



# *The Western Grebe*

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

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

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## Author will review “How Birds Created the World” for Redbud’s Sept. 18 program

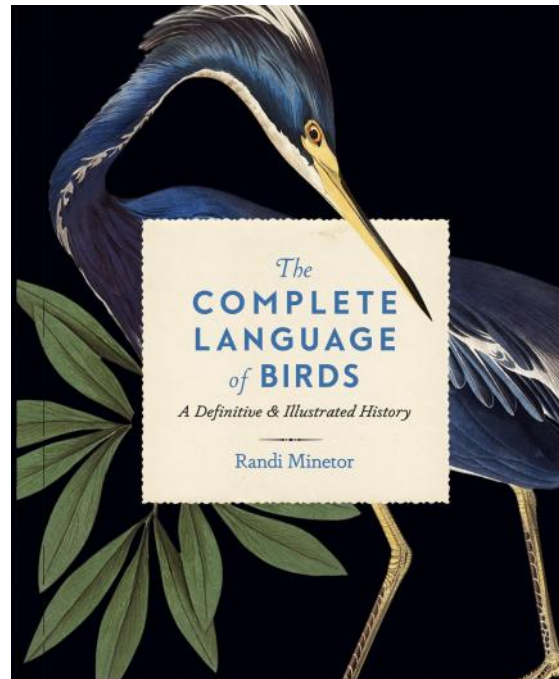


*Randy Minetor, a well-known author will present on Sept. 18 for Redbud Audubon’s Zoom program.*

The Redbud Audubon Society is pleased to welcome bestselling author, Randi Minetor, as the first presenter for the 2025-26 speaker series starting on Thursday, Sept. 18. The Zoom program will start at 7 p.m. Minetor will present a PowerPoint focusing on stories of “How Birds created the World,” showing birds’ influence on culture and myths of people world-wide.

Ancient Egyptians believed that the Earth began as an egg laid by a giant goose. Ojibwa people of America’s northern plains tell of a Great Flood

*(Continued on page 2)*



*One of Minetor’s best-selling books.*

## REDBUD AUDUBON

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

Thursday, September 18, 7 pm

*Topic: How Birds Created the World*

*Speaker: Author Randi Minetor*

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:



# September speaker dives into how human culture and myths have been influenced by birds

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that swept away the world's evils, and the bird that braved the deep waters to bring a bit of soil up from the bottom to restart the continent. European scientists once believed that geese survived the winters by turning themselves into barnacles and adhering to the bottoms of ships, transforming back into birds in spring. These and many other tales told in Randi Minetor's latest book, *The Complete Language of Birds*, bring us back to a time when birds seemed like magical beings with the answers to so many of the world's questions.

Registration for the program is required and can be accomplished by clicking on the link in this newsletter (if you receive it by email) or by going to the Redbud Audubon website: [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://www.redbudaudubon.org) and clicking on the registration link on the home page.

**Randi Minetor** writes books for the Birdfinding and Best Easy Bird Guides series for Falcon Guides/Globe Pequot Press and is the author of *Backyard Birding and Butterfly Gardening* for Lyons Press. Her most recent book, *The Complete Language of Birds*, is an encyclopedia that unites classic illustrations, science, folklore, and mythology about more than 400 bird species around the world. She has written

for *Birding Magazine*, is a regional report editor for *North American Birds*, and served for three years as president of the Rochester Birding Association in New York State.

Born and raised in Rochester, NY, Randi Minetor discovered the backcountry wonders of America's national parks in 1992 with her husband, photographer/lighting designer Nic Minetor. That first trip changed her life, and by 2000, the Minetors had pledged to see all 391 (now 432) national parks in their lifetimes.

They found a way to subsidize this passion in 2006, when they began writing and photographing books on the parks for The Globe Pequot Press (now Rowman & Littlefield). Today Randi has written more than 90 books, including seven books in the nonfiction "Death in the National Parks" series, ten hiking guides in New York State, several bird-finding guides, and even reference books on health topics. To date, they have visited 364 national parks. In addition, Nic's photography appears in eight Quick Reference Guides to the Birds, Trees, and Wildflowers of New York City and New York State, and the Trees and Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic States. The Minetors live in Rochester, NY.

## *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.

# President's Message

by Donna  
Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

As summer turns to fall, I want to take a moment to celebrate the incredible progress made by the **National Audubon Society** over the past year, as well as the meaningful work accomplished right here at home by our own **Redbud Audubon Chapter**.

National Audubon has continued to lead bold conservation efforts across the country, from protecting critical bird habitats in the face of climate change, to advancing environmental education programs that inspire the next generation of conservationists. This past year, Audubon's advocacy helped secure stronger protections for migratory birds, expanded habitat restoration efforts, and supported groundbreaking science on bird population trends, which guided local chapters like ours.

Here in Lake County, we are proud of our chapter's ongoing contributions to this vital mission. We expanded our **Fishing Line Recycling Program**, which has already kept nearly **30 pounds of dangerous monofilament line** out of Clear Lake, thanks to the hard work of our dedicated volunteers. Our **field trips and community programs** have introduced both longtime residents and new friends to the beauty and importance of local birdlife. And our chapter continues to be a strong voice for the conservation of Lake County's unique ecosystems, from oak woodlands to wetlands.

Looking forward, we are thrilled to announce that our **Grebe Monitoring Program** is continuing this fall with the school year! This exciting project will involve **high school students from around Clear Lake**, giving young people hands-on experience in bird monitoring, data collection, and conservation action. Students will work alongside Audubon volunteers to observe grebe nesting colonies, track population changes, and contribute valuable information that supports both local and statewide conservation.

This is a groundbreaking step for Redbud Audubon—connecting youth directly with conservation science, while deepening community involvement in protecting one of Lake County's most iconic bird

species. If you haven't donated yet to support this program, **now is the perfect time**. Your contribution will help cover essential supplies, student training, and data reporting. Together, we can inspire the next generation of conservation leaders while protecting grebes and their fragile habitat.

Thank you for being part of the Redbud Audubon family. Together, we are making a difference.

**Donna Mackiewicz**  
**President, Redbud Audubon Society**

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## Welcome new members

Welcome new and returning members: Gill Abaja, Clearlake; Kimberly High, Clearlake; Jacque Begun, Cobb; Jean Murphy, Kelseyville; Linda Drake, Kelseyville; Violet Renick, Lakeport; Laurie Pfohl, Castro Valley; Dean Gotham, Clearlake; Ellen Barrett, Kelseyville; Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Hidden Valley Lake; Marian Stotswood, Kelseyville; Deanna Madeson, Kelseyville; Aaltje Koski, Upper Lake; Margaret Derrick, Clearlake; and Franz Waltenspuhl, Cobb.

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## Audubon membership 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.



# *Bringing nature to youth and families: Redbud Audubon's summer of outreach*

This past spring and summer, Redbud Audubon volunteers were busy sharing the wonders of birds, wildlife, and conservation with Lake County youth and families. From classrooms and creeks to community festivals, our team partnered with local organizations to bring engaging, hands-on environmental education to hundreds of children and adults.

In May, nearly 120 kindergarten students from Lakeport schools visited educational stations hosted by Redbud Audubon and the Lake County Land Trust. The children learned about native animals and food webs, explored how birds' beaks work, and even enjoyed temporary nature tattoos. Our partners from the Clearlake Museum of Science and Math added to the fun with musical instruments and bubble-making activities, ensuring that science was as joyful as it was educational.

In June, Redbud Audubon joined the Resource Conservation District's annual **Field Day at the Creek**, where more than 100 students from Middletown and Cobb schools explored Putah Creek. Equipped with binoculars, students observed wildlife, witnessed electric-shocking fish counts, spoke with CalFire representatives, and learned about native plants through interactive booths. This day of discovery provided an unforgettable outdoor classroom experience.

July brought us to the **Shigom Festival**, a celebration filled with cultural and ecological learning. Participants joined bird walks, watched Pomo dancers and prayers, and explored nearly 50 educational booths featuring partners such as the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited, the County of Lake Water Resources, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and tribal representatives. Redbud Audubon was proud to stand alongside so many dedicated groups working to protect our shared natural heritage.

Our outreach continued into August with the three-day **Tule Festival**, sponsored by Big Valley Rancheria. On Thursday, participants gathered tules at Clear Lake State Park, and on Friday, families and visitors watched the fascinating process of tule boat building.

*(Continued on page 5)*



*Redbud Audubon president, Donna Mackiewicz at our table and displays at the Tule Festival in August.*



*Donna visits with Lake County Land Trust's president, Val Nixon during the Tule Festival sponsored by Big Valley Rancheria.*



# Redbud Audubon's public outreach highlights

(Continued from page 4)

Nearly 70 environmental booths and cultural demonstrations filled the weekend, along with Pomo dancing, storytelling, and hands-on arts and crafts. On Sunday, excitement peaked with the traditional tule boat races, followed by awards, a community dinner, and more dancing. This extraordinary event brought together families, educators, and environmental stewards to celebrate both cultural traditions and ecological awareness.

Redbud Audubon is proud to be part of these vibrant events that connect young people and families to the natural world around them. These moments of discovery—whether peering through binoculars, meeting a scientist, or hearing a traditional story—are the seeds of future conservation. If you missed these wonderful events this year, be sure to mark your calendar for 2026!



*Aimee Wyrick of Pacific Union College also attended the festival. She is part of the Grebe Project that is sponsored by Redbud Audubon.*



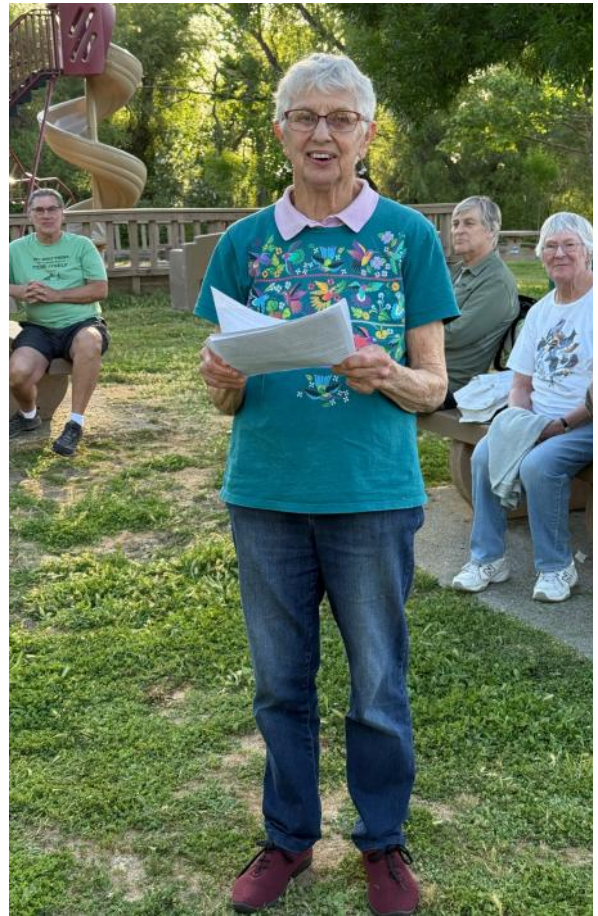
*Donna Mackiewicz educating some students at the May Day in the Creek event presented by the Lake County Resource Conservation District.*



# *Redbud Audubon May picnic and installation of officers*



*A wonderful array of great dishes is always offered. Join us next year!*



*Long-time Audubon member and volunteer, Darlene Hecomovich, installed officers for the 2025-26 year.*



*Enjoying the afternoon picnic at Lakeside County Park.*



## *2025-26 Redbud Audubon Society Officers*



*Officers installed at the May 2025 Redbud Audubon picnic were, from left: Nicola Selph, Treasurer; Donna Mackiewicz, President; Roberta Lyons, Vice-President; and Cindy Jasser, Secretary.*



# *This Year's Nesting Colony of Clark's and Western Grebes*



*2025 has been a successful nesting year for the grebes at Anderson Marsh. The above photo was taken by Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association Board Member Gae Henry, and was featured recently in the Peterson Field Guide to North American Bird Nests.*



*Two Clark's grebes perform the "face-off" ritual that often precedes a "rush" across the water, with a Western grebe watching intently. Photo by Gae Henry*



# *More scenes of this year's colony*

## *Photos by Gae Henry*



*Western and Clark's Grebes rush or "dance" across the water as part of their mating practices.*



*Calmly sitting on their nest.*



*Eggs on a nest in Anderson Marsh.*



*Western and Clark's Grebes carry their babies on their backs. It is so cute!*





# REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



## OFFICERS

*President:* Donna Mackiewicz

*Vice President:* Roberta Lyons

*Treasurer:* Nicola Selph

*Secretary:* Cindy Jasser

*Members-at-large:*

Katherine Lindsley and Marilyn Waits

## CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Bird Observations - Jerry White

Christmas Bird Count - Brad & Kathy Barnwell

Conservation - Roberta Lyons & Donna Mackiewicz

Field Trips - Donna Mackiewicz & Roberta Lyons

Historian - Pat Harmon

Membership Manager - Susanne Scholz

Newsletter Editor - Roberta Lyons

Graphic Design - Robin Winniford

Newsletter Email Distribution - Donna Mackiewicz

Newsletter Mail Distribution - Jim Scholz

Programs - Cindy Jasser

Publicity - Roberta Lyons

Webmaster - Bonnie Thompson

Social Media - Donna Mackiewicz

**To contact a board member:**

**Phone 707/805-9410**

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



*Pam and Esther Smithstan are new fishing line collectors for Redbud Audubon's project.*

## ***Fishing line recycling: keeping wildlife and our waterways safe***

Improperly discarded, broken, or abandoned fishing line poses serious risks to both wildlife and people. Birds, fish, and other animals can become fatally entangled, while boats and propellers may sustain costly damage. Because monofilament fishing line is not biodegradable, it can persist in the environment for hundreds of years.

To address this problem locally, the Redbud Audubon Society established its Fishing Line Recycling Program in 2012. Thanks to the dedication of outstanding volunteers Pam and Esther Smithstan of Clearlake Oaks, the program has grown to include 27 fishing line collection bins around Clear Lake. Pam and Esther collect line from all the Northshore community bins, ensuring the material is cleaned, sorted, and sent for recycling once a year. Since the program began, under the leadership of longtime volunteer, the late Robert Patton, our chapter has successfully recycled nearly 60 pounds of fishing line—line that will never threaten wildlife or pollute Clear Lake.

If you would like to get involved, consider adopting a bin at a local boat ramp. We provide personalized training for volunteers who want to take part in this important stewardship effort. If you are interested, email Redbud Audubon at [redbud.audubon@gmail.com](mailto:redbud.audubon@gmail.com).





*Viewing with a scope at the Reclamation Area during a past field trip there.*



*On one of the levees in the area.*

## ***Join us for exploration of the Upper Lake Reclamation Area***

Join us for a field trip to the Reclamation Area on Sept. 20. All are welcome to join Redbud Audubon for a field trip to the Reclamation Area near Upper Lake on Saturday, Sept. 20. Attendees are asked to meet at Upper Lake Park, at 575 East Highway 20, west of the Running Creek Casino at 9 a.m. Please don't be late.

After meeting, the group will caravan to the Reclamation Area. The walk will be on flat ground (for the most part). We never know what we will see, but it's a fun area to visit and an enjoyable walk with friends.

### **2025-26 Field Trip Calendar**

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

**September 20** – Reclamation area near Upper Lake

**October 18** – Clear Lake State Park

**November 22** – Boggs Demonstration Forest

**December** – Christmas Bird Count TBA

**January 17** – Sacramento and Colusa National Wildlife Refuges

**February 21** – Lake County Land Trust's Rodman Preserve

**March 21** – Clearlake Oaks Boat Ramp/Clark's Island/Wetlands/Rookery

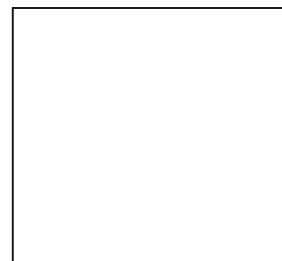
**April** – TBA

**May** – Annual Picnic

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**  
**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 \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 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*