



# *The Western Grebe*

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

[www.redbudaudubon.org](http://www.redbudaudubon.org)

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## Learn about challenges and efforts to clean up Clear Lake's valuable ecosystem



*Candace Reynolds*

Clear Lake's ecosystem faces urgent challenges, from habitat loss and sedimentation to harmful algal blooms and declining native fish populations. Efforts to combat these problems will be explored at the Thursday, March 20 program meeting of the Redbud Audubon Society. The program is presented on Zoom and starts at 7 p.m.

Candace Reynolds, a Restoration ecologist and senior biologist specializing in habitat restoration and invasive species management, will review the Revitalizing Clearlake Oaks Initiative which is tackling these issues

through two interconnected projects: the Schindler Creek Habitat Restoration Project and the Clear Lake Keys Rehabilitation Project.

These efforts aim to restore fish passage for the threatened Clear Lake hitch (*Lavinia exilicauda chi*), improve water quality, and enhance habitat resilience. Currently, the initiative is in Phase 1: Planning and Design and preparing a funding request to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Watershed Restoration Grant Program. If awarded, this funding will support community outreach and engagement efforts, hydrological studies, engineering assessments, and environmental permitting to develop targeted restoration

*(Continued on page 2)*

## REDBUD AUDUBON

### MARCH MEETING

Thursday, March 20, 7 pm

*Topic: Cleaning up Clear Lake's ecosystem*

*Speaker: Restoration ecologist & senior biologist Candace Reynolds*

To register for this Zoom meeting, click link:

[Redbud Audubon Program Registration](#)

Or visit [RedbudAudubon.org](http://RedbudAudubon.org) and click on the registration link

Or scan the following QR code:





*(Above) Candace Reynolds examines the environmental conditions of the Clear Lake Keys. Learn about the ongoing efforts to restore this area, revitalize Schindler Creek, and improve passage for the Clear Lake hitch at this month's Zoom meeting.*

## ***Efforts ramp up to restore health to Clear Lake's ecological system***

*(Continued from page 1)*

strategies, including sediment reduction and circulation improvements in the Clear Lake Keys. This presentation will provide an update on planning efforts, outline next steps, and highlight opportunities for community involvement in shaping the future of Clear Lake's ecological health.

Candace Reynolds is a California native and Humboldt State University graduate. She applies nature-based solutions to guide restoration planning, grant development, and stakeholder engagement. She has worked across California's diverse ecosystems, conducting biological

surveys, habitat assessments, and ecological monitoring.

With extensive expertise in the full lifecycle of habitat restoration, Candace collaborates with conservation groups, agencies, and communities to develop and secure funding for ecological restoration projects and currently leads efforts to advance the Revitalizing Clearlake Oaks Initiative. She works for Hana Resources, an Environmental Consulting firm. Based in Humboldt County, Candace enjoys exploring California's landscapes with her two teenage children and remains passionate about conserving biodiversity in harmony with people for future generations.

# President's Message

by Donna Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

As spring approaches, the migrants continue to drift through offering excitement every day. The Say's Phoebes and Phainopeplas are leaving as the swallows, Osprey and orioles begin returning.

Did you know that one-third of American adults (96 million people) participate in bird-watching in some form every year? This pastime results in around \$107 billion in spending on birding-related supplies and travel expenses annually and supports 1.4 million jobs. This means birding is both a beloved activity and an economic engine, and that is why it's incredibly important for our conservation efforts to protect the land and waters birds call home.

As we celebrate Audubon's 120th anniversary this year, we are excited to work to build support with local and national policy makers for the Healthy Birds, Healthy Planet Policy Agenda that National Audubon prepared.

Lake County needs a strong Oak Protection Ordinance, and the developing Cannabis Ordinance

language should include protecting our nesting birds' habitats, serpentine areas and the most often overlooked importance of shrub and chaparral habitat. Let's make this happen!

Below is a list of Audubon's policy priorities for the 119th Congress that are important to Redbud Audubon members.

- Investing in Conservation to restore ecosystems and create nature-based solutions that not only safeguard bird habitat but also make communities safer from natural disasters.
- Keeping Working Lands Working to help private landowners, including farmers and ranchers, conserve grassland and wetland habitats.
- Supporting America's Wildlife and Special Places to steward our treasured National Wildlife Refuge System and national parks and to uphold core protections for birds.
- Advancing Clean Energy and Bird-Friendly Transmission Lines to grow U.S. manufacturing and clean energy development.

Audubon and our local chapter members – including myself – look forward to working together to advance our shared conservation goals.

Enjoy!

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## *Please provide us with your email*

A number of our members have emailed us at [redbud.audubon@gmail.com](mailto: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 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](mailto:redbud.audubon@gmail.com), and, if you wish, let us know in what areas you feel you can help.

## *March field trip will view nesting birds and hopefully some dancing grebes!*

Redbud Audubon's upcoming field trip on March 15 will be special because it will allow viewing from the properties of private homes in the Clearlake Oaks Keys Subdivision, places not usually available to the public. Donna Mackiewicz, field trip co-chair and Redbud Audubon president, will welcome everyone at the Clarks Island boat launch area in Clearlake Oaks.

We should see nesting cormorants and herons at the rookery. We might see some "rushing" Western and Clark's Grebes as well. Bring a lunch if you like, and hopefully the weather will be nice!

The meeting place is at Clark's Island: 12684 Island Dr. Clearlake Oaks, 95423. Clarks Island is a 1.48 acres parcel purchased by the County in 2007 and developed to provide information to promote environmental sustainability.

Just a friendly reminder: please note that this month's field trip is on March 15, the Saturday before our monthly program meeting on the 20th. (The field trip is usually the Saturday following the meeting.)

## *Welcome new members*

Welcome new and returning members: Rasma Krasts, Lakeport.



*Two Bald Eagles were spotted during the February field trip to the Reclamation Area near Upper Lake. Photo by Ed Oswald*

## **2025 Field Trip Calendar**

***Please note: field trips will start at 9 a.m. unless otherwise announced in the newsletter***

**March 15** – Clark's Island and more Clearlake Oaks

**April 19** – Cache Creek's Redbud Trail, flats only

**May 15** – Annual evening picnic at Lakeside County Park

Details for each field trip will be published in the preceding newsletter, including directions and start time if different from 9 a.m. Field trips are weather dependent and will be cancelled if there is severe weather or weather issues make accessibility difficult. Put these dates on your calendar and plan for a fun day of birding with friends!

# *Redbud Audubon's February field trip to the reclamation ponds saw forty species*

*By Donna Mackiewicz, Field Trip co-chair*

Redbud Audubon Society's field trip to Upper Lake's Reclamation Ponds was a lot of fun and the weather was beautiful.

We were excited to welcome two new birders and share some exciting sightings as they learned how to use both binoculars and spotting scopes for observations.

Special thanks to Ed Oswalt for his photos. He captured so many of our 40 different species sightings.

We car caravanned the roads with several stops spotting migrating **Tree Swallow**, **Red-winged Blackbirds** singing in the cattails, **Double-crested Cormorants** in the trees, **Western Meadowlarks** feeding in the grass and **Western Grebes** rushing. Highlights were spotting the female **Phainopepla** in the mistletoe and two **Bald Eagles** perched.

Sighted were: 34 **Canada Goose**, 30 **Lesser Scaup**, 14 **Bufflehead**, 70 **Ruddy Duck**, 24 **California Quail**, one **Mourning Dove**, one **Anna's Hummingbird**, one **Virginia Rail**, 34 **American Coot**, 12 **Killdeer**, eight **Pied-billed Grebe**, 90 **Cormorants**, one **Great Blue Heron**, one **American White Pelican**, two **Turkey Vulture**, one **Osprey**, two **Bald Eagle**, one **Red-shouldered Hawk**, two **Northern Flicker**, one **American Kestrel**, 4 **Black Phoebe**, one **Say's Phoebe**, four **California Scrub Jay**, three **American Crow**, one **Comon Raven**, five **Tree Swallow**, 11 **Bushtit**, two **Bewick's Wren**, one **American Robin**, one **Phainopepla**, four **House Finch**, three **Lesser Goldfinch**, four **White-crowned Sparrow**, seven **Golden-crowned Sparrow**, one **Song Sparrow**, three **California Towhee**, two **Spotted Towhee**, 22 **Western Meadowlark**, 600 **Red-winged Blackbirds**, and seven **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. These sightings have been catalogues in an ebird account.

Next month's field trip is on March 15, at Clark's Island and the Clearlake Oaks boat ramp and beach. We will meet in the Clearlake Oaks (Clark's Island) boat launch parking lot and bird both the lake and Clark's Island, then take a drive into the Keys addition to the rookery to see nesting **Cormorants** and possibly a side trip to a very special piece of private wetlands. Feel free to bring a sack lunch and spend the day enjoying the great birds of the Keys, too.



*Phainopeplas at the Reclamation Area February field trip. Photo by Ed Oswalt*



*Pelicans in flight. Photo by Ed Oswalt. See more field trip photos on page 6*

*February field trip photos continued*



*Lesser Goldfinch feeding on a thistle. Photo by Ed Oswald*



*Meadowlarks were seen on the February field trip. Photo by Ed Oswald*

## *A Nature Challenge “bioblitz” set for April 27*

Lake County has a 2025 Inter-city Nature Challenge entry for all observations you see on April 25-28.

Come out to the Rodman Preserve on Saturday, April 27 and walk with us as we record everything we see and hear. No charge. Gate opens at 9 and we will begin our walk at 9:15.

Check out the iNaturalist project page at: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-lake-county-california>.

## *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.

## *Audubon memberships choices 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*.

Visit our website at [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://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](mailto: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 to defray printing and mailing expenses.

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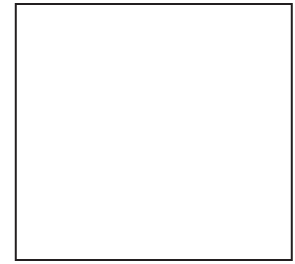
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**To contact a board member:**

**Phone 707/805-9410**

**Email: [redbud.audubon@gmail.com](mailto: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.

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You have the option of joining just the Redbud Chapter by enrolling online at [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://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*