April 30 event left from Lakeside County Park and although two of the afternoon boat rides had to be cancelled, numerous people enjoyed the morning boat rides that went along the shoreline of Clear Lake.

Photos by Cathy Hall and Bonnie Thompson



Hundreds of Western and Clark's Grebes were seen and many treated viewers to their famous dance across the water.

2016 Heron Days a success despite some tour cancellations because of high winds

By Vivian McFarling

The Heron Days boat tours on April 30 at Lakeside County Park were a mixture of delight and disappointment. Forecasts of high winds threatened to cancel the whole day, but we decided to go ahead with the tours and take our chances.

We succeeded in accommodating the morning tours. The winds were relatively calm, the sun was shining, and the temperature was perfect. People had a great time. Among the sightings were a Bald Eagle, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Great Blue Herons feeding their young, and wonderful displays of Grebes doing their courtship dance across the waters. People on Bonny and Clyde's boat saw a Marsh Wren's nest attached to a reed just a few inches above the water. In the park itself you could see an Osprey nest with little Osprey heads poking over the top.

From 11 to 12 noon the wind direction changed and increased by at least 15 mph from a mild concern to a howling wind. The 12:15 and 1:15 tours were cancelled. Ed Legan and Eyes of the Wild loaded their boats on trailers. Jim Scholz returned the Prather boat the short distance to Shirley Slough. Bob Rumpfelt in a Disney boat and Bonny and Clyde in their boat battled the winds on their return to Lakeport. And the onsite staff hastily packed up their tables, canopies, etc. and skedaddled out of there.

This newsletter goes to press before the May 7 tours at Redbud Park in Clearlake. As of this writing there is a chance of rain and hopes on our part that the forecast will change between now and then. It's been quite an adventure for us this year but we can't complain. Mother Nature has also provided us with abundant rain, wonderful wildflowers and a lake full of fish and birdlife.

It goes without question that Heron Days could not happen without the volunteer boat owners and drivers. The bird guides are an equally important part of the enjoyment of the tours as well as all of the onsite workers at the sign-in tables and docks. Our sincere thanks go out to them.

I also want to thank the behind-the-scenes supporters: Tina Wasson – permits; Nicola Selph – insurance and check writing; Tom McFarling – boater license renewals and general overall support; Roberta Lyons – publicity; Bonnie Thompson – publicity and website updates; Bill and Carol Lincoln – hauling of equipment from storage to the site. And a special thanks to Evelyn Wachtel who fielded all the registration issues, acted as onsite leader at Lakeside and much more.



People who signed up for morning boat rides enjoyed a beautiful and calm tour; unfortunately the wind came up in the afternoon and two tours had to be cancelled.



Redbud Audubon members and volunteers Roberta Lyons, left, and Darlene Hecomovich enjoyed the beautiful morning.

New & returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Patricia Lieuallen, Clearlake; Geneva Stimple, Clearlake; Emma Owen C/O Meadow Wood Nursing Center, Clearlake; Peter Shrive, Clearlake; Anita Moran, Cobb, Ann Wetmore, Finley; Jane McKnight, Kelseyville; Barbara Coles, Kelseyville; Gilbert Bean, Lakeport; Lynn Nehrkorn, Lakeport; Charles Hayden, Lakeport; Richard and Anne Snow, Lakeport; Laura Burke, Lakeport; Marsha Anderson, Lakeport; Karen Dann, Lower Lake; Suzanne Lang, Middletown; and Michael Calegari, Hidden Valley Lake.



Redbud members Floyd Hayes, Marilyn Waits, and Lisa Prather attended the grebe conservation team meeting in Chico on April 21, along with Teresa Arrate from Plumas Audubon (center) and Steve Overlock from Altacal chapter (far right).

Grebe Conservation Team reviews Grant Year Five

By Marilyn Waits

The three Audubon chapters conducting a Grebe Conservation project – Redbud, Altacal, and Plumas chapters – met with Audubon California staff in Chico on April 21 to review chapter activities during the fifth year of this public outreach and monitoring grant.

The grant is funded by the Luckenback Council of Federal and State agencies that manage mitigation funds from oil spills off the northern California coast that killed Western and Clark's grebes wintering along the ocean.

At the one-day meeting hosted by Altacal Audubon, each chapter gave PowerPoint presentations on the outreach and education activities conducted during the past grant year, as well as presenting graphs and charts summarizing the monitoring data for the 2015 grebe breeding season. Year Five began March 1, 2015, and ended on February 29 of this year.

Redbud reported on the two 2015 community events of Earth Day and Pear Festival, where the chapter hosted a grebe education booth to engage the public in discussing how to avoid human disturbance to the nesting grebe colonies on Clear Lake. The grebe exhibit booth was also part of the May 2015

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Heron Days celebration at two shoreline public parks. One school presentation on the grebes was made to two combined 4th grade classes this year as part of a study unit designed by a local teacher.

Dr. Floyd Hayes reported on the 2015 breeding season that had the lowest reproductive success of the five years that Redbud has conducted this project. Due to the low level of the lake from the four-year drought, 97% of the nests last summer were out in open water where they suffered vulnerability from both wind and predators. Dr. Hayes also shared some of the unusual and interesting photos captured by the three wildlife cameras purchased for the grebe project.

Anyone wanting more information on Redbud's grebe project is welcome to email their questions or comments to redbud.audubon@gmail.com.

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