



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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An osprey in the nest, waiting to fly.

April program spotlights osprey monitoring and how volunteers can get involved with the cause

On Thursday, April 23 (a week later than our normal meeting date), the Redbud Audubon Society will host a zoom program presented by Elizabeth Meisman focusing on the Northern California Osprey Collaborative, a new, community-driven raptor research initiative working to better understand and conserve breeding Ospreys across this region. The program will start at 7 p.m. and registration can be accomplished by going to Redbud's website and clicking on the link on the

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Elizabeth Meisman

REDBUD AUDUBON

APRIL MEETING

Thursday, April 23, 7 pm

Topic: Osprey monitoring and how to help

Speaker: Elizabeth Meisman

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:





Winging over the water in search of prey. Photo by Pam Smithstan

Osprey Collaborative will expand monitoring efforts throughout Northern California

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home page; or by clicking on the link in this newsletter if you receive it by email.

The program will include fascinating information about the iconic Osprey along with images and a video. There are few sights more thrilling than an Osprey hovering above the water, wings beating steadily, before plunging feet-first to capture a fish. Known as the “fish hawk,” the osprey is a powerful symbol of healthy waterways—and thanks to decades of conservation, it’s also one of our great wildlife success stories.

Created to help fill important knowledge gaps in regional raptor research, the Osprey Collaborative project aims to expand monitoring efforts beyond Humboldt Bay to coastal areas, reservoirs, and river systems throughout Northern California, including areas like Lake County and Clear Lake. Anyone who drives around this area has probably noted numerous osprey nests here, everywhere from the City of Clearlake to Lakeport, the northshore and beyond.

This research is led by Elizabeth Meisman at Cal Poly Humboldt and is building a collaborative network of researchers, community scientists, and youth groups. “We are currently seeking volunteers to help locate Osprey nests and assist with monitoring throughout the breeding season. Whether you have a known nest to report or are interested in participating in nest monitoring, your contributions can make a meaningful difference,” Meisman explained.

In addition, a statewide survey of breeding Peregrine Falcons is underway and also welcomes volun-



Osprey at the Rodman Preserve.

teer participation.

Lizzi Meisman is a wildlife biologist working across California on a variety of ecology, conservation, and long-term monitoring projects. She is currently an NSF Graduate Research Fellow in Dr. Matt Johnson’s Habitat Ecology Lab at Cal Poly Humboldt. Her master’s research aims to investigate habitat selection of Swainson’s Hawks breeding in the Butte Valley.

A dedicated conservation communicator and mentor, Lizzi provides extensive training opportunities through hands-on research, supervising student interns conducting independent senior projects as part of the long-term monitoring program. Each season, she has coordinated and trained dozens of volunteers, fostering the development of early-career scientists and building capacity for collaborative field research. She regularly engages landowners, youth, and com-

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Osprey have recently returned to Lake County. They usually return to their favorite nests.

Help find osprey and falcon nesting sites

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munity members through presentations, classroom visits, birding trips, and banding demonstrations, and shares findings with the broader scientific community through publications and conference presentations.

If you are interested in contributing to community-based raptor research—or if you know of any Osprey or Peregrine Falcon nests please share observations or questions at: NorCalOsprey@gmail.com.

Ospreys sit at the top of the aquatic food chain, feeding almost exclusively on fish. This makes them excellent indicators of environmental health. When osprey populations are thriving, it often reflects clean water, abundant fish, and functioning ecosystems.

Join a guided Geology walk on Saturday, April 18 at Boggs Lake Preserve starting at 9:30 am

For the April Redbud Audubon field trip, we suggest that participants join a geology walk at Boggs Lake Preserve at 6902 Harrington Flat Rd. Kelseyville.

The walk is being sponsored by the Lake County Land Trust and the United States Geologic Society and is being billed as a "Rockin" guided walk at Boggs Lake Preserve.

Learn about the important geologic features underlying Boggs Preserve and how the landscape has been shaped over millions of years. USGS Geologist and Geochronologist, Seth Burgess will lead the group in a fascinating discussion about Boggs Preserve Geology.

Wear sturdy shoes, weather-appropriate clothing, prepare for walking and stopping for about two hours. Bring water, snacks, walking sticks, hat, sunscreen and a sense of adventure and rock-loving attitude. RSVP strongly encouraged but not required. Parking is limited and most likely will have to be along the road, so carpooling is suggested.

To register go to:

<https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/LakeCountyLandTrust/rsvp-1-1-1.html>

or call the Lake County Land Trust at (707) 262-0707.

Slate of Officers

This year's Nominating Committee for Redbud Audubon, Darlene Hecomovich and Marilyn Waits, has presented a slate of officers for 2026-2027.

President: Donna Mackiewicz

Vice-President: Roberta Lyons

Treasurer: Nicola Selph

Secretary: Cindy Jassar

Officers will be voted on during this month's Zoom meeting, after nominations from the floor have been requested. Installation will occur at the May 21st annual picnic.

Bee houses can be an important addition to the health and habitat of local bees

Just like bird nest boxes, bee houses can be a wonderful way to help wildlife right in our own yards. Many of our native bees — including mason bees and leafcutter bees — do not live in hives. Instead, they nest in small hollow stems and natural holes in wood. Providing a bee house gives these gentle pollinators a safe place to raise their young and helps support healthy gardens, orchards, and wild habitats.

Information from Crown Bees, a leader in native bee education, reminds us that bee houses need a little yearly care to truly help bees. Without cleaning or replacing nesting tubes, pests, mold, and parasites can build up and harm the next generation. In nature, bees move to new nesting sites each year, so our bee houses should be managed in a similar way.

Simple care tips include:

- Replace or clean nesting tubes each season
- Keep houses dry and protected from rain
- Store filled tubes safely over winter if possible
- Put out fresh nesting materials in spring



With proper care, a bee house can support many years of healthy native bee activity.

When a bee house cannot be cleaned

Some bee houses are made in a way that makes them difficult or impossible to open and clean. In those cases, Crown Bees offers a special BeeGuard Bag, designed to safely contain the nest box while allowing the bees to emerge, while helping prevent pests from spreading to new nesting tubes. This can be a helpful option for older or decorative bee houses that cannot be taken apart.

If you have a bee house and are unsure how to maintain it, feel free to ask for help. Just as with bird boxes, a little care goes a long way toward protecting the wildlife we love to watch.

Providing safe nesting places for bees, birds, and other pollinators is one of the simplest ways we can make our yards part of the natural world. With a bit of attention each season, these small efforts can help keep our local ecosystems healthy and full of life.

Changes are coming for Western Grebe delivery—we really do need your email now

Due to changes in membership procedures at National Audubon, and the continuing rising cost of printing and mailing newsletters, Redbud Audubon is moving towards producing an “email only,” newsletter. Most small societies now send their newsletters only by email and we hope to soon follow that model.

We hope that you all understand and support this effort and if we don't already have your email that you will supply us with one. If you absolutely must have a printed copy, for a limited time we will still print and mail newsletters to our few remaining members who prefer this method of receiving the Western Grebe.

President's Message

by Donna Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

Spring nesting season

Spring has arrived in Lake County, bringing one of the most important times of year for birds — nesting and fledging season. Along our marshes, creeks, oak woodlands, and shorelines, birds are busy raising their young. Western and Clark's Grebes are building floating nests, herons and egrets are returning to rookery sites and cormorants are starting on their second of three nests, and bluebirds and swallows are once again using nest boxes across the county.

National Audubon reminds us that successful nesting depends on healthy habitat. Clean water, protected wetlands, native plants, and mature oak trees provide the food and shelter birds need to raise the next generation. Because we live along the Pacific Flyway, the care we give to habitat here in the Clear Lake watershed helps birds that travel thousands of miles each year.

California Audubon encourages all of us to be especially mindful during nesting season. Giving space to nesting areas, keeping cats indoors, checking carefully before trimming trees, and maintaining nest boxes responsibly are simple actions that make a real difference.

This time of year reminds us why conservation matters. A grebe carrying chicks on its back or the sound of young birds calling from the oaks is a sign that healthy habitat is still here — and worth protecting.

Thank you for all you do for birds,

Donna Mackiewicz
President, Redbud Audubon Society



REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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To contact a board member:

Phone 707/805-9410

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The group that attended the March field trip in Clearlake Oaks.



Bald Eagles frequent the area.

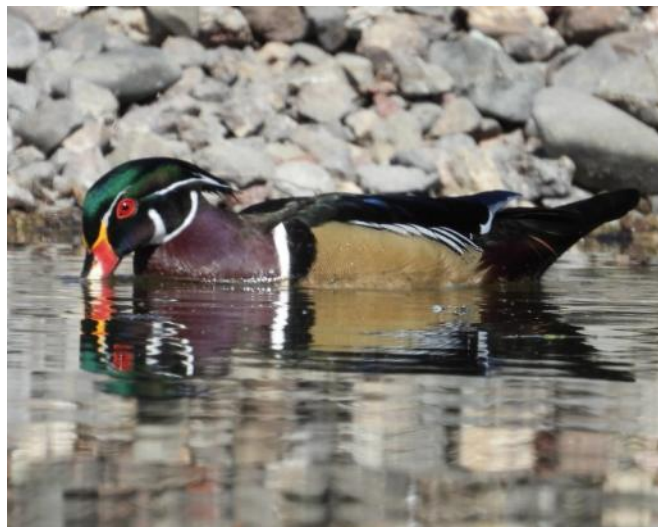
March field trip to Clearlake Oaks was well attended

The March field trip to Clarks Island and the Clearlake Oaks keys was well attended and a lot of fun. Participants enjoyed viewing the rookery on the wetland near the Keys and everyone also enjoyed sightings on the lake at Clarks Island.

This month we are foregoing an Audubon birding walk and instead are inviting people to attend the Lake County Land Trust's "Rock Walk," at the Boggs Lake Preserve on Harrington Flat Road.



Red-shouldered Hawk.



Wood Ducks are often seen in the channels.



The rookery near the Clearlake Oaks keys already has baby herons in it.



Black Crowned Night Herons were in the trees.

2025-2026

Field Trip Calendar

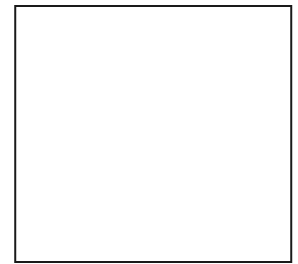
Please Note: field trips will start at 9 a.m. unless otherwise announced in the newsletter

April – Lake County Land Trust’s “Rock Walk” at Bogg’s Lake Preserve on Harrington Flat Road.

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 NAS Member Introductory Rate — \$20 for the first year

YES Enroll me in both the National Audubon Society and local chapter of Redbud Audubon.
(It is easier to go to our website and sign up online!
www.redbudaudubon.org)

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.
Membership starts at \$25 a year.**

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email (Required to receive local chapter newsletter): _____

Please make check payable to National Audubon Society. Mail your application and check to POB 5780, Clearlake, CA 95422

I would also like to make a donation to the local work of Redbud Audubon. My separate check is enclosed for
_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 Other: _____

Thank you for supporting Redbud Audubon Society
Connecting People with Nature since 1974