



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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This photo of a male in full breeding plumage was taken on 11/9/2019 on the Old Kelsey Creek Slough in Clear Lake State Park. You can tell he had his eye on me even though I was standing behind some short stubby willows on the bank. I took this photo using a Canon EOS 7D Mark II and a Canon EF 100-400mm f/4.5 - 5.6 L IS II USM.

It's time to learn a little history and status of the beautiful Wood Duck

By Brad Barnwell

Although you can see Wood Ducks in many different areas of Lake County, I have always concentrated on Clear Lake State Park and Rodman Slough. The habitat is perfect and there are a number of manmade nesting boxes and natural nesting cavities close to the water.

Over the past 13 years I have been able to photograph them year round on the open water, sneaking around on the brushy shoreline, perched in the trees and on the nest box. I'm always thrilled to

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President's Message *by Roberta Lyons*



In my last President's Message I discussed National Audubon's attempt to deal with the character of Audubon Society's namesake: John James Audu-

bon, the famous bird artist and early 19th century naturalist. Audubon held demeaning, racist attitudes toward Blacks and Native Americans that influenced his actions toward them. He and his wife purchased and sold household slaves, and these facts cannot be ignored. As Audubon-historian Gregory Nobles has said, "Evan though Audubon found Black and Indigenous people scientifically useful, he never accepted them as socially or racially equal."

I was scolded by a reader for "bringing politics," into Redbud Audubon. The comment was something like: "Audubon should stick to its mission of birds and not get involved with politics."

First of all, I don't see the issue of facing up to the

racial inequities of the past and present as necessarily "political." It is an issue that needs to be dealt with. And secondly, Audubon is a political organization. As a non-profit we cannot endorse or pay for individual candidates, but we do advocate or comment on issues that involve our mission. Our mission is not just to enjoy birds, take beautiful photographs, and give tips on how and where to go birdwatching. Our mission is also to protect habitat for those beautiful birds and to educate people about how our behaviors affect the birds that we love. Audubon Societies are innately "political," because of this advocacy. For example, our Conservation Committee comments on grading projects such as vineyards and other developments that require environmental review by the County. We have commented on CalFire's Vegetation Management Plan, protection of the Salton Sea, and many other projects. National Audubon lobbies politicians regularly to pass or maintain important Federal legislation that protects birds.

If you read David Yarnold's statement in this newsletter, you will see some interesting statistics from a national survey of Audubon members. He points out that self-identified liberals, moderates, and conservatives support or are concerned with numerous current issues, including climate change. This survey shows that people of all political persuasions do care about the environment and issues like climate change and social equity.

On a separate topic, I would like to take this opportunity to thank some folks who are helping to keep Redbud Audubon Society going during this time of digital only communication. Lisa Prather has facilitated and hosted our Redbud Audubon Society board Zoom meetings and she and her husband Doug Prather will be hosting our annual Bird Identification meeting on Dec. 17 on Zoom. I'd also like to thank Brad and Kathy Barnwell for agreeing to move forward with our annual Christmas Bird Count. This is always a big job, but this year there are added restrictions of course, and Brad and Kathy could have just as easily opted to not hold the CBC. So thanks to everyone for hanging in there, including our members who continue to support us. This is an increasingly difficult time right now, but we will get through it.

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 offer chapter-only membership whereby you ***must enroll via the internet***. You can visit our website at www.redbudaudubon.org and click on membership 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.

If you prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, please consider donating \$10 - \$15 to Redbud Audubon.

National Audubon Society to election winners: “Birds are telling us there is no time to lose”

*Statement from National Audubon Society
President and CEO, David Yarnold*

NEW YORK – “People are rising up to demand action on climate change and racial equity. And [birds are telling us](#) there is no time to lose: more than two-thirds of North American birds are threatened with extinction because of climate change. We need bold, equitable, and durable action on climate. That’s why Audubon’s 1.9 million members are helping to lead this movement. Rural and urban, progressive and conservative, Black college students and white grandparents all agree that everyone regardless of race or ethnicity should have access to clean air and water and feel safe and welcome in the outdoors.

“Now that the votes have been counted, it’s important that the rule of law is respected and the peaceful transition of power proceeds as it has since the founding of our nation. The tone of this election season put a spotlight on the deep divisions in our nation. Audubon members are deeply troubled by the racist, sexist and homophobic rhetoric present in some campaigns. These divisions make it even harder to address climate change and to protect the places both birds and people need to thrive. But Audubon members know there is a better way forward—one that lifts up all people and creates a healthier, more resilient world.

“We have a long history as community builders, and because we are local everywhere, our membership reflects America. Our membership is 53 percent progressive and 47 percent moderate/conservative, and we have members in nearly every county in the

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Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Mark Kitch, Clearlake; Edward J. McLaughlin, Clearlake; Sissa Nelson Harris, Clearlake; Glen Schindle, Clearlake Oaks; Linda Foster, Kelseyville; Joan Brennan, Lakeport; Mary Helit, Lakeport; Jean Wonnacott, Lakeport; Larry Kinder, Lower Lake; Robert Lockett, Hidden Valley Lake; Penny Hargrove, Hidden Valley Lake; and Beverly Thomas, Upper Lake.

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Regional Meeting of Northern CA Council of National Audubon Society

By Donna Mackiewicz

Both Redbud Audubon Society President, Roberta Lyons, and Vice-President, Donna Mackiewicz, attended the Northern Regional Council meeting on Oct. 28.10/28/2020 by Zoom. This is the council meeting that was held in Lake County last October, 2019 at the Yacht Club in Lakeport. It is made up of numerous Audubon Societies from Northern California, including the Chico area's Altacal Audubon, who hosted this meeting.

Ken Sobon, Northern Region representative on the Audubon California Board of Directors, presided and Meghan Hertel - Director of Land and Water Conservation for Audubon California, filled in for Andrea Jones, California Director of Bird Conservation. Representatives from Altacal (Chico) Audubon, Mendocino Coast Audubon, Mt. Shasta Area Audubon, Peregrine (Ukiah) Audubon, Plumas Audubon, Redbud Audubon, Redwood Region Audubon and Wintu (Redding) Audubon attended.

Meghan Hertel gave various updates including one on the Salton Sea. One of the issues there is dust created by exposed playa creates a hazard for almost 600,000 people in the region. The California Department of Water Resources is the lead agency on the Salton Sea. Audubon is working with the Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, and Pacifica Institute. According to Hertel, there are three options to control the dust: creating small ponds of wetness so dust won't blow, plant native vegetation in hedgerows, or dig small ditches, which is the least likely option to be used.

Each chapter gave a report of their activities, which are severely restricted because of the Covid 19 pandemic. Wintu Audubon is continuing its bird walks every month and plans on doing four different Christmas Bird Counts. Redbud reported on various County issues, including removal of Mute Swans from Clear Lake and the impact of permitted cannabis cultivation sites. Plumas Audubon did a bird box give-away and completed their 10-year Grebe Project report. Redwood Region talked about the concept of "Catics," and how they are encouraging cat lovers to consider building these outside enclosed space for their cats.

Both Peregrine and Mendocino Audubon Societies

have stopped all outdoor activities (as has Redbud) but are encouraging "do-it-yourself," field trips for families.

Ken Sobon of Altacal said he would be happy to offer his Owl Zoom presentation to all chapters. He reported that Altacal has banded 52 Saw-Whet Owls this past year. The Feather River Watershed is 51% burned and searches are on-going for owl populations after the fires. He also reported that the popular Snow Goose Festival was postponed, (as was Redbud Audubon's annual Heron Festival).

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 a 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.

Christmas Bird Count is planned for Dec. 19 as of now

Information has been sent by the National Audubon Society regarding this year's Christmas Bird Count. As of now, Redbud Audubon Society is planning its annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for Saturday, Dec. 19. Brad and Kathy Barnwell, who have been organizing Redbud's CBC for the past several years will once again lead, organize, and compile the information for the event. You will be receiving your usual email from them if you are a former participant, but information will be available in our December newsletter if you would like to take part as a first-time participant.

Information from the National Audubon Society: Due to the COVID19 outbreak, this year's Christmas Bird Count will require a few changes if your count is to take place at all. The two options for Christmas Bird Count compilers are as follows:

Option 1: Run a COVID-19 safe and socially distanced CBC, if local rules allow. [Must wait until November 15 at the earliest to choose this option in order to better understand status of COVID outbreak in your region during the CBC.]

Option 2: If option 1 is not possible, cancel this season's CBC for your location. [Can choose this option now if you wish.] If you choose option 1, below are the guidelines that we urge you to follow: (This is the option chosen by Redbud Audubon)

- Wait until November 15 at the earliest to confirm CBC will take place, if local regulations allow.
- Cancel all in-person compilation gatherings.
- Social distancing and/or masking are required at all times in the field.
- Carpooling may only occur within existing familiar or social "pod" groups.
- Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

There will be a virtual bird ID presentation this year on Thursday, Dec. 17, and information to connect to the Zoom link will be sent via email to everyone on the chapter email list.

National Audubon Society to election winners: "Birds are telling us there is no time to lose"

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United States. "In a recent survey of our membership, we found that: Nearly every Audubon member (**97%**) agrees that **"every American, regardless of race or color, should have equal access to clean air and clean water."**

"That belief is shared by **98% of progressive** Audubon members and **96% of moderates and conservatives**—a deeply held value across political lines. More than **95%** of all Audubon members—including 9 in 10 moderate and conservative members—report concern about the following issues:

- Destruction of habitat for birds and other wildlife;
- Air and water pollution;
- Attacks on bedrock environmental laws;
- Oil drilling and mining on protected public lands.

75% of all Audubon members, including a majority of moderate and conservative members, rank climate change as one of their top three

concerns among all issues facing America today—and **82%** of Audubon members (including **61% of moderates and conservatives**) are personally "very concerned" about growing impacts of climate change.

"Our membership demonstrates strong support across the political spectrum for action on environmental, climate, and community priorities. "We need durable solutions with support across political lines—and our members are ready to raise their voices. Environmental concerns are no place for partisan divisions.

"Audubon is resolute in our ambition for inclusivity, our commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization, and our determination to address the disproportionate impact climate change and air and water pollution have on marginalized communities.

"To that end, we will advocate for a more resilient and inclusive economy with more green jobs, for cleaner air, and stronger communities that protect birds, conserve water, restore wetlands, and reduce emissions."



This photo of a male and female in full breeding plumage was taken 10/24/2020 on Old Kelsey Creek Slough in Clear Lake State Park. I was able to take this photo while walking the trail next to the slough. I had watched this pair in the same area for a number of days. They were often in a group of mallards and one female Northern Shoveler, but usually off to the side near the shoreline and near cover. I took this photo with a Canon EOS 7D Mark II and a Canon EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM.

It's time to learn a little history and status of the beautiful Wood Duck

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reveal the wood ducks to people on my bird walks who have never seen them. I'm as excited as they are when they see them up close through binoculars or a scope.

Although we can see Wood Ducks at almost any time of year in Lake County, it wasn't always that way in both the United States and Canada. During the late 1800s and early 1900s the Wood Duck population was drastically reduced because of loss of habitat and market hunting, and there was a serious concern that they would be eliminated.

In 1918 Canada and the United States closed the hunting season until 1941. This protection, combined

with smaller bag limits and protection of the Wood Duck's preferred habitat, enabled the population to rebound.

In the 1960s the population was estimated at between 2 ½ and 3 ½ million. Although extremely difficult to get an accurate count of the current Wood Duck population, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has estimated the population as of 2019 to be three million breeding pairs in North America.

I thought I would take this opportunity to show you a few photos and give you the time of year of the photo and the description of the circumstances of my encounter.

Happy birding!

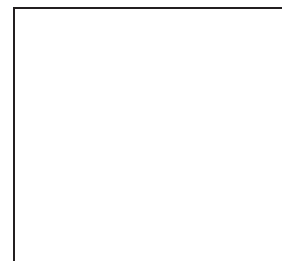


This photo of a young juvenile male was taken at the mouth of Rodman Slough on 9/14/2011. Notice that he does not have the full adult plumage and does not have the red eye. I was able to slip my kayak right up close to this not-so-wary youngster. I took this photo with a Canon EOS 7D and a Canon 100-400mm lens.



This photo of a female with one duckling was taken on 6/24/09 on Cole Creek near the marina in Clear Lake State Park. I had been watching this family for about a week. When I first started watching her she had eight ducklings and in just a few short days she was down to one lone survivor. I was able to slip right up close to her in my kayak to get this photo. I was using a Canon 40D with a Canon EF 100-400 f/4.5-5.6L IS USM.

Redbud Audubon
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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.

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