



# *The Western Grebe*

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

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

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## “Grebe Whisperer” featured at Redbud Audubon Society’s first Zoom program of the season

The Redbud Audubon Society is pleased to welcome Krisztina Scheeff as the first presenter for the 2024-25 season, starting Thursday, Sept. 19. Redbud Audubon will present a Zoom program featuring Krisztina, starting at 7 p.m. 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 website: [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://www.redbudaudubon.org) and clicking on the link on the home page.

Krisztina Scheeff spent years study-

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Award winning photographer Krisztina Scheeff.*

## REDBUD AUDUBON

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

Thursday, September 19, 7 pm

Speaker: “Grebe Whisperer” Krisztina Scheeff

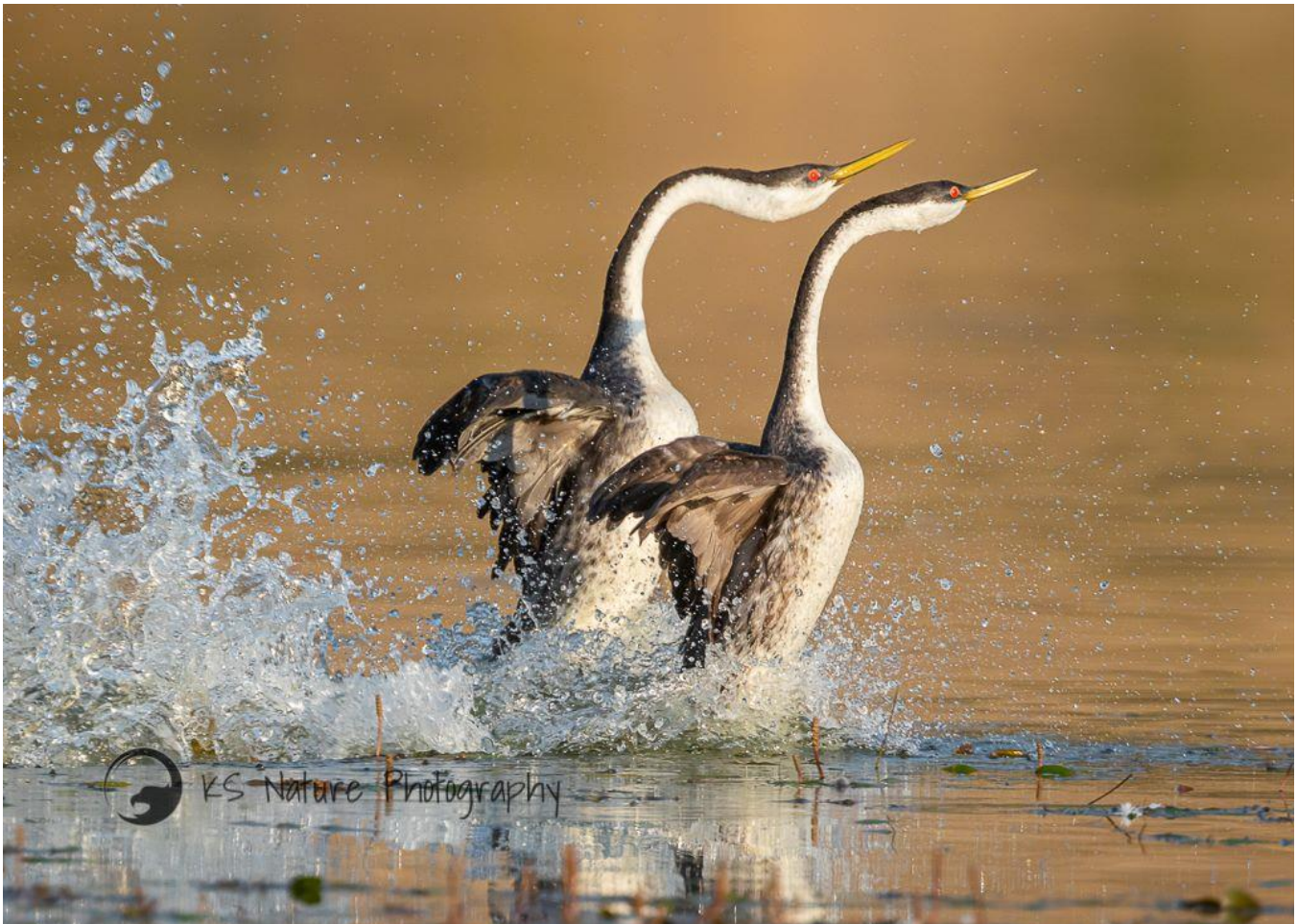
To register for this Zoom meeting, click link:

[Redbud Audubon Program Registration](#)

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

Or scan the  
following QR code:





*Grebes dance across the water as part of their courtship ritual. See more photos on page 3*

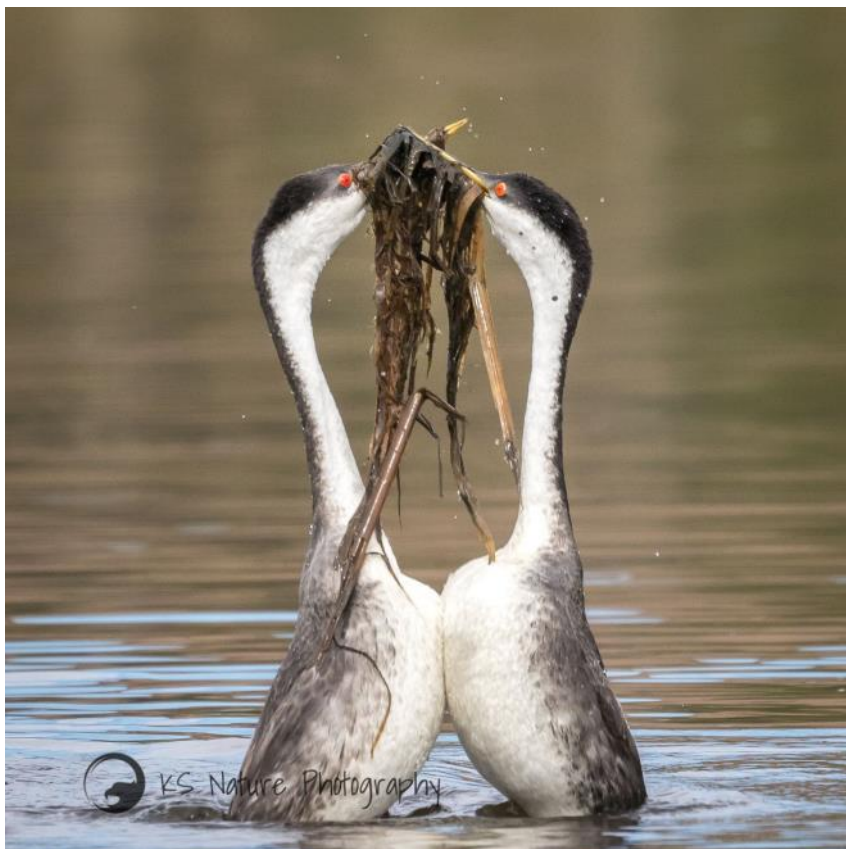
## Experience “Grebe Whisperer” Krisztina Scheeff’s award winning photographs Sept. 19

ing and photographing Western and Clark’s Grebes and guides her photography clients at Lake Hodges in San Diego to experience the grebe’s amazing behavior. She is known as the “Grebe Whisperer,” as her clients like to call her.

She is an award-winning and professional nature photographer. Recognized for her photographic work in National Audubon Society as well as a finalist in the Wildlife Photograph of the Year competition, Krisztina’s photos have been published in magazines and articles around the world, including National Geographic, Wild Planet Photo Magazine, California 101, San Diego Audubon Society, American Wild Magazine, Birders Digest, Marine Conservation Magazine – UK, North American Nature Photography Association, and more. They have also been featured in art shows and galleries around the country.

Scheeff operates a successful business leading photography workshops and tours to Scotland (Puffins), Ireland, Galapagos Islands, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Hungary, Bosque del Apache, Grand Teton NP and more. She also leads workshops for bird festivals around the country and presents at various events. More information is on her website at <https://www.ksnaturephotography.com/>

“As a professional Wildlife & Nature Photographer I work on creating meaningful images that convey a message of hope for the natural world. Conservation photography is one part what my photograph says, and two parts what my photograph does. My goal is to share these images of beautiful animals in their natural environment to inspire others around me to preserve the world that we share with all the amazing living creatures around us,” she noted.



*See the award winning photos of Krisztina Scheeff at the September Zoom meeting. (Above) Grebe with chicks. (Left) Prospective mates present weeds to each other.*

# President's Message

by Donna Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

We are off to a great fall with migrations just around the corner. Birds are great bioindicators of ecosystem conditions because they are responsive to environmental changes. Birds also serve important ecological functions, such as seed dispersal and insect consumption. These special traits, in addition to the fact that birds are so easy to observe, make each birding season in Lake County special.

Audubon's Bird Migration Explorer ([www.explorer.audubon.org](http://www.explorer.audubon.org)) lets us follow over 450 bird species on their annual journeys. You can easily check each species' conservation status and follow their flight paths through the year.

During 2010-2020, Redbud Audubon participated in a Western and Clark's Grebe monitoring project led by Dr. Floyd Hayes and Board member Marilyn Waits. The project, funded by a Luckenbach grant through Audubon California, produced invaluable research into counting grebe nest successes and failures. The grant also led to another of our projects – the installation of fishing line recycling bins around the lake – which is ongoing to this day. Rob Patton leads this project, along with volunteers, and benefits the conservation of not only grebes but also other Clear Lake birds, such as cormorants, ducks, and more. The bins allow for the safe disposal of fishing line that could otherwise cause harm and often death to these birds.

In May, the chapter received an Audubon In Action Grant to continue our grebe research. The long-term goal (2025-2030) of our monitoring is to use grebes to infer information about overall aquatic ecosystem health, using drones and AI-based monitoring and involving high school, college, and tribal-education students, thereby training conservation technologists of the future. Dr. Scott Butterfield, Clark Professor of Conservation Technology at Pacific Union College, plans to help implement sustainable environmental curricula and involve the students in grebe monitoring. After the project ends, the drones will become property of the schools and tribes involved in the monitoring.

To learn more about this grant and Dr. Hayes' continuing research, go to YouTube and watch the Clear Lake Integrated Science Symposium sessions from Friday, 8/16/2024. Happy birding!

## Seven Simple Ways to Help Birds

*Bring Birds Back article from [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)*

- **Make Windows Safer, Day and Night.** Simple adjustments to your windows can save birds' lives.
- **Keep Cats Indoors.** Indoor cats live longer, healthier lives. Outdoor cats kill more birds than any other non-native threat.
- **Reduce Lawn by Planting Native Species.** The U.S. has 63 million acres of lawn. Replacing lawn with native plants has a huge potential for supporting wildlife.
- **Avoid Pesticides.** Look for organic food choices and cut out some of the one billion pounds of pesticides used in the U.S. each year.
- **Drink Coffee That's Good for Birds.** Shade-grown coffees are delicious, economically beneficial to farmers, and help more than 42 species of North American songbirds.
- **Protect Our Planet from Plastics.** 91% of plastics are not recycled, and they take 400 years to degrade.
- **Watch Birds, Share What You See.** Bird watchers are one of science's most vital sources of data on how the ecological world is faring.



*Cindy Jasser*

## ***Cindy Jasser welcomed as new Redbud Audubon board member***

**By Donna Mackiewicz**

Join me in welcoming Cindy Jasser to our Audubon team of volunteers!

Cindy has lined up fantastic speakers for this year's monthly Zoom meetings, beginning with the September Zoom with the Grebe Whisperer, Krisztina Scheeff.

Cindy is the Fire and Forestry Program Coordinator for the Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC). She earned a double major BS in Biology and Zoology from Cal Poly Humboldt in 2003. Cindy serves as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Konocti Fire Safe Council and is a member of the Certified Emergency Response Team (CERT) for the Konocti region.

Cindy has a passion for wildlife rehabilitation. She worked for over 20 years as Executive Director of the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center and volunteers locally with the Wasson Memorial Veterinary Clinic.

This past spring she followed up on and rescued a couple of Ospreys, and we look forward to their release back into the wild soon.

# **REDBUD AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



## **OFFICERS**

*President:* Donna Mackiewicz

*Vice President:* Roberta Lyons

*Treasurer:* Nicola Selph

*Secretary:* Katherine Lindsley

*Member-at-large:* Cindy Jasser

## **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**

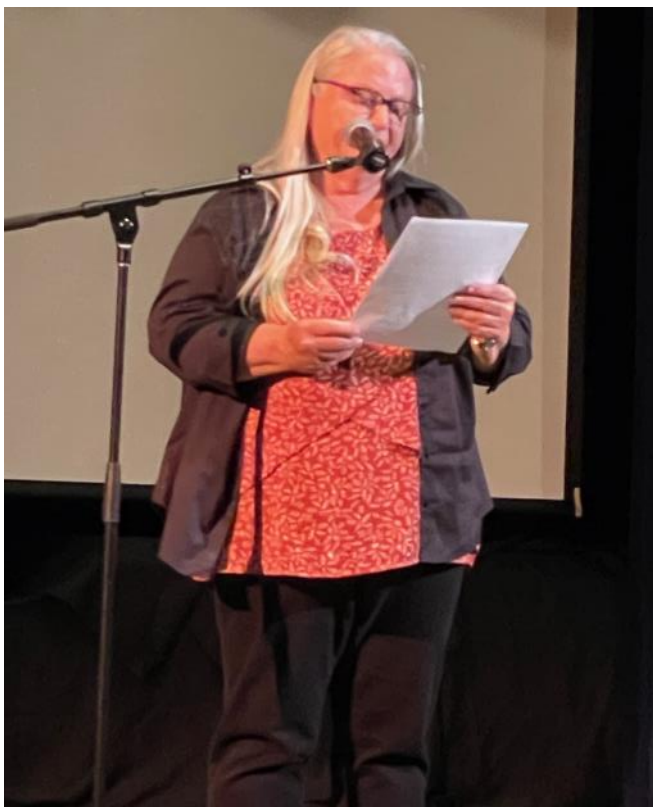
**Email: [redbud.audubon@gmail.com](mailto:redbud.audubon@gmail.com)**



*Angela Depalma-Dow with Lake County's Water Resources Department at the CLISS poster session Thursday night.*



*Candace Reynolds of the Environmental Consulting group HANA attended the conference. Her company is involved in wetland restoration projects here in Lake County.*



*Redbud Audubon president, Donna Mackiewicz presented at the symposium and also at the Friday night Science Slam.*

## Redbud Audubon participates in Clear Lake Science Symposium

The Clear Lake Integrated Science Symposium (CLISS 2024), was the first scientific conference to focus on the Clear Lake watershed in more than two and a half decades. The last dedicated Clear Lake conference in Lake County occurred in 1998.

CLISS 2024 was held August 15-16, 2024, at the Robinson Rancheria Conference Center, and featured researchers and practitioners from Federal, State, County, and Tribal agencies and non-profit organizations. This historic symposium covered the latest developments in water quality monitoring, lake and lakebed management, and conservation and restoration efforts in the Clear Lake Watershed.

*(Continued on page 7)*



Dr. Scott Butterfield of Pacific Union College in Angwin.

# Scientific conference on Clear Lake first in decades

(Continued from page 6)

Redbud Audubon Society president, Donna Mackiewicz, presented information about Redbud Audubon’s recent grebe monitoring grant, along with Redbud’s partner, Dr. Scott Butterfield. (See story in this issue.)

Attendees learned about the ongoing scientific research on issues that deeply concern all county residents: the risks associated with Hazardous Algal (cyanobacteria) Blooms, changes to Clear Lake fish populations, how to get waterway projects approved through local and state permitting processes, the potential for volcanic eruptions, and mitigation strategies for Clear Lake.

## 2024 - 2025 Field Trip Calendar

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

**September 21** - Kuulanapo Preserve, Lakeport

**October 19** - Highland Springs Reservoir

**November 23** – Clear Lake State Park

**December 14 - Christmas Bird Count**

**January 18 – 2025** – National Wildlife Refuges – Colusa and Sacramento

**February – 22** – Reclamation Area, Upper Lake

**March – 22** – 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’s first field trip of the season will be to the Lake County Land Trust’s Kuulanapo Preserve*

Redbud Audubon has some great field trips planned for this season, starting with a visit to the Lake County Land Trust’s Kuulanapo Preserve near Lakeport. The preserve is located at 446 Soda Bay Road.

The walk is flat and lasts from one and a half to two hours. Meet at the parking area of the preserve at 9 a.m. sharp, please. The Preserve is located on Soda Bay Road. Just after going over the Manning Creek Bridge, if you are coming from Lakeport, and just before the bridge if coming from the Kelseyville direction. Another good landmark is the recycling/transfer station there. If coming from Lakeport, once you go past the transfer center, the driveway is the third driveway on the left. It’s a bit of a tricky turn off but a Land Trust sign is there along with a “feather flag.” Turn in and drive down the road, following the arrows, until you reach the parking area where everyone is gathering.

# *Audubon annual picnic and officer installation*



*At the end of the Redbud Audubon season, which lasts from September through May, members, guests, and friends gather for the annual evening picnic. The event is held at the County Park near Kelseyville and is a great time for fellowship and good food. Installation of officers is also held at the event.*



*Installation of officers is held at the May end of year picnic held at Lakeside County Park. Pictured are Nicola Selph, L, Treasurer; Roberta Lyons, Vice-president and Donna Mackiewicz, President of your local Redbud Audubon chapter.*



*Redbud Audubon members, Brad Barnwell, Donna Mackiewicz, Pat Harmon and Kathy Barnwell enjoyed the evening picnic held as the last event of the season.*



*Everyone enjoys visiting at the annual Redbud Audubon chapter picnic. Join us next year for this fun event held at the end of Redbud's "season," in May.*

## *Welcome new and returning members*

Welcome new and returning members: Donna Mackiewicz, Clearlake Oaks; Cissy Brazil, Clearlake Oaks; John Grice, Kelseyville; Ella Gralund, Lower Lake; Carol L. Butzbach, Clearlake Oaks; Karen Magnuson, Kelseyville; Mary McQueen, Lakeport; Eleanor Neumuth, Lakeport; Loretta Montgomery, Lucerne; Corrine Erze, Hidden Valley Lake; Bill Trammell, Clearlake Oaks;

Judy Noell, Clearlake Oaks; Dottie Brookins,

Clearlake Pk, Barbara Gleed, Clearlake Pk; Sharon Fuller, Kelseyville; Lynne Demele, Kelseyville; Sydney C. Moore, Kelseyville; Julia Clickard, Lakeport; J. Pimentel, Lakeport; Peter G. Stanley, Lakeport;

Judith Grindle, Lower Lake; Teresa Andre, Nice; Lori Young, Hidden Valley Lake; Carl Petersen, Upper Lake; Jeanne Wotherspoon, Kelseyville; Kathleen A. Griffin, Hidden Valley Lake; Kathy Herdman, Lucerne and Claudia Ellis, Upper Lake.



# *Enjoy some of the amazing wildlife on Clear Lake*



*Clear Lake Keys resident, Pam Smithstan, has shared some images of Western Grebes and Great Blue Herons with Redbud Audubon. The rookery photographed by her is on land directly across from the Clear Lake Keys subdivision channel. It is also a favorite area for the American White Pelicans that visit here in the winter. Pictured is a Great Blue Heron adult and chicks.*



*A Western Grebe in the channel.*



*A Clark's Grebe in the Keys channel.*



*A view of the Great Blue Heron rookery near the Clear Lake Keys in Clear Lake Oaks.*



*Grebe parent and chicks from the summer of 2024. The Redbud Audubon Society will be monitoring grebes starting next season thanks to a grant from the National Audubon Society. Photo by Pam Smithstan*

## ***Audubon memberships 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.

# Redbud Audubon Society receives Audubon Action grant of \$13,000

The Redbud Audubon Society is pleased to announce that it has received a grant for \$13,000 from the National Audubon Society's "Audubon in Action," program. The grant will be used to purchase drone equipment, pay for permitting and license fees for the drone, fund participation from local high schools (Upper Lake and Lower Lake) and the Robinson Rancheria. Funds from the grant will also pay for manuscript preparation and for other equipment.

The drone will be used to monitor Western and Clarks Grebe nesting colonies on different areas of Clear Lake. The Redbud Audubon Society spear-headed a program for almost 10 years of monitoring colonies which resulted in a research paper written by biologist, Dr. Floyd Hayes of Pacific Union College. The current grant will enable Redbud Audubon to continue tracking the activities of the local nesting colonies that are prevalent around Clear Lake. Dr. Hayes, and Dr. Scott Butterfield also of Pacific Union College will be working with Redbud Audubon on this project.

Western and Clarks Grebes are an iconic species of Clear Lake. They are a fascinating bird with entrancing mating habits, like "rushing" across the water in pairs, bobbing their heads and offering water weeds to their prospective mates. After the babies are hatched they climb on their parent's backs and head out into the water of Clear Lake to bring delight to those lucky enough to see them.

The Redbud Audubon Society is the oldest conservation organization in Lake County. It was founded in 1976 by a group of citizens here who appreciated the abundant bird life both on Clear Lake but in all areas of the county.

## *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.

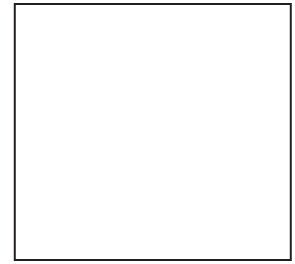
Even if you still prefer to receive the mailed version of the "Grebe", we would like to have your email for our records. Once in a while, we send out emails to our members about important events or bird sightings that may be of interest. You are also welcome

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.

So 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.

**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.

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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*