



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

Volume 45 • Issue No. 9 • May, 2020

Redbud Audubon Society will stay connected!



President's Message

By Roberta Lyons

The last time Redbud chapter members met together was Feb. 20, 2020 when we enjoyed a superb program on “Birds, Buds and Bugs,” presented by Mendocino naturalist Kate Mari-anchild. Slated for March 19 was Dorothy Leland who was going to report on “What birders need to know about ticks.” That meeting did not take place. As we all know, March 19 was the day that a Shelter-In-Place order was delivered to Lake County by our Public Health Officer, Dr. Gary Pace. Since that time we have all been working on how to deal with this new reality.

Redbud had to cancel our April chapter meeting, two weekends of Heron Days, the annual May picnic, and a special

May field trip along the Eel River into Potter Valley. Pat Harmon has been trying to organize this trip for two years now! In 2019, intense storms cancelled the trip and now, in 2020, we are Sheltered-in-Place.

The new reality also changed the normal annual election schedule specified in Redbud's By-Laws. At our April meeting the members present would have “officially” elected the proposed slate of officers: President, Roberta Lyons; Vice-president, Donna Mackiewicz; Secretary, Katherine Lindsley; and Treasurer, Nicola Selph. At the May picnic we would have installed the officers with a ceremony usually conducted by one of our longest-term Redbud Audubon Society board members, Susanne Scholz.

Because we could not have our official election and installation, and because the By-laws do not tell us what to do in the case we are unable to have an election, we will consider the proposed slate of officers as temporarily assuming their offices and duties. The next time the membership is able to meet, we will hold the official election.

In the meantime, Redbud Audubon is trying to stay connected to our members. We prepared the April newsletter and emailed it to all members for whom we had an email address, but did not mail

(Continued on page 11)



Redbud members Karen Weston, Marilyn Waits, Nicola Selph, Marina Vedovi, and Katherine Lindsley promote grebe conservation at the annual Pear Festival.

Redbud concludes ten years of Grebe Conservation Project

In April 2020 Redbud Audubon and two other Audubon chapters in Northern California (Altacal and Plumas) completed ten years of a Grebe Conservation Project. Grant funding came from the Luckenback Trustee Council, a joint effort of Federal government agencies that disburses oil spill mitigation funds to compensate for wildlife losses.

The overall goal of the project was to increase the breeding success of Western and Clark's Grebes to compensate for the losses of these two species from several oil spills off the Northern California coast. The participating three chapters are located near the largest breeding lakes for Western and Clark's Grebes in the northern half of the state.

To promote greater breeding success, the project goals were to educate the public on how to protect the floating colonies during the summer nesting season and to monitor each year's breeding success in numbers of colonies, nests, and offspring.

Two final reports summarizing the project's results were submitted by Redbud on April 30 to Audubon California, the project coordinator that obtained and managed the grant. Redbud's project manager Marilyn Waits prepared the 22-page report describing both the chapter's outreach and education activities over the ten years and the colony protection activities. The Outreach Report is posted on Redbud's website.

(Continued on page 3)

Audubon Grebe Conservation Project Redbud Audubon

2010-2019 Grebe Breeding Data Clear Lake

<u>Year</u>	<u>Active Nests</u>	<u>Adult Grebes</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Reproductive Rate</u>
2010	1,322	2,694	121	0.045
2011	1,248	6,443	29	0.0050
2012	2,382	7,760	361	0.0330
2013	2,737	8,250	211	0.0270
2014	5,936	2,799	442	0.1600
2015	888	3,253	9	0.0027
2016	4993	6245	704	0.11
2017	5,075	4,560	599	0.025
2018	4,022	3,703	1	0.0006
2019	2,829	3,658	108	0.039

(Continued from page 2)

Dr. Floyd Hayes, Professor of Biology at Pacific Union College in Angwin, directed the grant's monitoring and research activities and prepared the 52-page Final Report on the ten breeding seasons studied under this grant. His final report will be publicly available after its publication in academic journals. The chart accompanying this article summarizes the data from the ten breeding seasons.

The chapter's many outreach activities over the ten years included setting up a grebe exhibit booth at 52 separate community events in six towns. The booth featured a range of educational materials created specifically for the project: Large laminated photos, life-size wood carvings of the grebes, a color brochure, posterboard displays, and a banner urging "Protect Baby Grebes."

Redbud gave a total of 16 talks to community groups like the Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Club, the Board of Supervisors, the Clearlake City Council, the National Audubon Board of Directors, and the Northern California Chapters Regional Council. Four times in the ten years, the project team were the featured speakers at a Redbud monthly chapter meeting.

In its efforts to reach children with the message of grebe conservation, Redbud gave eight classroom talks and participated twice in the Agricultural and Natural Resources Day at the County Fairgrounds, where over 1,000 students in K-6th grades from four school districts spent half a day touring displays introducing them to local farming and outdoor resources. Redbud also exhibited at the family-oriented Children's Science Fair, held on a Saturday in the City of Clearlake.

(Continued on page 4)



A Western Grebe near its nest with eggs at Anderson Marsh. Photo by Gae Henry



Three Clark's Grebes "rush," as part of their courtship ritual. Photo by Floyd Hayes.

Redbud concludes ten years of Grebe Conservation Project

(Continued from page 3)

News media coverage was also important in Redbud's outreach efforts. A total of 18 articles appeared in local newspapers and online lakeconews.com. Twelve articles were featured in the chapter's monthly newsletter. In both 2011 and 2012, Redbud set up a web-camera on a small off-shore group of grebe nests and streamed several days of the grebes' nesting activities. An 18-minute video of the project was filmed and edited by Floyd Hayes and has been available on YouTube since 2012.

Five beautiful outdoor interpretive panels explaining grebe behaviors and how to protect their breeding colonies were

installed in 2014 at public parks around the lake.

Redbud's activities to protect the nesting colonies from human interference included purchasing 20 speed limit buoys that the County's Department of Water Resources deployed around the colonies for protection from boat traffic. Under the leadership of volunteer Robert Patton, 25 fishing line recycle bins have been installed at parks and resorts around the lake to prevent harm to grebes and other wildlife from discarded fishing line.

More information and photos on the project's accomplishments are available on the chapter's website www.redbudaudubon.org.



*A Western Grebe gathers material for its nest.
Photo by Gae Henry.*



*Baby Western and Clark's Grebes ride on the backs
of their parents almost immediately after they are
born. Photo by Gae Henry.*

REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



OFFICERS

President: Roberta Lyons

Vice President: Donna Mankiewicz

Treasurer: Nicola Selph

Secretary: Katherine Lindsley

Past-President: Marilyn Waits

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Bird Observations - Jerry White

Christmas Bird Count - Brad and Kathy Barnwell

Conservation - Roberta Lyons
and Donna Mackiewicz

Education - Lisa Prather

Field Trips - Pat Harmon

Grebe Project Manager - Marilyn Waits

Historian - Pat Harmon

Hospitality - Pat Harmon

Member-at-Large- Tina Wasson

Membership Manager - Susanne Scholz

Newsletter Editor - Roberta Lyons

Newsletter Email Distribution - Lisa Prather

Newsletter Production - Jim Scholz

Programs - Marilyn Waits

Publicity - Roberta Lyons Webmaster and
Social Media -

Bonnie Thompson and Donna Mackiewicz

To contact a board member:

Phone 707/ 263-8030

Email: redbud.audubon@gmail.com

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Shelter-in-Place Patch Challenge

Editor's Note: Mendocino Coast Audubon shared this "game," created by their member Adam Hutchins. Adam is an experienced birder who has worked on various song bird and raptor monitoring projects where he would take notes on details of birds when trying to establish nesting success and area productivity. As Adam says: "The more someone looks, the more they'll see." (P.S. It is possible that many places to bird will be opening up soon; nevertheless, the game sounds fun and interesting no matter what the circumstances!)

By Adam Hutchins

You may be astonished to discover, as I was, that driving to favorite locales for an hour or so of bird watching does not fall under essential activities. As local parks and public spaces close to visitors, our immediate surrounding areas, or "home patch," is getting more bird watching interest. For folks looking to add some personal sport to regularly watched home patches, here's a little scoring challenge for you. Scoring your personal Shelter-In-Place Home Patch can be done as often as you like, per session, day, week or whole shelter-in-place period. You may find the more you observe, the higher you score.

Category for Scoring	Point Value and What to Count	Total
Shelter-in-Place Species List (of course)	1 pt each species	
High number at a feeder at a time	1 pt each bird	
High number within 6 feet of feeder at a time	1 pt each bird	
"Local yokels"— year-round residents	2 pt each species	
Migrants passing through	5 pt each species	
Migrants staying for the summer	3 pt each species	
Territories defended	3 pt each territory	
Seen/never heard	1 pt each species	
Heard/never seen	2 pt each species	
Seen and heard	3 pt each species	
Nests	10 pt each species	
Fledges	20 pt each species+5 pt/fledge	
Interlopers-Birds chased off by patch residents	3 pt each observation	
Birds that eat birds	5 pt each species	
Birds that eat fish	7 pt each species	
Birds that eat mammals	5 pt each species	
Birds that cache food for later	5 pt each species	
Birds that scratch/dig for food	4 pt each species	
	Total Behavior Section Points	

**Score points for any amount of the listed colors
in an observed species plumage.**

Red	1 pt each species	
Orange	1 pt each species	
Blue	1 pt each species	
Brown	1 pt each species	
Yellow	1 pt each species	
Purple/Violet	1 pt each species	
Fuchsia/Pink	1 pt each species	
Black and White	1 pt each species	
Gray	1 pt each species	
Green	1 pt each species	
	Total Plumage Color Section	

Total Behavior Section_____+Total Plumage Color Section_____ = _____

I hope that this Home Patch Bird Game gives you a birdie distraction as we all do our part to combat coronavirus spread. Flatten the curve! Happy birding.

Enjoy these great videos of Clear Lake State Park

Although walking is still allowed at Clear Lake State Park, you can enjoy the park from the comfort of your own home. A series of short videos is available on YouTube, produced by Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association's board member, Bob Schoenherr.

There are a total of 78 videos, each 2-3 minutes long, filmed at different seasons and various locations in the park. Especially interesting are those captured by the numerous motion cameras installed in different habitats within the park. They allow us to watch amazing close-up views of many of the creatures that inhabit our beloved State Park. Watching the videos filmed during the night when there is no presence of humans is especially interesting. You can click on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLlt7dpkiufHKItJnP6f9XCj913i-wbAad>

or go to CLISPIA's Facebook site and click on the YouTube link available there. Or, another way to find the videos is to go to the YouTube website and search for Clear Lake State Park videos uploaded by Bob Schoenherr and they should come up. Clicking on the link is easiest of course, and should work just fine. Many thanks to Bob and his able helper Anita Benzing for the creativity, knowledge, skills, and time that went into filming and editing these videos.



Our first field trip of the year was to the Lake County Land Trust's Rodman Preserve.



Brad Barnwell gets ready to lead a group on our first-ever field trip to the Reclamation area near Upper Lake in November, 2019.

Season in Review

The season of 2019 – 2020 for Redbud Audubon would have run from September, 2019 through May, 2020, ending with our annual picnic. Unfortunately, starting in March, our meetings, field trips and Heron Days were cancelled. To start out, we were having a successful and fun season and we hope to be able to take up our monthly activities again soon. Before our “official” season began, we held a dedication ceremony erecting an interpretive panel at Lakeside County Park, the site of a new Osprey pole that was placed in February of 2019 through efforts by Redbud Audubon and partnerships with Calpine and the County of Lake. We started our field trips by visiting the Lake County Land Trust's Rodman Preserve.



Every year Redbud Audubon holds a Christmas Bird Count. Here are some birders on the bridge at Clear Lake State Park.



An often-seen sight on the way to our annual January field trip to the Colusa and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges are the Tule Elk along Highway 20.



A field trip to the Rodman Preserve was part of the regional council meeting event.



A Cinnamon Teal photographed by Bob Schoenherr at Redbud Audubon's last walk of the season – February, 2020 at Clear Lake State Park.



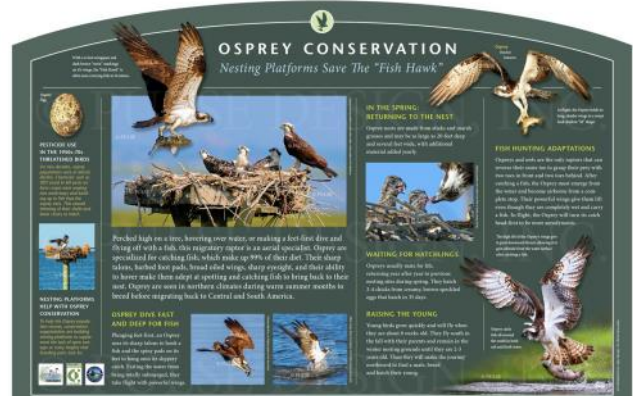
Ryan Keiffer of Peregrine Audubon helped lead the walk at Rodman Preserve for the regional council meeting.



Representatives from numerous Northern California Audubon Chapters met in October for the council meeting hosted by Redbud Audubon.



In October 2019 Redbud Audubon hosted the Northern California Regional Council meeting. It was a great success. Katherine Lindsley and Tina Wasson were part of the volunteer Redbud Audubon members who helped present the event.



Our September 2019 newsletter featured this image of the new Osprey signs that were installed in August 2019 at Lakeside County Park. There are two signs: one in English and one in Spanish. The signs are near the Osprey nest pole that was erected by Redbud in partnership with Calpine and the County. The panels were in part funded by the County's Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee.



The August 24 dedication ceremony at Lakeside County Park. Pictured from left, in back, are Brian Powers, Superintendent of Lake County Parks; Dan Cole, Construction Superintendent for CALPINE, Don Walsh, Area Supervisor for County Parks, Faith Rigolosi who first raised the issue of the need for a new Osprey nesting site; Tina Scott, County Supervisor, and Terry Knight, wildlife and fishing columnist for the Record-Bee who has also been monitoring the Osprey nest at Lakeside County Park for Marilyn Waits, Redbud Audubon, far left, in front, who organized the installation of the pole and creation of the interpretive panels.

Fishing line collection bins now total 25 at popular fishing spots around Clear Lake

Redbud Audubon volunteer, Rob Patton, constructs, installs, and clears out used fishing line collection bins all around the lake. Fishing line is a hazard to the many birds on Clear Lake and supplying an easy spot where fishermen can dispose of their used and broken pieces of fishing line has been very beneficial.

In February Redbud shipped an 11.75 pound box of fishing line to a recycling facility in Iowa. If you would like to help Rod in this effort to empty the fishing line bins call him at (707) 318-8983.

- Shady Acres Campground, renamed **Clear Lake Campground**, 7805 Catch Creek Way, Clearlake, CA 95422. Phone 707-994-8201. In front of boat ramp, across from store. Bin was full/no trash.
- **Clarks Island**, 12565 E. CA-20, Clearlake Oaks, CA, 95423. Phone 707-998-0135. On the right at the end of the bridge. Recycle bin was 3/4 full, 5 - 10 pieces of trash.
- **Clearlake Oaks Beach boat launch**, 12684 Island Dr., Clearlake Oaks, CA 95423. Phone 707-262-1618. Right side of ramp. Recycle bin was full, 5 pcs trash.
- **Redbud Park Boat Ramp Area**, 14655 Lakeshore Drive, Clearlake, CA 95422. Phone 707-994-8201. South corner of bathroom area across from boat ramp. Recycle bin was 3/4 full, more than 10 pcs trash.
- **Redbud Park Fishing Pier Area**, 14655 Lakeshore Drive, Clearlake, CA 95422. Phone 707-994-8201. Fishing pier entrance. Recycle bin was full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Highlands Park** in front of fishing wall, 14295 Lakeshore Drive, Clearlake, CA 95422. Phone 707-994-8201. In front of fishing wall. Recycle bin was full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Clear Lake Vista Resort**, 6190 Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville, CA 95453. Phone 707-289-4017. On boat dock. Recycle bin was full / more than 10 pcs trash.
- **Clearlake State Park**, 5300 Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville, CA 95451. Phone 707-279-2270. Fish cleaning station near the boat ramp. Recycle bin was less than 1/8 full / 5-10 pieces of trash.
- **Clearlake State Park #2**, 5300 Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville, CA 95451. Phone 707-279-2270. Just across the road from Kelsey Creek Campground host sign. Recycle bin was 1/4 full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Lakeside County Park**, 1985 Park Drive, Lakeport, CA 95453. Phone 707-262-1618. Small building just left of boat launch entrance. Recycle bin was 1/2 full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Konocti Vista Casino Resort, Marina & RV Park**, 2755 Mission Rancheria Rd, Lakeport, CA 95453. (707)262-1900. The dock near the boat launch. Recycle bin 1/2 full / 5-10 pieces of trash.
- **Library Park**, 222 Park Street, Lakeport, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6515. Right side of Third Street boat launch entrance Recycle bin was full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Library Park**, 222 Park Street, Lakeport, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6515. Left side of Fifth Street boat launch entrance. Recycle bin was 1/2 full, 5-10 pieces of trash.
- **Skylark Shores Resort**, 1122 N. Main Street, Lakeport, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6151. Center of walkway in front of boat docks. Recycle bin was 1/4 full, 5 pieces of trash.
- **Rodman Slough**, 1005 Nice/Lucerne Cutoff Road, Nice, CA 95453. Phone 707-262-1618. Left side of boat Launch entrance. Recycle bin was full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Keeling Park**, Nice, CA 95453. Phone 707-262-1618. Left side of boat launch entrance. Recycle bin was 1/2 full / more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Holiday Harbor Park**, Nice, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6151. Auto barrier post on west side of Channel. Recycle bin was 1/8 full, 5-10 pieces of trash.
- **Holiday Harbor Park East**, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6151. Light pole on east side of entry channel. Recycle bin was less than 1/8 full, 4 pieces of trash.
- **Alpine Park**, Lucerne, CA 95453. 707-263-6151.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

NE corner of Gazebo on fishing pier. Recycle bin less than 1/2 full / 5 pieces of trash.

- **Harbor Park**, Lucerne, CA 95453. Phone 707-263-6151. Left side of long fishing pier entry in front of boat launch. Recycle bin was less than 1/4 full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Harbor Park**, Lucerne, CA 95453 phone 707-263-6151. Left side of straight fishing pier left of boat launch. Recycle bin was less than 1/4 full, more than 10 pieces of trash.
- **Indian Beach Resort**, Glenhaven, CA 95453. Phone 707-998-3760. Left support post of recycle area roof. Recycle bin was full, more than 10 pieces of trash.

- **Indian Beach Resort**, Glenhaven, CA 95453. Phone 707-998-3760. Left support post of recycle area roof. Recycle bin was 1/4 Full / 5-10 pieces of trash.
- **Kono Tahee Boat Launch**, 7877 Richard Drive, Lucerne, CA 95458. Phone 707-318-8983. On post at entrance to dock. Recycle bin was less than 1/4 full / 5 pieces of trash.
- **Highland Springs Recreation Area**, 3600 E. Highland Springs Road., Lakeport, CA 95453. Phone 707-262-1618. The left side of the road before the horseshoe pits on the right of the road. Recycle bin was 1/2 full / 5-10 pieces of trash.

President's Message By Roberta Lyons

(Continued from page 1)

it to our "mail only," folks. This May newsletter will be "snail-mailed," to our "mail-only," members as well.

Our website and our Facebook page remain interactive ways we can communicate with each other. Elsewhere in this newsletter, we suggest some online resources that will allow you to enjoy amazing birds and animals, both within Lake County and elsewhere across the county.

And here is a suggestion for enjoying birds in a new way at your own home and yard. As president of Redbud Audubon I receive the email newsletters from other Audubon Societies in the region. I particularly enjoy Mendocino Coast Audubon's *The Black Oyster Catcher*. In the May issue, President Tim Bray wrote about a birding game that one of their members, Adam Hutchins, created. Bray called it a "yard-birding game."

As he explains, it is a fun way to think about what you are seeing when looking at birds in your yard, instead of just "tallying," them. He talked about looking at the same birds every day for a month, watching and noticing all the details "that make birds so endlessly fascinating," (perfect wording Tim, couldn't say it better myself). The game entails observing closely and even trying to distinguish individuals of the same species, using their voice, movements, habits, and plumage details. "The closer you look, the more you might see," President Bray notes. He also states that developing the habit of looking closely at

each individual bird will improve your birding skills. If you really want to get "into it" and play the game, we have printed the form in this newsletter, created by Adam Hutchins of Mendocino County. Or, you can just view the birds more carefully and keep your own notes.

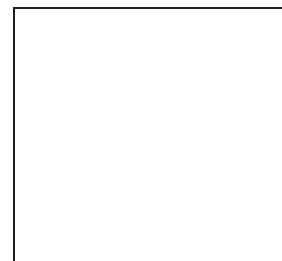
I love this idea and I've started doing it myself. My first exercise was to take a long look at a pair of grebes in our Bay. Even though I may not see this same pair again (as it is different than birds coming to your feeder) I spent more time than usual watching them. I saw how their "head-bobbing," started and the way they took turns and had a very keen interest in one another each time the bobbing started. I also noticed just how beautiful these birds are: how the curve of their neck forms a beautiful "S". Graceful and beautiful and so fun to watch.

Well, dear friends, let's hope that we will be meeting together again soon. In the meantime, stay healthy and safe. Enjoy the birds in your own backyards and on the trails in Lake County where walking is allowed. Both State Parks' trails are open to socially-distancing walkers, as is Boggs Lake and Rabbit Hill in Middletown.

Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Thomas Moore, Calistoga; Kristen Olson, Kelseyville; Anne Frappier, Middletown; and Luis Santana, Upper Lake.

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 joining just 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 donation 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