



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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Hiking to the rim of an erupting volcano

Redbud Audubon Society will be hosting Redbud board member Lisa Prather on Nov. 18 starting at 7 p.m. Lisa will be talking about her adventure of traveling 4,000 miles from her home to see a volcano in Iceland. The program is a Zoom presentation and requires pre-registration.

Why travel 4,000 miles from home to see a volcano? Well, for several reasons. This volcano erupted this year for the first time in 800 years. And it continued erupting, from March 19 to September 18, with occasional breaks. It is in a country that has both 150 volcanos and the second largest glacier in Europe.

We are talking about Iceland. The volcano is Fagradalsfjall. Lisa Prather, the “someone” who traveled to see the volcano first-hand, is a science and math teacher in the Lakeport School District, and is currently a teaching coach for new Lakeport teachers.

“Fagradalsfjall captured my interest in early

(Continued on page 10)



Lisa Prather visited the ocean port at Vestmannaðejar, Iceland.

REDBUD AUDUBON

NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

Thursday, November 18, 7 PM

Topic: Hiking to the rim of an erupting volcano

Presenter: Lisa Prather, Redbud Audubon Board member

To register for this Zoom meeting, click link:

[Redbud Audubon Program Registration](https://www.redbudaudubon.org)

**Or visit RedbudAudubon.org
and click on the registration link**

Or scan the following QR code:



Christmas Bird Count planned for Saturday, December 18th

If Covid cases in Lake County continue to go down or stabilize, we plan to participate in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, Dec. 18. National Audubon is advising participating chapters to follow the CDC guidelines and all State and local mandates to ensure the safety of all CBC participants.

They advise us to wait until Nov. 15 to determine if local conditions will allow a safe event, and ask us to follow these Audubon Covid restrictions:

- Masking in the field if social distancing is not possible
- Carpooling allowed only within existing

familiar or “social” pod groups

- Compilation gatherings to be held outdoors, if possible. If held indoors, masking and other precautions must be taken.

Brad and Kathy Barnwell will again organize, lead, and compile the information for the event. Past participants will receive a save-the-date email in early November, and a confirmation email Nov. 15 when we are allowed to make our final determination based on our local Covid conditions.

More information will be available in the December Grebe Newsletter.

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 for which 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.

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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.

Watch livecam on birds arriving at Sacramento Refuge

The group Friends of the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge (NWR) has set up a live web-camera that you can watch on www.explore.org. Flocks of migrating ducks have arrived and are clustered on the beaches at the refuge.

The explore.org website has 87 different nature webcams on birds, bears, African wildlife, and others. The seasonal bird webcams include nesting bald eagles, hummingbirds, peregrine falcons, and puffins.

Redbud Audubon will be holding its annual field trip to both the Colusa and Sacramento NWRs in January. Exact date will be published in our January newsletter.

Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Arthur Peoples, Clearlake; Melissa Bentley, Cobb; Robert Boccabella, Kelseyville; Shannon Tolson, Kelseyville; Gina Martin, Kelseyville; Lynn Nehrkorn, Lakeport; Elyse M. Donald, Lakeport; Roche Julia, Lower Lake; Dianne Sokoloski, Clearlake Oaks;

Sandra Moura, Kelseyville; Barbara Bridges, Lakeport; Karen Marshall, Lakeport; Karen Dann, Lower Lake; Kay Nyne Coyote, Clearlake; Gene Borissenko, Cobb; Sidney Richards, Cobb; Sharon Weeks, Kelseyville; Roberta Actor, Lakeport; Kirk Olsen, Lakeport; Collette Fletcher, Lakeport; Jeffrey Kessner, Lakeport; Steven W. Ellis, Lower Lake; Cheryl Trueblood, Middletown; Jocelyn Montgomery, Clearlake Oaks; Geraldine Qugley, Clearlake Oaks;

Wendy Overin, Clearlake Oaks; Jeanne Welch, Kelseyville, Don and Leah Adams, Kelseyville; Roxann Brasier, Kelseyville; Catherine Quistgard, Kelseyville; Patricia Pneumatikos, Lucerne; Marion Franklin, Stonyford; Judy Noell, Clearlake Oaks; Susan Youngblood, Glenhaven; Ralph L. Moore, Jr., Kelseyville; Susanne Scholz, Lakeport; Bernard Merchen, Lakeport; and Karen S. Dann, Lower Lake.



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To contact a board member:

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An adult Killdeer clearly showing the red/orange eye-ring, two black chest bands and the white chest and belly. Photo taken July 2011.

Learn about the charming and interesting Killdeer

Photos and article by Brad Barnwell

I thought I would begin by giving you some basic information on the Killdeer, then add some local statistics and anecdotal observations, followed with some of my photographs. So lets get started.

The Killdeer is by far the most common of the four plovers documented in Lake County, which are part of the larger, less formal group collectively referred to as “shorebirds” (about 55 species, about eleven of which are plovers in the continental USA).

According to “The Sibley Guide to Birds” First Edition 2000, the basic measurements of the four plovers seen in Lake County are:

	Length	Wing span	Weight
Black-bellied Plover	11.5”	29”	8 oz (240 g)
Killdeer	10.5”	24”	3.3 oz (95g)
Snowy Plover	6.25”	17”	1.4 oz (40g)
Semipalmated Plover	7.25”	19”	1.6 oz (45g)

Female Killdeer are larger than males, and Killdeer are often used as a size reference for shorebird size

(Continued on page 9)



Adult Killdeer eating a freshly caught earthworm. Photo was taken November 2011.



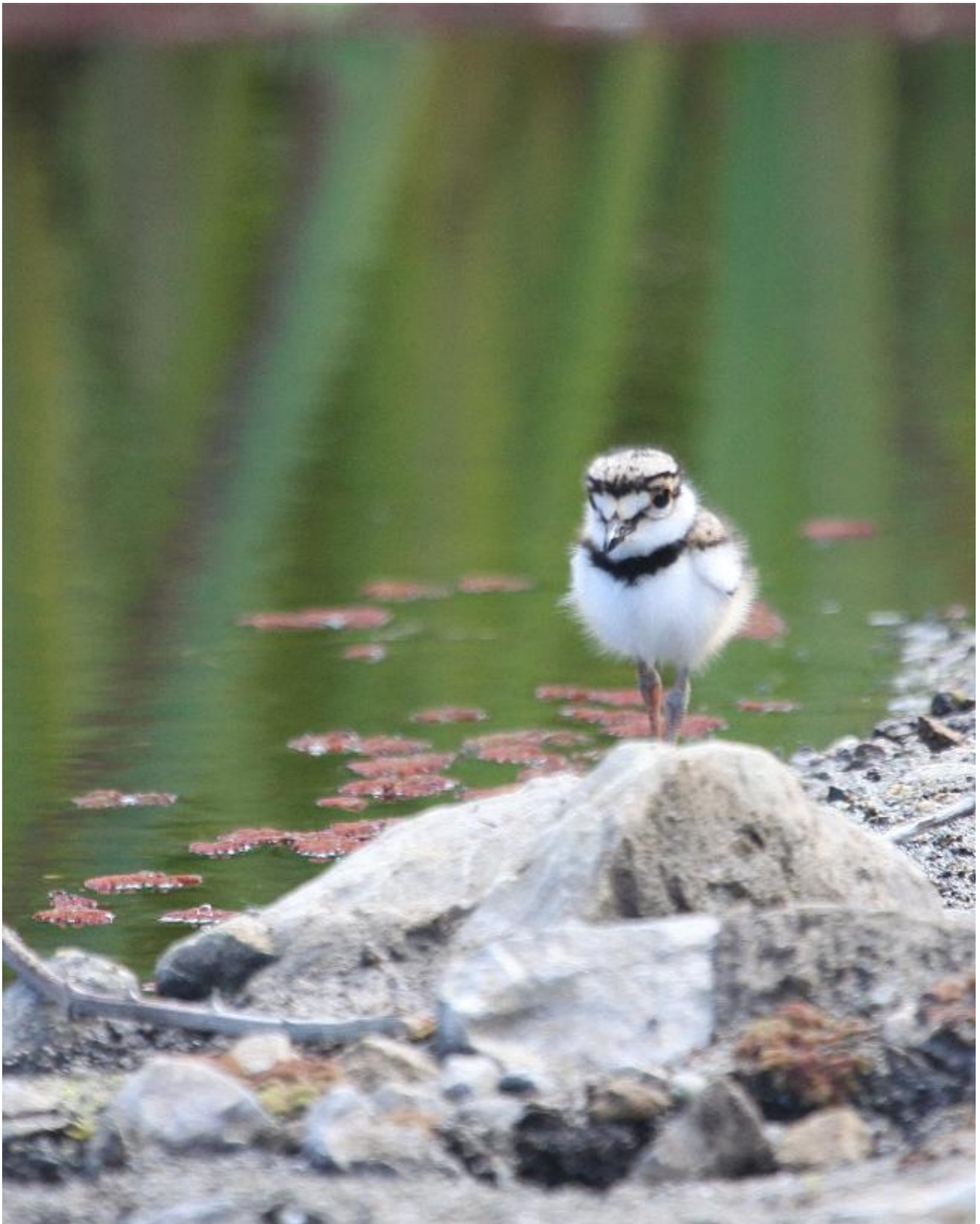
An adult killdeer trying to lure the photographer away from her nest by acting crippled. Photo was taken March 2018.



An adult pair preparing to mate. This photo was taken at the Clear Lake State Park swim beach picnic area in March of 2018.



This nest was right in the middle of a well-used service road at the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge in April 2009. This was probably not a successful nest.



"Yes, I am the cutest little bird you have ever seen." This photo was taken at MacKerricher State Park July 2010, near Fort Bragg.



Mother sheltering two of her young chicks at MacKerricher State Park July 2010.

Learn about the charming and interesting Killdeer

(Continued from page 4)

comparisons.

Killdeer are listed on the *Lake County Bird Checklist* as “Common” in the spring, summer, fall and “Fairly Common” in the winter.

The literature states that although the Killdeer is often migratory in some parts of the country, it may be a year-round resident across the south, southwest and west coast of the USA, including Lake County.

Although listed as fairly common during the winter season in Lake County, (December thru February) there are times when it can be tough locating a Killdeer. Case in point: The Redbud Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) normally held around mid December each year had the following totals:

2020	13
2019	2
2018	0
2017	30
1978	320 (all time high)

I’m hoping that this year, with the low lake level and the expansion of the mudflats, the 2021 CBC numbers will increase.

As you can see by the photos, the adult Killdeer has some distinct identifying markings, i.e. two black bands across the chest (chicks only have one band), the orange/red eye ring, white belly and a rufous or

orange rump.

When it comes to nesting, they tend to nest in open fields, pastures, and some more precarious sites like gravel roadbeds or driveways, golf courses and flat gravel roofs. I found one nest with eggs on the gravel road bed of a service road in the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge (see photo); others were found in the planter at the Lakeside County Park boat launch parking lot, and in the parking lot of my accountant in downtown Lakeport.

The two Killdeer riding piggy-back in the photo were in the picnic area at the Clear Lake State Park swim beach. The nests are normally in the open and are only a slight depression in the ground surrounded by some small pebbles, and maybe some bits of grass and twigs.

According to *Stokes Field Guide to Birds*, Killdeer lay 3 to 4 eggs and incubate them for 24 to 28 days. The chicks are born precocial (hatched with feathers and able to move and feed themselves), and fledge in about 25 days. The parents may also have a second brood.

Some sources state that more than 50% of the eggs are lost, primarily to predators. On average, well over half the nests fail to fledge young. The survival rate for first-year birds is about 50%. Killdeer can live to be about 10 years old.

Legislative support needed!

Some of our members who are also members of National Audubon may receive 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 representatives in Congress and their email. Your voice is important! Our voices together can make a difference. Redbud Audubon forwards pertinent 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.



The volcano attracted Icelanders and tourists by the thousands. Photo by stuckiniceland.com

Hiking to the rim of an erupting volcano

(Continued from page 1)

March,” Lisa explained, “when news reports announced that an impending volcano was going to emerge in the small island nation of Iceland. My husband and I watched the live feed of the volcano from day one until July 9th when I got to see it in person, sort of.”

“I was hoping to see lava erupting in great mountains of molten orange, but when my sister and I arrived, it was ‘taking a break.’ Fortunately, this provided me with the time to explore this island and all it has to offer,” Lisa notes.

“Iceland is a land of contrasts. Among the reasons why I went to Iceland were the awe-inspiring waterfalls, geothermal pools, and amazing ‘wildlife.’ I got to walk across the continental divide, relax in hot

pools, get to know the people and their history, and see a live volcano erupt.”

Iceland is the second largest island in Europe, after Great Britain. It spans two tectonic plates: The North American and Eurasian; and its volcanos draw from deep in the molten mantle of the Earth. It has a mild summer climate for such a northern latitude. Despite its name, Iceland is a green nation in both its renewable energy and vegetation, making summer visitors speculate why it was dubbed ‘the land of ice.’

It is one of the least populated nations in the world but has the highest per capita electricity usage in the world. Although 28 times larger than San Francisco, Iceland holds 60% fewer people. Icelanders are among the most literate people in the world with a

(Continued on page 11)



Selfoss is Iceland's second largest waterfall. Photo by Lisa Prather

Hiking to the rim of an erupting volcano

(Continued from page 10)

99% literacy rate. They also speak several languages fluently, including English. While claiming a tough Viking heritage, Iceland is also fiercely dedicated to human rights.

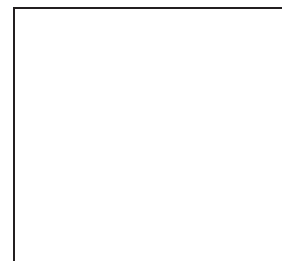
“All these contrasts drew me to Iceland as a place to regenerate after several years of hard work, and it provided me with a temporary escape from Covid. So when my friends ask me, “Why Iceland?” I answer, “Why not?”

To register for this Zoom presentation click on the link in Redbud’s online newsletter, or go to www.redbudaudubon.org and click on the registration link on the home page of the website.



Puffin colonies are a famous Iceland sight. Photo by Kara Larricea

Redbud Audubon
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National Audubon/Redbud Audubon
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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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