



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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Saving Songbirds One Bird at a Time *Come and learn about Wildlife Rehabilitation!*

The Redbud Audubon Society is pleased to present an inspiring and interesting program at its upcoming meeting on Thursday, April 19 at the Lower Lake Methodist Church Social Hall in Lower Lake, starting with refreshments at 7 p.m. followed by the program at 7:15.

Have you ever wondered what a wildlife rehabilitator does? Does wildlife rehabilitation really make a difference for wildlife? If

APRIL MEETING **Thursday, Apr. 19**

- **Topic:** Saving Songbirds
One Bird at a Time
- **Speaker:** Veronica Bowers
- **Refreshments:** 7 pm
**Announcements &
Program:** 7:15 pm
- **Location:** Methodist Church
Social Hall, 16255 Second
St., Lower Lake

you find an injured or ill bird, shouldn't you just "let nature take its course"? Veronica Bowers of Native Songbird Care & Conservation in Sebastopol will answer these questions and more as she discusses her work saving native

passerines (perching songbirds that live on land) through rehabilitation, release back to the wild, and community outreach and edu-

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Passerines are perching songbirds making up over half of the species of birds worldwide. Western Bluebirds are common in Lake County. Photo by Brad Barnwell.



White-breasted nuthatch. Photo by Brad Barnwell.

President's Message

By Roberta Lyons



Editor's Note: Janet Swedberg was president of Redbud Audubon Society, Inc. for many years in the early 2000s. She wrote this President's Message in December of 2003 and I thought it was

particularly relevant again as we see the extensive clearing of chaparral around the county. RL

It's Only Brush

by Janet Swedberg

How often have you seen land being cleared, and think to yourself, "It's only brush." Over the past five years, or so, I have been able to identify at least 13 plants growing in our brush, or chaparral lands. These plants treat us to a succession of blooms throughout the year. Blooms provide nectar and pollen, which support a variety of insects, animals and birds.

Many of them provide berries at various times of the year. They are nature's buffet, if you will, and also provide moisture and cover for the various animals and birds that live there. Among the birds and animals that inhabit the chaparral are the California Thrasher, the California Quail, various species of hummingbird, the California Vole, snakes, lizards, gophers, ground squirrels, mice, wood rats, the Gray Fox, bobcats, deer, mountain lions and coyotes.

Currently, you may see the Coyote Brush in bloom and the California Toyon (Christmas berry) with its beautiful berries. Soon the Manzanita will be in bloom with its clusters of little white or pink bells. In the late summer and fall it will bear its "little apple" berries. It

will be followed by the striking magenta blooms of the Western Redbud, February – April, which gives way to the blue and lavender, California Lilac. Meanwhile, Buck Brush, a relative of the California Lilac, will have bloomed as well. The Mock Orange, a member of hydrangea family, blooms May – July.

Winding upward, clinging to trees and shrubs is Virgin's Bower, a creamy white clematis with a yellow center. The Birch-leaf Mountain Mahogany shows its yellowish flowers March – May, and Chamise (Greasewood) with tiny white 4" clusters of flowers in May and June, are both members of the Rose family. The beautiful California Snowbell or snow-drop plant (*Styrax officinalis Californicus*) has white bells, whose petals fall like snow.

In summer, the Bush Chinquapin (button brush) sports its spiny yellowish burs, which contain a small hard-shelled nut. The California Coffeeberry and the HollyLeaf Redberry, which has tiny yellowish flowers in clusters January – April, are both members of the Buckthorn family (as are the Buck Brush and California Lilac). There, I have 14. I challenge you to learn them and appreciate their beauty. What birds, animals, and insects might they feed, and how do they contribute to the food chain? What happens to the animals and birds that inhabit their spaces when they are gone?

There is one more plant, a pest familiar to all of us: Poison Oak. It is a member of the cashew family (believe it or not). Its tiny, greenish white flowers bloom in April – June, followed by tiny white berries, a delicacy for the birds.

If this plant can support life, we should think twice before we destroy all the others, because they are not "only brush." They are some creature's food and shelter, with their own place in the web of life.

It's time to elect 2018-2019 officers for Redbud

By Roberta Lyons

At the Thursday April 19 meeting we will present a slate of officers for the upcoming Redbud Audubon Society Inc. 2018/19 year. We will call for suggestions from the floor before we take a vote. We are once again short of people willing to join the board and provide us some much needed help. As of this writing we do not have a secretary. If this sounds like something you would like to do, please try it out. It involves going to 8 board meetings a year, held both in Kelseyville and Lower Lake. The board meetings are held before our regular program meetings. Taking minutes is not difficult, it involves writing down all action items and then writing them up and sending them out before the next meeting. Here is the slate of officers proposed for next year:

President: Roberta Lyons

Vice-president: Beth Shaver

Treasurer: Nicola Self

Secretary: Open

Board members include: Marilyn Waits, Tina Wasson, Lisa Prather, Joyce Anderson and Marina Vedovi.

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee: Pat Harmon and Roberta Lyons.

Please join us! If you would like to discuss being a board member or taking on a position, call me at 707-994-2024; leave a message and I'll get back to you.

Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members:

Jody Altic, Lakeport;
Holly Warneck,
Hidden Valley Lake;
Dineke Morotto, Lower
Lake, and Margie
Hackett, Hidden
Valley Lake.



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



Heron Days Update

Planners for our annual Heron Days have decided that the level of Clear Lake is sufficient to move forward with this fun event scheduled for the last weekend in April and the first weekend in May; registration opened on March 31. After just the first couple of days boat tickets were selling fast and we cannot even guarantee that spaces will be available by the time this newsletter comes out.

Some may notice that we have fewer boats going out this year, and that is why tickets are limited. We rely on boat owners volunteering their boats and for insurance purposes, we need boat drivers who have acquired a license through the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation of Waterways, Division of Boating and Recreation--For-Hire Operators Licensing.

Licensing involves an application, a written exam, and a medical examination report. They are good for 5 years. These two issues are impacting our availability of boats and drivers and thus reducing the number of tickets we can sell.

- Applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
- Applicants must have at least one year's experience in operating the type of boat on the type of water for which the license is requested. In certain cases, other experience or training may be substituted.
- Applicants must be in good physical condition to provide safe operation of a vessel.
- Applicants must possess adequate knowledge and have the skill necessary for safe operation of a passenger vessel. Written and practical (on-the water) examinations are given.

We had extra boats this year, but not enough licensed drivers; so if you are someone or know someone who might be interested in this process; please let us know. We can supply the information about how to get licensed.

Go to the Audubon website: www.redbudaudubon.org for information about Heron Days and to register and pay for a boat ticket.

—*Roberta Lyons, President*





We couldn't have Heron Days without boat owners volunteering their boats and expertise. If you would like to volunteer, you need a license from the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation of Waterways, Division of Boating and Recreation--For-Hire Operators Licensing.

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.



The Redbud Audubon Society and the Lake Group of the Sierra Club were recently hosted on a site visit of Beckstoffer Vineyards in the Red Hills area and at the base of Mt. Konocti. Clint Nelson, left, a vineyard manager for the company, was one of the hosts. He is pictured with Roberta Lyons, Redbud Audubon, Peggy Barthel, Assistant Resource Planner for the County of Lake; Victoria Brandon, Lake Chapter, Sierra Club and Beckstoffer General Manager Pedro Rubio.

Audubon and Sierra Club working with local Growers to encourage wildlife friendly farming

By Roberta Lyons

The Redbud Audubon Society and the Lake Group of the Sierra Club both have Conservation Committees that work on issues of concern: locally, statewide and nationally.

Recently committee members, including Roberta Lyons and Evelyn Wachtel of Redbud and Victoria Brandon, of the Sierra Club have been holding meetings with local grape growers and developers to review plans for new vineyards and comment on issues

of concern regarding wildlife and habitat.

The County's grading ordinance provides that whenever a significant amount of native vegetation (chaparral, oak forests, and grassland) is being removed, the project is subject to evaluation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Numerous agencies are notified and both Redbud Audubon and the Sierra Club are among those groups, even though we are not "official," state or federal agencies.

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The view from the flanks of Mt. Konocti. One of our big concerns is the importance of habitat connectivity.



The group learned about Beckstoffer's efforts to provide wildlife enhancement in their project area by providing raptor perches, owl boxes, bluebird and bat boxes, as well as leaving patches of habitat and connectivity.

Audubon and Sierra Club working with local Growers to encourage wildlife friendly farming

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The goal of both Audubon and the Sierra Club is to meet with owners, growers, and vineyard managers in a non-confrontational way to review plans and biological surveys that are required as projects are being developed. So far, we are happy that we have been successful in reaching agreement on proposed developments and also in getting a better understanding of current and future plans. Both conservation organizations realize that agriculture has long been a major feature of Lake County's history, culture, and economy and we want to help facilitate agricultural development taking into account impacts on native habitat and the birds and mammals that it supports.

One of our big concerns is the importance of habitat connectivity, or "wildlife corridors." The County has recently started to address this as we have brought it to the attention of the Community Development Department. Since extensive biological surveys and erosion control plans are required for all major grading projects, it is good to see that inclusion of wildlife corridors are now also being considered. We are happy to report that so far growers have been amenable to our concerns and willing to make some changes in their plans.

As time goes on, however, it will continue to be important to review proposed projects, not just vineyards, and to continue to stress the importance of habitat, connectivity, and scenic values. People often point to the hillside vineyards as a source of erosion and causing the problems with Clear Lake. This is generally an incorrect assumption. Most of the sediment load flowing into Clear Lake is a result of unmaintained roads, erosion from illegal off road vehicle use, illegal marijuana grows and activities by people who live on the lake shore and ignore the regulations regarding removal of tules and other lakeside vegetation. We are not implying agriculture is not part of the problem (and the solution) but simply pointing out that the problems with our lake are many and complicated and can't be blamed on one industry simply because it is the most visible.

Now is the time for those of us who love the scenic beauty of our county and enjoy the wildlife here, to make our voices heard regarding the continuing de-

velopment of our scenic and habitat-rich hillsides and valleys. Vineyard developers can work to benefit wildlife through conservation oriented farming techniques including such ideas as leaving corridors and also providing "habitat" breaks, or areas where chaparral and oak trees are left in place. Local developers are for the most part in agreement with this concept and many are already doing it, we just don't know about it. So, as we noted, the goal is to work together to keep Lake County the special place that it is and make it both a home for a vital economic force like agriculture, and for people and animals who love the beauty of this area and rely on its resources.

Your Membership explained

Just a quick reminder that you have a choice between two types of membership. Most of you are members of National Audubon and are assigned by National to our Redbud Audubon chapter. We now offer chapter-only membership whereby you must enroll via the internet. You can visit our website at www.redbudaudubon.org and click on JOIN US for further details. Also, as a reminder, if you are receiving this newsletter by regular mail and are open to receiving it by email, you can save the chapter significant printing and mailing costs by emailing us at redbud.audubon@gmail.org and letting us know.

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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 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.



Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are sometimes called “Little Mockingbirds” for taking bits of other birds’ songs and incorporating them into their own songs. Photo by Brad Barnwell.



Red-breasted nuthatch. Photo by Brad Barnwell.



A seldom-seen Wrentit. Photo by Brad Barnwell.

Saving Songbirds One Bird at a Time

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cation efforts. Veronica will also share some helpful tips that we can all use to support songbirds by reducing negative impacts and providing habitat in our own backyards and beyond.

Veronica Bowers has been a wildlife rehabilitator for 20 years and works exclusively with passerines. She is the founder and director of Native Songbird Care & Conservation, (NSCC) an all-volunteer non-profit wildlife rehabilitation organization.

She is passionate about passerines and is an avid birder. When she’s not working hands-on with songbirds, she’s out in the field learning as much as she can about these amazing and beautiful birds.

NSCC, a state and federally licensed wildlife hospital, cares for approximately 1,000 songbirds annually.



Redbud's Lisa Prather shows students how grebes dive under the water to catch fish for their hungry chicks.

Grebe exhibit wows kids at Agriculture and Natural Resources Day

More than 1,000 local school children enjoyed Redbud Audubon's grebe exhibit table during a morning of agriculture-based learning filled with animals, games and activities during the second annual Lake County Ag and Natural Resource Day, held March 15 at the Lake County Fairgrounds.

The Lake County Fair Foundation debuted the event last year with about 750 students attending. This year, that number nearly doubled, with fair officials estimating that between 1,250 and 1,400 students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade from around Lake County participated in the three-hour event. That is about 25% of the estimated 5,000 schoolchildren in Lake County.

All schools with kindergarten through sixth grades were invited, and event officials believed that every school district was represented.

The event is a natural fit for Lake County, a place

of rich natural resources where agriculture remains a key industry. The event offered children a broad overview of agriculture and the county's natural resources like Clear Lake. It was a hands-on opportunity to learn more about how food is grown and produced in the county, as well as introducing them to the outdoors and local wildlife.

Redbud's exhibit featured life-size wooden models of the Western and Clark's Grebes, with photos of their unique behaviors. Lisa Prather, the chapter's Education Co-Chair, and Marilyn Waits, Grebe Conservation Project Manager, answered the students' questions and explained the need to protect the floating nests and baby chicks during the summer nesting season.

Other exhibitors had all manner of animals – from tiny baby goats to big draft horses pulling carriages,

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potbellied pigs, ducks and chickens, sheep and a sheepdog.

At the Master Gardeners exhibit children could see lizards and newts up close, and could build toad houses to keep toads cool during summertime. There was walnut-shaking equipment and other things that children wouldn't normally see in a class.

The sponsors provided ice cream for the children and coffee for the adults, and Scully Packing was on hand to cut up fresh Lake County pears for everyone to sample.

Plan to attend award winning film on Climate Change at the Soper Reese Theatre on May 18

Editors Note: Redbud Audubon is pleased to encourage people to attend the showing of this interesting film. Climate Change should be a concern of everyone and this award winning film promises to educate and inform.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Lake County is pleased to announce a special showing of *Chasing Coral* on May 18 at the Soper Reese Theatre in Lakeport. Doors open at 6 pm. Movie begins at 6:30 pm. There will be refreshments provided in the front lobby for a minimal charge. Admission is free, but a \$10 donation per person is appreciated.

Chasing Coral documents the effects of climate change on the Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia, and offers solutions to save what oceanographers refer to as the "rain forest of the ocean."

This beautifully photographed movie is offered through the Chasing Coral Impact Campaign. This organization is dedicated to informing the public about the impact of global climate change on our oceans. Chasing Coral has received 24 national and international Film Awards, only some of which are listed below:

- Sundance Film Festival
- Boulder International Film Festival
- Princeton Environmental Film Festival
- International Wildlife Film Festival
- Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival
- CineEco Portugal



Observations ***By Jerry White (JRW)***

A **COMMON LOON** was found on "Tule Lake" (unique location) September, 25th 2017 by Mark Stevens. Brad Barnwell discovered a **ROSS'S GOOSE** at Lakeside County Park on February 1st 2018. The bird was seen later that same day by JRW and Nikki White. An adult male **SURF SCOTER**

was found at Highland Springs on November 1st 2017 by Jim Emmenegger. This bird was seen on November 2nd by Dave Woodward and on November 3rd by Brad Barnwell. A **SHORT-EARED OWL** was seen at Anderson Marsh State Park on December 16th 2017 (Christmas Bird Count) by JRW.

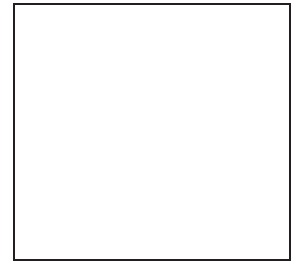
Dave Woodward saw an estimated 10,000 **EUROPEAN STARLINGS** from his residence in Lakeport on December 2nd 2017. Dave Guisti had a **BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** at his feeder in Kelseyville on December 4th 2017. This is only the second winter record for the county. The bird was also seen on December 16th on Christmas Bird Count Day.

- InScience Dutch International Science Film Festival
- Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival
- Seattle International Film Festival
- Barbados Independent Film Festival
- Sheffield International Documentary Festival
- Environmental Media Awards 2017
- Critics Choice Awards
- Philadelphia Environmental Film Festival
- UN Environment
- North Texas Film Critics Association

The movie is hosted by the Soper Reese Theater, organized by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lake County, and co-sponsored by the Sierra Club, Lake Chapter. For more information about the movie go to: www.chasingcoral.com.

For more information about the showing, contact: Anna Rose Ravenwoode at 707 279-8090.

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