



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

Volume 43 • Issue No. 6 • February, 2018

Visit the Pacific side of Costa Rica at the Feb. 15 Redbud Audubon Society meeting

Come spend an evening visiting the wild Pacific-side of Costa Rica on Thursday, Feb. 15 at Redbud Audubon's monthly program meeting at the Lower Lake Methodist Church Social Hall, starting at 7 p.m. The speaker is Bob Keiffer, of Hopland, a well-known local presenter of fabulous interesting programs. Bob and his wife Beth visited the diverse country of Costa Rica last year, and Bob was able to get lots of great images from their travels.

Visit special places on the Pacific-side of

FEBRUARY MEETING

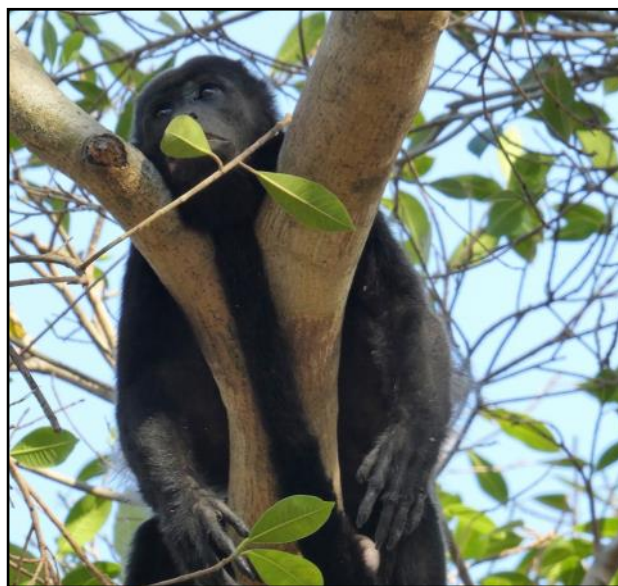
Thursday, Feb. 15

- **Topic:** Learn about the Pacific side of Costa Rica
- **Speaker:** Bob Keiffer
- **Refreshments:** 7 pm
- **Announcements & Program:** 7:15 pm
- **Location:** Methodist Church Social Hall, 16255 Second St., Lower Lake

Costa Rica and see Basalisks at Corcovado National Park, Tent-making Bats at Manuel Antonio Park, sloths at Carara National Park, hummingbirds at Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve, tur-

quoise waters of the Rio Celeste, and crocodiles on the Tarcoles River. Discover spectacular sunset beaches to wild jungles. Find out that it does not take a huge, expensive camera and lens to capture memorable wild-

(Continued on page 11)



Costa Rica is home to amazing wildlife. Don't miss this interesting program where images of animals like the Mantled Howler Monkey will be viewed.

Please note meeting place change

Starting in January, Redbud Audubon began meeting at the Methodist Church Social Hall, 16255 Second St. in Lower Lake as we have been doing for the last few years. If you are coming through Lower Lake, turn left on Lake Street and then right on Second St. The church social hall is on the right. The beautiful Methodist Church was destroyed in the Clayton Fire, but the Social Hall where we meet was spared. We have felt that moving our meetings to the south end of the county for half of our season is a way to accommodate all of our Redbud Audubon members county-wide. Hope to see you there!

President's Message

by President
Roberta Lyons

2018 is the “Year of the Bird” (And read further to find out why!)



In early February four board members from Redbud Audubon were able to attend the yearly Northern California Council meeting, this time held at the University of California Hopland Research and Extension Center. On Friday night we enjoyed a convivial dinner at the Ukiah Garden Café; then met the next morning at Hopland.

The 5300 acre ranch where the field station is located represents some of the most beautiful and intact Northern California landscape I have ever seen. This stunning property includes Oak forests, grasslands, wetlands and chaparral. As we drove up the hill to the facility we were treated to the sight of some baby lambs cavorting about the pasture with their moms looking on. The field station is a research facility focusing on management of natural resources and agricultural development.

While at the one-day conference, held in the Rod Shippey Hall, built in 2012, we learned about the challenges facing our birds and our environment coming from the Trump administration which is working swiftly and diligently to dismantle protections for birds and wildlife that have been established for decades.

Currently Trump's Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, is busy leading the assault on birds by significantly weakening the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), an international treaty that was ratified 100 years ago.

Zinke's directive rules that businesses such as oil companies which accidentally kill nongame migratory birds during their operations are not in violation of the treaty.

Another move on Zinke's part is to throw out the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) that took years and millions of dollars to hammer out among all stakeholders in the southern desert areas of California. According to Mike Lynes, of Audubon California, Audubon just found out about Zinke's gambit. There is dismay that the so-called “renewable energy,” companies, solar and wind, are as bad as the oil and gas industry and are leaping at the chance to dump the DRECP, a hard fought compromise that took years to work out with BLM, Audubon, the Department of Energy, area residents, and other stakeholders.

These are just two of the numerous efforts to weaken and eliminate regulations that protect birds and their environment. This is why I encourage the financial support of both National Audubon and Audubon California. Of course our local Redbud Audubon appreciates your support too, but there is only so much we can do. National and California Audubon have the means to lobby and litigate these issues which unfortunately is the only way this outrageous assault on our environment by the Trump administration can be stopped.

Because the MBTA is 100 years old, and because of this attack on our nation's and indeed, the planet's wildlife, National Audubon has declared 2018 **“The Year of the Bird.”**

Let's keep that in mind as we head into 2018 and do what we can locally, statewide and nationwide to halt these shameless efforts to dismantle the most basic of environmental protections for our wildlife.

For more information on these issues and to find out what you can do go to www.ca.audubon.org or www.audubon.org click on the tabs, or google the topics I mentioned. Redbud Audubon also has a website: www.redbudaudubon.org.

21st Annual Great Backyard Bird Count February 16-19

The 21th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will start on Friday, Feb 16 and extend through Monday, February 19. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) and report their sightings online at [**birdcount.org**](http://birdcount.org).

Each checklist during this event helps scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share.

Last year, more than 180,000 checklists were submitted online from more than 100 countries, creating an instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations. More than 6,200 species were recorded.

In Lake County, Citizen Scientists submitted 96 checklists recording more than 93 species.

Be sure to check out the [**Explore a Region**](#) tool to get an idea of what you can expect to see in your area during the next GBBC.

Please visit the official website at [**birdcount.org**](http://birdcount.org) for more information and the latest education resources. We hope to see more checklists submitted online this year.

***For questions and comments,
please contact:***

Cornell Lab of Ornithology

[**gbbc@cornell.edu**](mailto:gbbc@cornell.edu)

or (800)843-2473

National Audubon Society,

[**citizenscience@audubon.org**](mailto:citizenscience@audubon.org)

Or Redbud Education Co-Chairs:

Joyce Anderson

[**joyce.anderson@dominican.edu**](mailto:joyce.anderson@dominican.edu)

and

Lisa Prather at

[**lisap@lakeportk12.ca.us**](mailto:lisap@lakeportk12.ca.us)

REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



OFFICERS

President: Roberta Lyons

Vice President: Tina Wasson

Treasurer: Nicola Selph

Secretary: Beth Shaver

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Bird Observations - Jerry White

Christmas Bird Count – Brad and Kathy Barnwell

Conservation - Roberta Lyons & Evelyn Wachtel

Education - Joyce Anderson and Lisa Prather

Field Trips - Pat Harmon

Hospitality - Pat Harmon

Membership Manager - Susanne Scholz

Newsletter Editor - Roberta Lyons

Newsletter Production - Jim Scholz

Publicity - Roberta Lyons

Grebe Conservation—Marilyn Waits

Program Committee—Marilyn Waits

To contact a board member:

Phone 707/ 263-8030

Email: [redbud.audubon@gmail.com**](mailto:redbud.audubon@gmail.com)**

February Field Trip to Clear Lake State Park

The Feb. 17 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 song-birds 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.

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

Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Michele Quere, Upper Lake, Michael Boyle, Santa Clara; Deanna Tunstall, Kelseyville; Jody Altic, Lakeport; and, Chuck Morse, Lakeport.

Field Trip Calendar 2018

Following is the field trip calendar for the Redbud Audubon Society for 2017-2018. Prior to each field trip a description will appear in our newsletter, 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.

February 17

Clear Lake State Park,
Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville

March 17

McKerricker State Park
Highway 1, Fort Bragg

April and May
(TBA)



Watching a Western Grebe entangled in fishing line prompted Redbud Audubon volunteers to devise clever recycling bins for fishing line.



Redbud has helped Altacal Audubon in Chico build six fishing recycle bins for the California Park Lake. Redbud member Rob Patton and Dr. Becki Brunelli work on one of the bins.



Dr. Becki Brunelli and Dawn Garcia, Altacal Audubon members show off their six new bins.

Redbud Fishing Line Recycle Bins: The Project Expands

Over the past six years, Redbud Audubon volunteer Robert Patton has built and installed 21 fishing line recycle bins at shoreline public parks and popular fishing resorts around Clear Lake. By removing discarded fishing line from the lake or shoreline, this recycling effort protects birds and wildlife from injury or death caused by tangled monofilament fishing line.

Each bin costs about \$80 for the PVC pipe and other materials, and the \$1,680 expense for 21 bins came from Redbud's Grebe Conservation Project, funded by the Luckenback Council.

Redbud volunteers first recognized the need for these bins when they attended a grebe project meeting where they witnessed from shore a Western Grebe struggling unsuccessfully to free itself from discarded line caught in its bill and foot.

Now Redbud has helped Altacal Audubon in Chico to build six fishing line recycle bins that Altacal will install to protect wildlife at California Park Lake. In early January, Altacal members Dr. Becki Brunelli and Dawn Garcia drove to Rob Patton's home in Lucerne. Over four hours, Rob worked with them to build six bins.

Altacal became interested

because Becki had watched from her lakeside home a distressed Canada goose, crippled by tangled fishing line wrapped around the legs. The goose could take only one or two steps at a time because both legs were bound together, and the line was deeply imbedded.

Becki contacted CA Fish & Wildlife and then worked with the warden to cut off as much of the line as they could. They treated the wounds and released the goose back into the lake. Becki continued to monitor the goose. It likely has some nerve damage in its legs, but it appeared to be doing well, eating normally, and is mobile.

Because fishing line is not biodegradable, the recycle bins have an additional value beyond protecting wildlife.

Volunteers empty the bins, and the fishing line is collected and mailed to a manufacturer in the Midwest that incorporates it into new plastic products.

Since Redbud started this project, Rob Patton has sent 20 pounds of fishing line to be remanufactured.

The fishing line recycle bins are a practical way for Audubon chapters to protect birds and wildlife wherever fishing is a popular recreational activity.



Dr. Brunelli, Rob Patton, and Dawn Garcia made the six bins at Patton's home in about four hours.



Dawn Garcia and Dr. Brunelli work on one of the bins together.



(Right) One of Redbud Audubon's fishing line recycling bins in use. Since the project began, 20 pounds of line has been collected.



Redbud Audubon recently donated this copy of the Birds of Napa County field guide and a Lake County Seasonal Bird Checklist to the Wasson clinic staff, to help in identifying the specific species cared for at the clinic. Reports to both Federal and state agencies are required under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Shown from left to right are Vet Tech Carol Saulnier, Dr. Susan Cannon, and Vet Tech Kathy Bracisco.

Rescuing Injured Birds in Lake County

Dr. Susan Cannon, veterinarian at Wasson Memorial Clinic in Lakeport, is also licensed to provide medical care for injured wildlife. She is the local starting point for a care network that stretches across three counties and involves a range of nonprofits and volunteers.

A multiple-county solution is needed because Dr. Cannon can provide only the immediate medical care and/or surgery that an injured bird needs. Her busy vet clinic has neither the space nor staff for the next stages of recovery when a bird requires extensive rest and rehabilitation before it is well enough to return to the wild.

For more than 30 years in Lake County, Sandy Elliott offered a licensed volunteer all-in-one-location care and rehabilitation service at her large property on Cobb. Injured birds and mammals brought to her by concerned people were given not just the immediate care they needed, but she had the space, facilities, training, and commitment to see injured birds and

mammals through to complete recovery. Eventually, however, Sandy retired from this passionate unpaid volunteer work, sold the property, and moved to Texas to be near family.

Dr. Cannon has taken on this volunteer work of helping injured wildlife. She and her staff handle about 250-300 wildlife cases annually, 80% of which are birds. While injuries happen throughout the year, the busiest time is during spring and summer when baby birds and fledglings often come to harm.

The complicated journey for injured Lake County birds

After a bird's immediate medical care is completed, if it needs only a day or two of short-term rest, it usually can remain temporarily at Wasson clinic. When it is ready to return to the wild, either the person who initially rescued the bird or another volunteer is needed to return it to the original nest or place where it was found. In instances with owls and raptors when the nest is high in a tree, professional arborist and

falconer Steve Garoutte is often called upon as a volunteer to climb the tall tree with the chick or fledgling to return it safely to its nest.

If longer-term rehab is needed before release back into the wild, the bird is transported from the Wasson clinic to one of several nonprofit organizations in Sonoma County. The first stage of this journey is usually accomplished by a Wasson staff member who coincidentally happens to live in Windsor. From there, the bird is taken to one of several specialized places, depending on the species.

Songbirds go to **Native Songbird Care in Sebastopol** which cares for over 1,000 injured, ill and orphaned songbirds each year. Caring for over 60 different songbird species, the center is able to rehab over 75% of them.

Raptors go to the **Bird Rescue Center in Santa Rosa**. Some raptors there are rehabilitated over many months by falconers who fly them until they recover sufficient muscle strength to live on their own again in the wild. Recovered raptors needing to be returned to their place of origin in Lake County are brought back to the county by volunteers.

Water-birds are sent to the **Sonoma County Wildlife Center in Petaluma**, which has pools and other facilities to meet their special needs. That center also handles all wildlife, not just water-birds.

Water-birds requiring longer-term care may be sent over to the **International Bird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Cordelia in Napa-Sonoma County**. (Note: This latter nonprofit is one that Redbud supported for several years in its work to rehab brown pelicans starving along the coast when their food source was temporarily scarce.)

Permanent care for birds unable to return to the wild

Some birds experience injuries that leave them permanently disabled and unable to survive in the wild. In these instances, several of the temporary-care places in Sonoma County also provide permanent homes. Some of these birds become Ambassadors for their species in public education programs at the shelters or in talks to schools and community groups.

Redbud members may remember two other nonprofit groups that offer live Ambassadors education and have made presentations to Redbud in past years. Wild Things, located in the Sierra foothills gave several talks with their Ambassadors, including a young mountain lion, an American Bald eagle and Golden Eagle, and several owls. Native Bird Connections,



This Peregrine Falcon is one of four Peregrines treated by Dr. Cannon in the past year. After recuperating from surgery at Wasson for a broken wing, this bird is currently being flown by a falconer in Sonoma County to strengthen the injured wing. When healing is completed, the Peregrine will be returned to Lake County.

located in Walnut Creek, brought live owl and raptor species to several talks at Heron Days. For five years Redbud also sponsored that group's talks at the annual Children's Museum for Science and Art (CMAS) day camp for 120 public school children in Lake County.

Volunteers are needed to help with local injured birds

Given the current complicated network of care for injured Lake County birds, there is a need for volunteers at many points in the process. Volunteers are especially needed for transporting the birds, a task that doesn't require special training, but can make the difference whether a bird is able to get to the location that can help it reach the next stage of recovery. Volunteers are needed both for trips within Lake County

(Continued on page 10)



In the last 10 years, Pileated Woodpecker sightings have increased at the Clear Lake State Park.



Their food consists of carpenter ants, wood-boring beetles, flies, mosquitoes, poison oak berries and more.

The Pileated Woodpecker (Dryocopus pileatus) By Brad Barnwell

Although listed as “Uncommon” in the “Birds of Lake County bird list”, the Pileated Woodpecker can be regularly heard and often seen in Clear Lake State Park at almost any time of year. It seems that over the past ten years the number of sightings has increased, particularly within Clear Lake State Park,

BIRD OF THE MONTH but also throughout the county in suitable habitat of mature mixed forests and Oak woodland. The Pileated’s scientific name, *Dryocopus pileatus*, (“tree cleaver” or “wood cutter”) is very representative of one of the birds most entertaining and infamous activities, the destructive pounding, “cleaving”, “cutting” and tearing of both large and small holes or crevices in trees, as well as the state park’s buildings.

Reference: “The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds” by John K. Terres, Wings Books, New York, 1991. “...genus name: from Gr. *Drys*, a tree, especially an oak (Jaeger, 1955), and *kopis*, cleaver: a “tree cleaver” or ‘wood cutter’.”

Physical Characteristics

Length: 16.5” (Crow size)

Wing span: 29”

Weight: 10 oz to 16 oz with the male > female

The male and female can quickly be identified by the red head cap which extends from the bill over the head to the back of the head on the male and only from the forehead to the back of the head on the female. The male also has a red malar or red streak extending from below the bill back along the lower cheek, while the female has a black streak.

Feeding

Loves carpenter ants, wood-boring beetles, flies, mosquitoes, moths, ants, grubs, poison oak berries (about 75% animal food and 25% vegetation).

Nesting

Normally excavates a hole, in a dead snag or limb, with the hole 15 to 40+ feet above the ground. The hole is about 3 or 4 inches long and 3 inches wide appearing oblong while most other woodpeckers in the area have circular holes. The interior-nesting cavity is about 10 to 24 inches deep, large enough to house two adults and maybe 3 to 5 young chicks. It has been my observation that when the chicks get big enough to stick their heads out the hole, one or both of the parents move-out to perch/roost nearby in-

(Continued on page 9)



Watch for Pileated Woodpeckers to begin digging out their nests in March.

The Pileated Woodpecker

(Continued from page 8)

order to cut down on the household congestion. The literature states that the parents make a number of holes in addition to the nesting hole and roost in these holes while the mate is caring for the young. If you have the time to watch a nest hole you will see that the parents switch nesting duties. One study observed the male entering the nest just prior to sunset and leaving before sunrise.

Watch for the nest building (hole digging) to begin in March and for the heads of the young birds to be popping out of the nest hole in mid to late April.

Normally 3 to 5 white eggs are incubated for 15 to 18 days and the young fledge in 28+ days. The most young I have seen in one nest has been 3. After the young are truly independent they leave the parents territory and they have been known to relocate up to 20 miles away.

Age

There are a few cases noted in my research that had documented cases of birds living 9 to 10 years, with one still alive at age 13.

Migration

The pileated is not a migratory bird and in fact will occupy a guarded territory of a few hundred acres throughout their life.

Happy Birding, *Brad Barnwell*



These woodpeckers can have three to six chicks. Their nests are in cavities in trees that are about 10 to 24 inches deep.



Four Redbud Audubon Society members attended the February Northern California Council Meeting, made up of Northern California Audubon Societies. Redbud's Grebe Conservation project manager, Marilyn Waits, works with Dave Jensen, Mendocino Coast Audubon, Ariana Rickard of Audubon California, and Brad Graeves, project manager for the Plumas Audubon Society's grebe project during a conference break. Other Audubon members attending were Roberta Lyons, Lisa Prather and Beth Shaver.

Rescuing Injured Birds in Lake County

(Continued from page 7)

and for the longer trips to and from facilities in the neighboring county. No training is needed for these trips, just the interest and willingness to volunteer your time and vehicle.

Experienced birders are sometimes needed when a recovered young owl or raptor needs to be returned to its nest. While the ground location where the bird was found will be known, it may take an experienced birder to spot the location of a well-concealed nest somewhere in the trees overhead. Redbud member Vicky Miller has often assisted with this challenge.

Individuals interested in volunteering to help with transport or other aspects of helping with injured birds are encouraged to call the **Redbud Audubon Chapter at 263-8030** and leave their name, phone number, and a brief message explaining what kind of help they can provide. Someone will respond to connect them with the appropriate resource.

Heron Days planned for April 28 & 29 and May 5 & 6

It's time to put the annual Redbud Audubon Heron Days event on your calendar! This year, we will continue to follow the format we started last year with Heron Days taking place over two weekends at each of the two locations: Lakeside County Park on Saturday and Sunday, April 28 and 29 and at Shady Acres Campground in Clearlake, May 5 and 6.

The 90 minute tours will leave between the hours of 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. The tour fee is \$30. Tours from Lakeside County Park follow the shoreline where numerous grebes, cormorants and other wildlife can be viewed as well as an active Great-blue Heron rookery, or nesting site. The trip from Shady Acres travels into Anderson Marsh and along Cache Creek, which is the location of another heron rookery and may be hosting nesting and mating Western and Clarks Grebes. Registration will open soon and will be available on the Redbud Audubon website: www.redbudaudubon.org. Org.

Grebe Festival planned at Lake Almanor for August 24 – 26

Put Aug. 24-26 on your calendars to attend the Grebe Festival at Lake Almanor near Chester, CA. This new festival is produced by the Plumas Audubon Society and offers birding, boating, hiking, culture, and family fun. Go to plumasaudubon.org/grebe-festival for information.

Please provide us with your email

A number of our members have emailed us at redbud.audubon@gmail.com to opt to receive our newsletter, "The Western Grebe" by email as opposed to receiving it by mail.

Not only do you help save a tree, you help us save on expenses and energy in sending it to you by regular mail, and it comes to you in color versus the black and white mailed version. If you have been meaning to, but haven't yet done so, take the minute or two out of your time to do so.

Even if you still prefer to receive the mailed version of the "Grebe", we would like to have your email for our records. Once in a while, we send out emails to our members about important events or bird sightings that may be of interest. You are also welcome to email us with any information that you think would be of interest to the membership. Questions requiring expert opinions are forwarded to the appropriate persons.

Also, we rely on our members for whom we have emails to help us with any volunteer efforts that we may have. Often it just means a couple of hours of your time. Whether you have areas of expertise or birding skills that you can share, or are willing to help us with general staffing of booths, setting up booths and transporting materials, we welcome your participation.

So please give us your email address by sending it to redbud.audubon@gmail.com, and, if you wish, let us know in what areas you feel you can help.

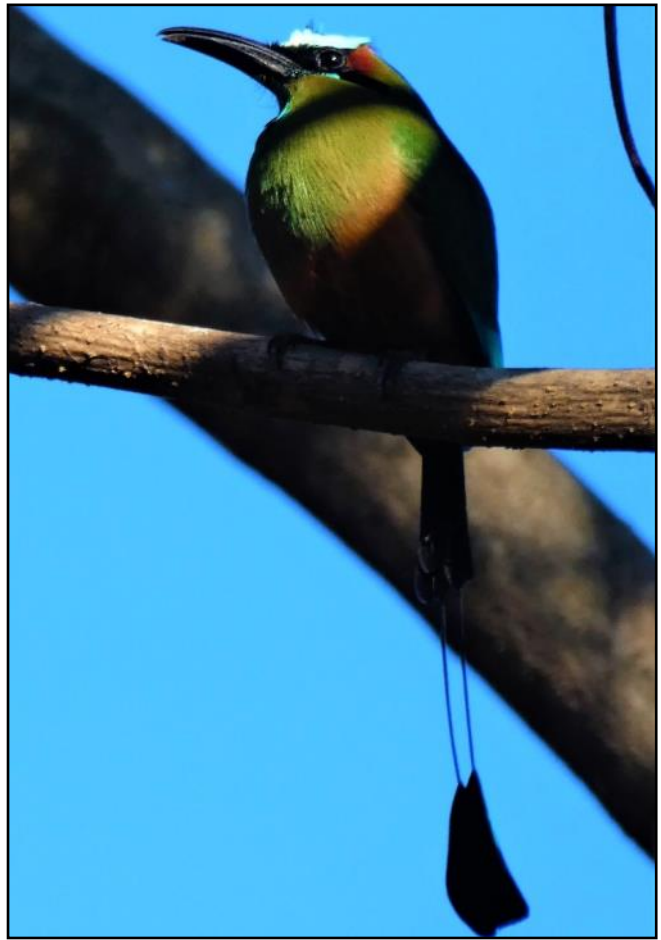
Visit the Pacific side of Costa Rica at the Feb. 15 Redbud Audubon Society meeting

(Continued from page 1)

life photos. Bob's great photography and his engaging talks always provide for an entertaining evening. "Beth and I traveled the Pacific-side of Costa Rica for over two weeks last February, visiting many of the parks and preserves. I chose not to carry my heavy Canon camera and 400 mm lens with me ...instead taking a small lightweight Lumix camera with a 30X zoom lens. I was surprisingly pleased with the ease of use and quality of wildlife photographs that I was able to obtain," Bob notes.

The program should be entertaining and filled with color, wildlife, and country customs and lore.

Robert J. Keiffer is a native of Mendocino County. He attended Humboldt State University from 1974 to 1979 where he graduated with a BS degree in Wildlife Management. Bob went on to work for the US Fish & Wildlife Service at Hart Mountain, Sheldon, and Modoc refuges, Bureau of Land Management in Colorado, Mendocino County Resource Conservation District and ended up with a career with the University of California at the Hopland Research and Extension Center as the Principal Superintendent of Agriculture. Bob retired this past July.

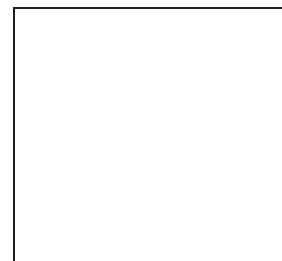


Turquoise-browed Motmot, is just one of the lovely birds that can be found in Costa Rica.



The American Crocodile is seen in the Tarcoles River in Costa Rica.

Redbud Audubon
PO Box 5780
Clearlake, CA 95422



National Audubon/Redbud Audubon
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.
- ☐ Check this box only if you wish to receive **The Western Grebe** newsletter by regular mail. Otherwise, it will be emailed to you.
- ☐ 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.

You have the option of just joining the Redbud Chapter by enrolling online at www.redbudaudubon.org.
Newsletter by email \$25/year; by regular mail \$35/year.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- ☐ I would also like to make a contribution to the local work of Redbud Audubon. My check is enclosed for
_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 Other: _____
**Please make check payable to Redbud Audubon Society. Mail your application and check to
POB 5780, Clearlake, CA 95422**

Thank you for supporting Redbud Audubon Society
Connecting People with Nature since 1974