



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

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CLERC biologist will present review of monitoring program at Redbud Audubon's April 17 presentation

Julia Clickard, a biologist for Lake County's Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC) will be the presenter for this month's Redbud Audubon program on Thursday, April 17, starting at 7 p.m. The program is presented on Zoom; to register click on the link in this newsletter, or go to www.redbudaudubon.org and click on the registration link. The link for the program will be sent the day of the presentation.

Julia Clickard, became a member of the CLERC team in April 2024 as a Biologist. She is originally from San Luis Obispo County and received her BS degree in Ecology and Environmental Biology from UC Santa Cruz in 2020.

After receiving her degree, she monitored spotted owl species in California as part of

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Cindy Jassar, left, and Julia Clickard at a tabling event for CLERC.

REDBUD AUDUBON

APRIL MEETING

Thursday, April 17, 7 pm

Topic: Clear Lake Monitoring Program Review

Speaker: CLERC Biologist Julia Clickard

To register for this Zoom meeting, click link:

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

Or visit RedbudAudubon.org and click on the registration link

Or scan the following QR code:



Program's goal is to learn more about ecosystems of Lake County and the best ways to protect them

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an acoustic monitoring program. Then, in Arizona, she monitored Bald Eagle nest sites and individual bald eagle behavior. Returning to California, she worked with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on monitoring the impacts of climate change on local stream systems and steelhead populations.

CLERC works on many roadside clearing projects for reduction of fire hazards here, especially along main evacuation routes. Currently Clickard monitors these vegetation management project sites before implementation in order to gauge the before and after effects of CLERC's work on local ecosystems and wildlife.

"Wildfires can be devastating to entire ecosystems. They alter populations of wildlife within large swathes of areas, as well as fundamentally change soil and vegetation composition in the long term. Whenever CLERC works within a project site to prevent fires and reduce fuel loads, we also want to minimize our impacts to the local wildlife and ecosystems," Clickard explained.

This program will consist of reviewing the various types of monitoring methods that are used in the field. From passively monitoring with wildlife cameras and acoustic microphones to actively surveying for bird nests and rare plants, Clickard states the end goal is to learn more about the ecosystems of Lake County and the best way to protect them.

Welcome new members

Welcome new and returning members: Jill Thompson, Clearlake; and Karen Sullivan, Kelseyville.

President's Message

by Donna Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

By Donna Mackiewicz

Spring is here with an abundance of water in Clear Lake with fish for the birds and other animals to enjoy.

For the next month we are anxiously anticipating the appearance of our endemic hitch, *Lavinia exilicauda*. Their populations spawn yearly in creeks with some traveling 10 miles upstream. County of Lake Water Resources trained volunteers will be out monitoring weekly on bridges at streambeds. Besides hitch there are a lot of other species in the lake. The introduction of Northern Largemouth Bass and catfish began in the 1880's and contributed to a booming recreational fishery. By 1920 bass fishing was considered to be excellent. In 1909 bluegill and black crappie were introduced and have maintained a steady population. Young-of-year crappie, bluegill, and bass compete with native species, like the hitch, for food sources in tule nursery habitat around the lake still today. Then came Western Mosquito Fish's introduction as an effective means to combat the mosquitos and gnat in 1925. And this also provided for additional valuable food sources for the bass, catfish, bluegill, and crappie.

The Mississippi silverside was illegally introduced in 1967, and the probably accidental introduction of Threadfin shad (often used as a bait fish) occurred around 1980 adding another forage food for predators.

Unfortunately, in recent weeks, we have seen large die-offs of the shad as they cannot handle

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President's Message

by Donna Mackiewicz

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the drop in temperature. The shad die-off is most significant when the water temperature dips below 40 degrees. These fish will slowly sink to the bottom and then flutter up and sink again. The slow flutter of the shad and the flash that they put off attracts all types of gamefish and birds.

There is so much to learn and love about the lake.

And speaking of seeing all the birds eating the shad it reminds me we need to prepare our nest boxes for visiting swallows and our bluebirds.

Every properly built nest box can easily be cleaned. Sweep out the inside of box by hand or with a hammer (a car ice scraper comes in handy) to remove the remaining insects or nest material. Then you can spray the box out with a very mild bleach/water (1:10) solution to kill any bacteria, after cleaning. Make sure to securely close the box with the fastener.

House sparrows might try to take over the nest box but just be vigilant removing their nesting material until the native species can move in. If you do find House Sparrow eggs in a nest you have a couple of choices that might discourage their return. One is removing the eggs and nest and hope they do not return or put vegetable oil on the eggs and the female will sit on them until she realizes they are not going to hatch and abandons the nest. Because House Sparrows are an introduced, invasive species, it is allowable to destroy their nests and eggs. This is allowed only with House Sparrows and perhaps one or two other invasive species. Please, do not destroy or tamper with any nests of native birds, especially if they have eggs in them – that would be in violation of the Migratory Bird Act, a federal law.

If you would like to be part of citizen scientists, you can share your data of how many nests you remove or how successful your nests were with us, and we will include it in our reports to Nest Watch and CA Bluebird Recovery programs.

Happy spring and see you out birding!



The White Pelicans are still abundant here but should be returning to their breeding areas soon.



Clear Lake Hitch. Photo from US Fish & Wildlife.



Tree Swallows are investigating nest boxes and getting ready to move in!

Rob Patton was a wonderful Redbud Audubon volunteer who is greatly missed. This letter was displayed at Rob's service on March 22. To reveal how important he was to this project, we have still not found anyone to take over his role to spearhead this effort. If interested, please contact Donna Mackiewicz at redbud.audubon@gmail.com.



CALIFORNIA
COASTAL
COMMISSION

March 20, 2025

Ms. Cheryl Closser & Ms. Kathy Patton-Black

Dear Ms. Closser and Ms. Patton-Black:

On behalf of the California State Parks and the California Coastal Commission's Boating Clean and Green Program, we would like to express our condolences to you and your family. We had the honor and privilege of partnering and working with Robert in our California Fishing Line Recycling Program since 2013. Robert was always committed to keeping the lake clean and safe for all and to preventing injury to birds and fish.

Through a partnership with Audubon Society, Robert created and installed 24 fishing line recycling stations across your beautiful Clear Lake. Throughout the years he monitored and emptied them regularly and sent the line to be recycled. Thanks to his outstanding efforts, he was able to collect and properly recycle over 100 pounds of fishing line, protecting the lake's fauna and flora. We are thankful for his dedication and devoted service to the Fishing Line Recycling Program and to his community.

We are going to miss you, Robert. Thank you for all your dedication, help and commitment to keeping Clear Lake clean and safe.

We are sending great care to you Ms. Closser and Ms. Patton-Black, your family and the entire Lucerne community.

Sincerely,

Vivian Matuk

April 19 field trip scheduled for Cache Creek Redbud Trail

This month's field trip is scheduled for Saturday, April 19 at the Cache Creek Redbud Trail – flats only. We will meet at the Redbud Trailhead parking area, just off of Highway 20. Go east on Highway 20, 5.4 miles past the roundabout at Hwy. 53. The Trailhead sign is on the right. Drive to the parking lot and we will meet at the covered picnic table.

We will hopefully see Red-shouldered hawks, Meadowlarks, Bluebirds, and more. The walk is about a half mile out and half mile back with oaks and Pines to view as well. And wildflowers!!!!

Join us. The walk will start promptly at 9 a.m. Hope to see you all there!

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 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 to defray printing and mailing expenses.

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Clark's Island field trip in Clearlake Oaks was a very fun and productive day

By Donna Mackiewicz, Field Trip co-chair

The April Redbud Audubon field trip to Clark's Island in Clearlake Oaks and the Clearlake Keys was really fun. It was a small turn out of people, thousands of birds were seen!

Among the waterfowl and land birds sighted were: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallards, Ruddy Duck, Goldeneye, Mute Swan, Eurasian Collared Dove, Black Phoebe, House Finch, House Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, American Coot, Gulls (mostly California), Eared Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Western Grebes (est. over 5,000), Double-crested Cormorants, Osprey, Black-crowned Night Heron, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, American White Pelican, and Turkey Vulture, We heard the Belted Kingfisher, California Towhee and Song Sparrow.

This is always a fun and productive field trip. We urge folks to join us. It's a lot of fun!



Pelican with breeding bumps at Keys wetland.

Photos by Roberta Lyons and Donna Mackiewicz



A Double-crested Cormorant enjoying a rest.

2025 Field Trip Calendar

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

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!



Clark's Island Pelicans.



A Bald Eagle in the rain at the Clearlake Keys wetland channel. Photo by Pam Smithstan.



The Redbud Audubon group enjoying birding from the pier near the boat launch area at Clarks Island in Clearlake Oaks at the March 22 field trip.

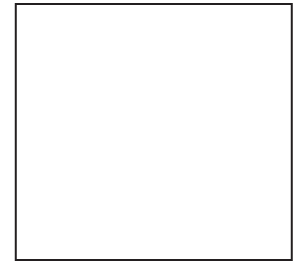


Donna Mackiewicz sets up the scope at the Clark's Island boat launch area. Thousands of Western and Clarks Grebes could be seen across the lake near Rattlesnake Island.



A field of Pelicans at the wetlands adjacent to the Clearlake Oaks Keys.

Redbud Audubon
PO Box 5780
Clearlake, CA 95422



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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