



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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Learn about birds of prey migrating by the thousands each year over the Marin Headlands



Allen Fish, biologist, hawk expert, and director of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory will be Redbud Audubon's guest speaker on Sept. 15.

The Redbud Audubon Society will host raptor expert, Allen Fish, on Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. on a Zoom program.

Allen Fish is a bird biologist, writer, teacher, and community science expert who has been the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) director since 1985.

From August through December each year a great number of hawks, kites, eagles, falcons, osprey, vultures and harriers pass through the Marin Headlands on their autumn migration. This spectacular visible flight has been monitored and tracked by National Park Service volunteers since the early 1980s, under the auspices of the GGRO.

Pre-registration for the Zoom program is required and can be accomplished by clicking on the link in this newsletter or by going to

(Continued on page 10)

REDBUD AUDUBON

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022, 7 PM

Topic: Birds of Prey by Allen Fish

Presenter: Director of Golden Gate
Observatory Allen Fish

To register for this Zoom meeting, click link:

[Redbud Audubon Program Registration](#)

Or visit RedbudAudubon.org
and click on the registration link

Or scan the following QR code:



President's Message

by Roberta Lyons

Birding opportunities in our area abound



Roberta Lyons

Welcome back everyone! We look forward to an interesting and rewarding season for Redbud Audubon. Our first program features the director of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory.

For our programs this year, the board wavered on whether to have “in person,” programs for half of the time and “Zoom,” for the other half. We finally settled on sticking to “Zoom only” for another season. After much feedback from members and friends, it seems most people prefer Zoom programs. We often get better attendance at the Zoom programs. I know this isn't satisfactory for everyone, but with Covid still lurking, we thought we would stick with Zoom a little while longer. We don't have the technology to do both. That, of course would be ideal.

To facilitate face-to-face gatherings, we plan to offer more field trips and promote attendance to those. Our first field trip will be to Stonehouse Cellars on Old Long Valley Road on Saturday, Sept. 17 at 9 a.m. This should be a fun morning.

I'm happy to report that the Great Blue Heron Rookery at the Reclamation Area (referred to on the graph as Rodman Slough because it is on the north end of the slough) appears to have done well this last spring. Brad and Kathy Barnwell and I visited in early spring and counted 100 GBH's and 50 nests. As far as we know, this is the largest rookery now in Lake County.

The rookery on Slater Island in Anderson Marsh has disappeared. Slater was one of our “go to,” sites to view the nesting herons during past Heron Days events. There have been reports of herons nesting on the north side of Cache Creek, further west than the Slater Island rookery, but it is difficult to view this

area so none have been corroborated. Clipper Lane and Reeves Point, both on the Big Valley shoreline, each have a few nests, less than 10. So, in general, there are fewer nesting herons here in Lake County

It would be great to get volunteers to visit the site at the Reclamation Area (Rodman Slough) next spring as it is quite a distance for some of us to drive there. Once parked, it is only about a half mile walk to where you can see them.

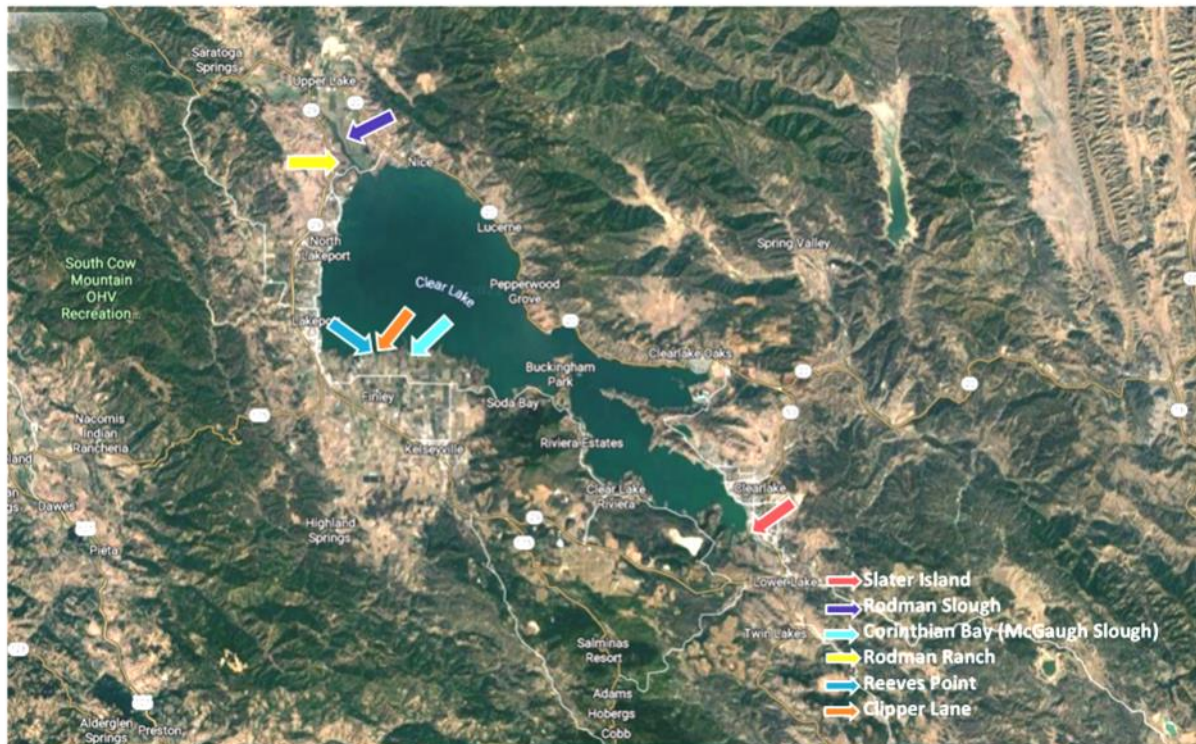
Hundreds of grebes have been spotted near Lakeport nesting off of Library Park, all the way down to the Lake County Land Trust's Wright Wetlands Preserve and beyond to the Konocti Vista Casino area. The grebes started nesting in early August. They built their nests out of lake weeds instead of tules (which is their usual material).

Because they are so far out in the lake, they are unprotected from the wind. Sadly, this seems to have led to the demise of perhaps half of the original 1000 nests that were first reported, but according to a recent observation, there are still nests; they are just closer to the shore and more spread out.

At one point it was believed all of the nests had been over-turned by waves as they have disappeared in some areas, but about 400 to 500 nests remain. These are approximate numbers, of course, as it is difficult to count every single nest. We believe this was a naturally occurring event from wind; not disturbance by boats. The area where the grebes are nesting is so thick with weeds it is unlikely a boat could get in there, or want to. Jet skiers have been noted to disturb birds, but witnesses kayaking say it looks like the extent of the damage was caused by wind.

Final news: Redbud Audubon Society will have a booth at the Pear Festival on Sept. 24. Stop by and say hi! Buy a T-shirt, book or just chat. If interested in volunteering to help staff the Redbud booth, email us at redbud.audubon@gmail.com and someone will get back to you.

Great Blue Heron Rookery Sites 1990-2022



Current Great Blue Heron rookery sites on Clear Lake.

Herons are moving to different nesting sites on Clear Lake

By Roberta Lyons

Last year Kathy Barnwell and I teamed up to start trying to keep track of the Great Blue Heron rookeries on Clear Lake. Kathy and her husband Brad coordinate our Christmas Bird Count and lead field trips, along with many other Redbud Audubon activities.

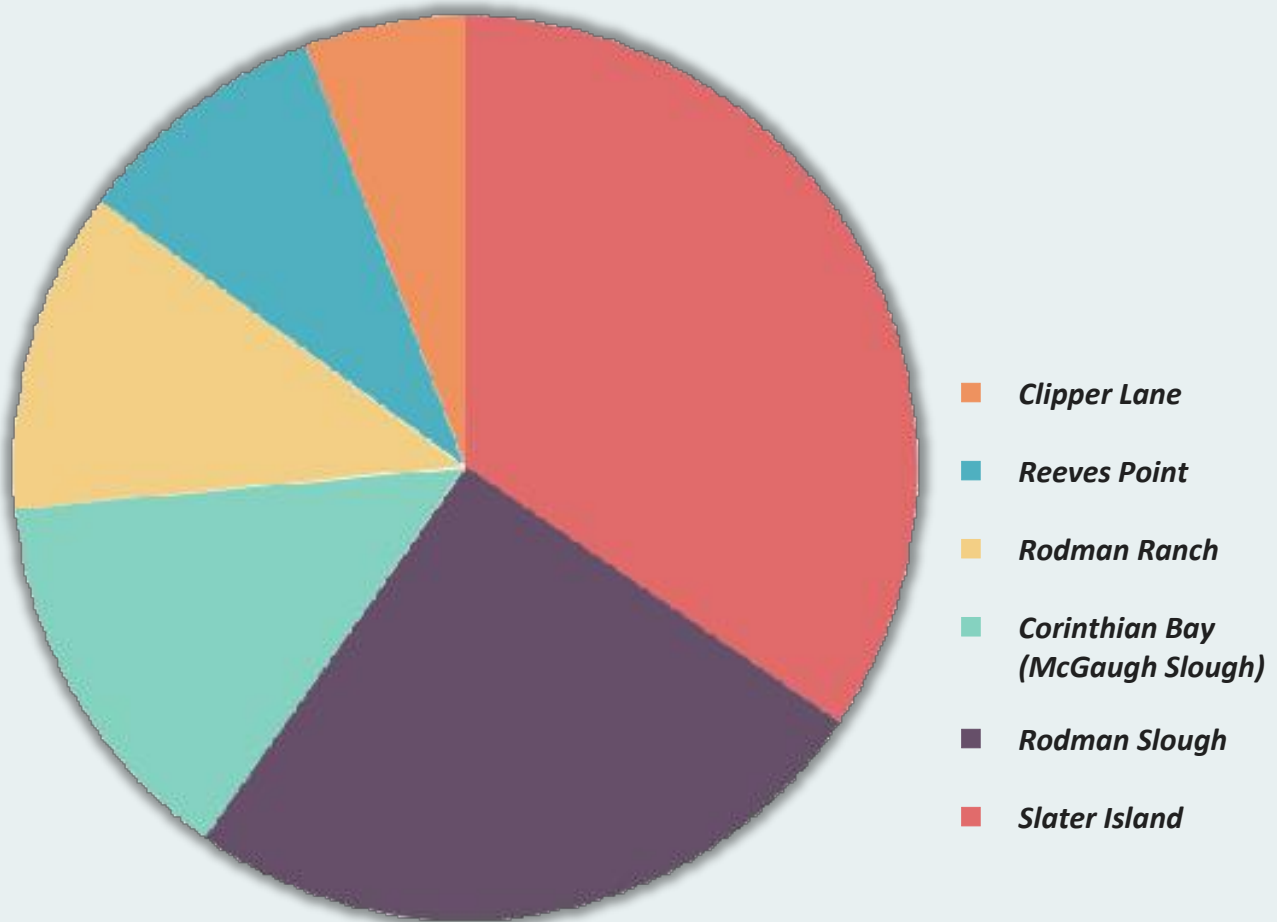
Last year, as reported in my President's message, we found no nests on Slater Island in Anderson Marsh State Historic Park and few nests at the several nesting sites that were once visible by boat from Clear Lake. I find this concerning. I reported our concerns to the Department of Fish and Wildlife, but apparently the GBH's on Clear Lake don't warrant much interest, as I heard nothing back from CDFW.

We updated our earlier graph and map of where the heron rookeries continue to exist. The numbers may seem a little vague, but we are trying to look at big picture changes over time, such as the diminishment of the very large rookeries. We appreciate any input from observers. You can contact us by emailing redbud.audubon@gmail.com.

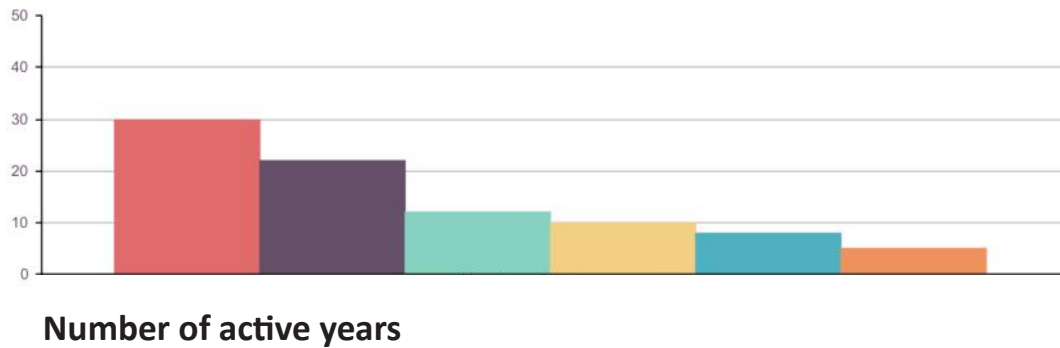
On the following four pages, see graphs showing historic rookery locations and photos of nesting herons, and Western and Clarks Grebes.

Location	Years Active	Under 100 Nests	Over 100 Nests	Year Decrease Noted	No Nests Noted	Number of Active years
Slater Island	1990 to 2018		x	2018	2021	30
Rodman Slough	2000 to 2022	x			Still active	22
Corinthian Bay (McGaugh Slough)	2006 to 2018	x			2018	12
Rodman Ranch	1990 to 2000		x		2000	10
Reeves Point		x			Still active	8
Clipper Lane		x			Still active	5

Active years for Great Blue Heron rookeries from 1990-2022



Great Blue Heron Rookeries from 1990-2022



Audubon members Roberta Lyons and Brad and Kathy Barnwell are keeping track of the Great Blue Heron rookeries near Clear Lake. This image was taken in April, 2022 when at least 50 nests and 100 herons were counted at the County of Lake's Reclamation Area near Upper Lake. The herons were nesting on the land mass east of Rodman Slough. Photo by Roberta Lyons



(Above) Western and Clarks Grebes are currently nesting off the shore of Clear Lake near South Lakeport down to the Konocti Vista Casino area, including offshore of the Lake County Land Trust's Wright Wetlands Preserve.

Photos by Karen Magnusen.



Birders in kayaks or canoes count nesting grebes on Clear Lake. Longtime Redbud Audubon member and volunteer, Susanne Scholz on her kayak offshore near Lakeport. Photo by Karen Magnusen



*Nesting grebes.
Photo by Karen Magnusen*



The Stonehouse Cellars winery and tasting room.

Stonehouse Cellars on Old Long Valley Road is the site for September's field trip

On Saturday, Sept. 17 the Redbud Audubon Society will lead a walk at 9 a.m. at Stonehouse Cellars and Winery for a birding field trip in the hills of Clearlake Oaks.

Beside the vineyards are trails of chaparral and oaks with an abundance of bird life. Birders can expect to see California Quail, Anna's Hummingbird, Western Scrub-jay, Bushtit, Bewick's Wren, Wrentit, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Oak Titmouse, Ash-throated Flycatcher, maybe Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Orange-crowned Warbler and there are always Western Bluebirds near the vines.

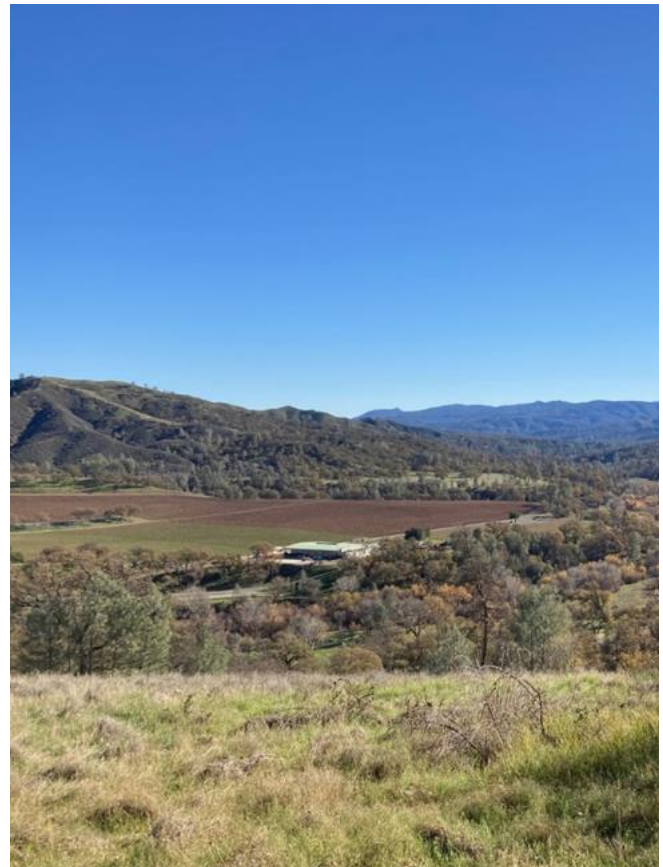
This 145-acre vineyard estate has 21.5-acres of Cabernet vineyards located on a volcanic shelf overlooking the North Fork of Cache Creek. Elevation is 1500 ft. There are two ponds and a historic rock house.

After the gentle hike, visitors are welcome to picnic under the oaks, browse the beautiful storeroom and check out the accommodations.

Directions: Driving east on State Hwy 20, after passing the traffic circle at Hwy 53, go 1.3 miles, then turn left onto Old Long Valley Rd. Travel 1.0 mile and the destination is on the right. 500 Old Long Valley Rd., Clearlake Oaks, CA 95423. (707) 998-3378. Walkers will meet at the tasting room entrance at 9 a.m. sharp. Join us! If you have any questions, email redbud.audubon@gmail.com.



The California Quail is just one of the many birds we hope to see on the Sept. 17 field trip to Stonehouse Cellars on Old Long Valley Road near Clearlake Oaks.



The view from Stonehouse Cellars is spectacular.

Discussion continues on National Audubon Society name change issue

Editors Note: Following is a report from Andres Villalon of National Audubon Chapter Services. We thought this issue of potential name change might be of interest to our readers. John James Audubon has become controversial because of his legacy, including the fact that he owned slaves. You can explore this topic on-line.

Dear Audubon Chapter Leaders,

As some of you may have already heard, National Audubon Society's Chief Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Officer, Jamaal Nelson, recently stepped down from his role due to the sickness of a loved one. Our hearts are with Jamaal at this time.

A search process for a new Chief EDIB Officer will take place over the coming months. Until a new Chief EDIB Officer is identified, I am leading Audubon's EDIB team. The EDIB team remains energized and deeply committed to our internal and external EDIB initiatives.

One such effort is to provide consultation to a Board Task Force that will examine the name and the legacy of John James Audubon. This initiative is integral to the organization's mission to root itself in equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and the need to interrogate our present decisions through the prism of the Audubon that we would like to become in the future.

Seattle Audubon recently announced that they would be removing "Audubon" from their name. We respect the Seattle chapter's autonomy in representing themselves to the community that they serve, just as every Audubon chapter can and does.

The National Audubon Society is still in our process and has not yet made a decision about our name, so I wanted to let everyone know more about the pro-

cess, where things stand, and what to expect.

A Board Task Force was formed earlier this year and is responsible for making a recommendation about whether or not to change National Audubon Society's name to the entire National Audubon Society Board. To make that recommendation, the Task Force is executing a scope of work that will provide four key inputs: historical research, engagement data, and legal and financial analyses.

The historical research explores John James Audubon's biography; the organization's origin story; the legacies of both the individual and the organization; and the frameworks that institutions can leverage to engage with these histories.

An engagement firm will design and execute a process to listen to where people are, gather feedback, understand the impact of any potential decisions, and provide data and analysis. Key audiences, including staff, donors, members and volunteers, will be engaged in that process.

After considering these inputs, the Board Task Force will present their recommendation to the full Board at the February 2023 Board meeting. At that time, the Board will embark on a decision-making process regarding the Audubon name.

The timeline of this project reflects the enormous scale of the decision. This work must be grounded in the history, current state, and future impact of the Audubon name and the extent to which that name reflects our identity and organizational mission. Recognizing that this decision will affect every single chapter, the Task Force is committed to taking the time to gather input and analysis from all parts of the Audubon network between now and December 2022. Updates will be shared as progress is made.

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.



Migrating raptors fly over the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to the Marin Headlands.

Learn about birds of prey at September meeting

(Continued from page 1)

the website, www.redbudaudubon.org and clicking on the link on the home page.

Join Director Allen Fish for a “deep dive,” into what GGRO and colleagues have learned over four decades of counting, banding and tracking birds of prey.

Fish will attempt to answer questions like – “what raptor species have the most increasing population trends?” And: “what species are GGRO most concerned about?”

The biologist will talk about the weirdest raptor that has been seen at Hawk Hill, and what Merlins eat on migration, and how do we know?

The impact on climate change on the Pacific Raptor Flyway will also be addressed as well as the greatest

threats to California birds of prey.

Allen Fish taught Raptor Biology at UC Davis in the 2000s and in 2022 was named to the Honorary Scholar Hall of Fame by the Biology Department at Sonoma State University. He lives in Berkeley with frequent migrations to the Marin Headlands and to Donner Pass.

The GGRO is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in cooperation with the National Parks Service which operates the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, located throughout parts of San Francisco and includes Hawk Hill on the Marin Headlands.



Welcome new members

Denise Cornell, Clearlake; Michelle Field, Clearlake Oaks; Bill Zickuhr, Kelseyville; Karen Magnuson, Kelseyville; Eva Johnson, Kelseyville; Deborah Newlan, Stewarts Pt; Laurie Dohring, Glendale; Curt Giambruno, Clearlake; Homer Hillebrand, Clearlake Oaks; William Meirs, Clearlake Oaks; Linda Foster, Kelseyville; Hilfri Hardesty, Lakeport; Peter G. Stanley, Lakeport; Gary Richberger, Lakeport; Janice E. Jennings, Upper Lake; Marion Brumfield, Santa Rosa; Thiala Schmitt, Clearlake; John Porter, Clearlake; Hans T. Dobusch, Kelseyville; Kirk Andrus, Kelseyville; Joann Herring, Kelseyville; Gary Richberger, Upper Lake; and Adam Garcia, Lakeport.

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.

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.

REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Conservation - Roberta Lyons & Donna Mackiewicz

Field Trips - Donna Mackiewicz & Roberta Lyons

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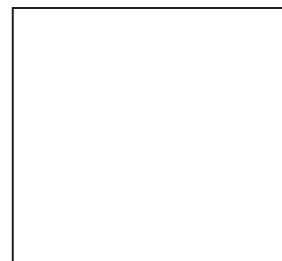
Social Media - Donna Mackiewicz

To contact a board member:

Phone 707/805-9410

Email: redbud.audubon@gmail.com

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 _____

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☐ 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