



The Western Grebe

Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.,

www.redbudaudubon.org

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Impacts of wildfire and grazing on bird communities to be discussed in November

The Redbud Audubon Society is pleased to host Dr. Frank Fogarty, who will discuss how wildfires and cattle-grazing influence wintering bird communities in California's oak woodlands. The monthly program meeting will be on Zoom on Thursday, Nov. 21. The Zoom program starts at 7 p.m. and registration can be achieved by clicking on the link in this newsletter or by going to www.redbudaudubon.org and clicking on the registration link. The Zoom link for the program will be sent the day of the program.

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Audubon California's Bobcat Ranch is the subject of Dr. Frank Fogarty's investigations on how wildfire and cattle-grazing impact wintering bird communities.

REDBUD AUDUBON

NOVEMBER MEETING

Thursday, November 21, 7 pm

Speaker: Dr. Frank Fogarty Topic: Impacts of wildfire and cattle-grazing on bird communities

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:





Birds may be affected in different ways by wildfire and grazing, including population size. Above, Meadowlark.

Impact of wildfire and grazing on bird habitat

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Dr. Fogarty is an Assistant Professor of Applied Avian Ecology in the Wildlife Department at Cal Poly Humboldt (formerly Humboldt State University). He studies how potential disturbances, including wildfire, climate change, habitat fragmentation, timber harvest, and cattle grazing, interact with birds and their communities. He is also interested in methodologies for evaluating occupancy and abundance, especially as it relates to the kinds of messy, realistic data that are used by wildlife professionals.

Wildfire and cattle grazing are both potential disturbances that may dramatically alter wildlife habitat,

Fogarty explains. However, little is known about how these disturbances affect birds on their wintering grounds. Dr. Fogarty will discuss his work investigating the responses of wintering bird communities to these disturbances in a northern California oak woodland. This work was conducted at Audubon California's Bobcat Ranch, near Winters, which provided a mosaic of burned and unburned sites, as well as grazed and ungrazed sites, providing a natural experiment to test these questions. Dr. Fogarty will discuss effects on the total number of birds, species richness, and community composition in response to wildfire and grazing.

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 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.

President's Message

by Donna
Mackiewicz



Donna Mackiewicz

Fall is here bringing migrants on the Pacific Flyway for our enjoyment. Coots, Shovelers, Hooded Merganser, Eared Grebe, and a Peregrine have been seen by birders on the north shore. It would be exciting to see if someone can beat last year's recorded 660 American Robins single-day count. And will the thousands of Western and Clark's Grebes be returning? Lake County offers so much for us to look forward to and be thankful for.

Our chapter's Audubon in Action grant implementation is underway. Scott Butterfield of Pacific Union College, Angwin Campus, is enrolled in the drone instruction course, and two drones are ordered and ready for monitoring grebe nests around the lake this summer. We are proud to say three high schools are joining the project: Lower Lake, Clear Lake and Upper Lake. These schools will help us monitor the grebes. Bringing youth to actively monitor climate change, lake health, and the changing populations of birds is a great partnership. If you would like to be involved in the monitoring – reach out and let us know.

Did you know the Clear Lake Environmental Research Center's (CLERC) Fire and Forestry offers Wildfire Resilience and Forest Health programs? Free chipping services, consultations, and cost-share programs like tree planting are important programs they have received grants for in Lake County. Free chipping service guidelines include stacking the materials in an accessible area, filling out the forms from <https://www.theclerc.org/chipping-program>, and having a minimum of six properties in your area. Each property can get up to an hour of chipping service.

With the cooler temperatures arriving, remember to not transport firewood in or out of the county. Transporting invasive pests in the firewood is taking a toll on our trees, especially the oaks. If you spot signs of MOB (Mediterranean Oak Borer) snap a photo, note the location, and report it to Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (clerc.org).

Happy birding!

Please provide us with your email

A number of our members have emailed us at 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, and, if you wish, let us know in what areas you feel you can help.

Updated Great Blue Heron rookery report

By Roberta Lyons

Starting in 2021 some Redbud Audubon Society members, mainly Kathy and Brad Barnwell, started documenting the changes and movement of the Great Blue Heron rookeries on the shores of Clear Lake.

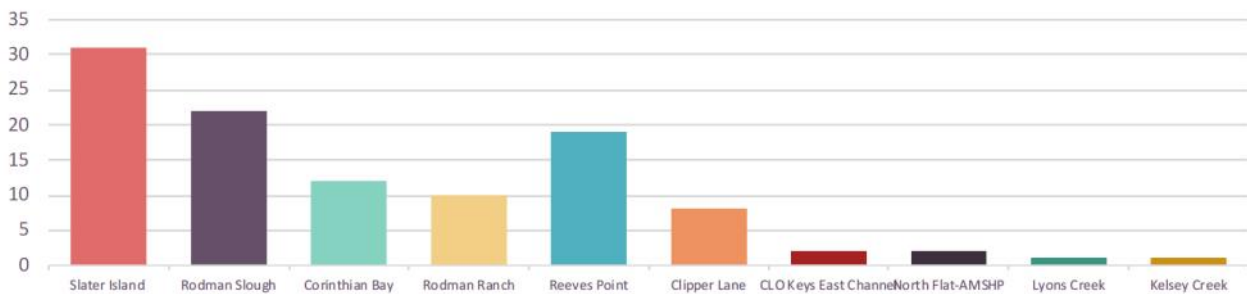
The latest data is being published here, with an updated graph and information regarding the rookeries. Last year, we reported no nests at the historical site on Slater Island in Anderson Marsh, but nests on the north side of Cache Creek, near the “North Flat” area

of the park. This year numerous young herons were heard jabbering for food on Slater Island and the Great Blues were flying in and out; however, the nests were hidden behind trees and were not visible, so we have to just say: it sounded like a lot of GBH’s back there! But we couldn’t count the nests. The North side of the creek still contained 15 to 20 nests according to sightings.

President Donna Mackiewicz, resident of Clearlake
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Great Blue Heron Rookeries

Lake County, California Sites & Years Active



Location	Years Active	Under 30 Nests	Over 30 Nests	Year Decrease Noted	No Nests Noted	Number of Active years
Slater Island	1990 to 2019 2024		x	2018	Active*	31
Rodman Slough	2000 to 2021		x		2022	22
Corinthian Bay	2006 to 2017		x		2018	12
Rodman Ranch	1990 to 1999		x		2000	10
Reeves Point	2006-2024	x			Still active	19
Clipper Lane	2017-2024	x			Still active	8
CLO Keys East Channel	2023-2024	x			Still active	2
North Flat-AMSHP	2023-2024	x			Still active	2
Lyons Creek	2024	x			New	1
Kelsey Creek	2024	x			New	1

*Although we could not count the nests, it appears some GBHs have repopulated Slater Island in 2024

Rookery Report

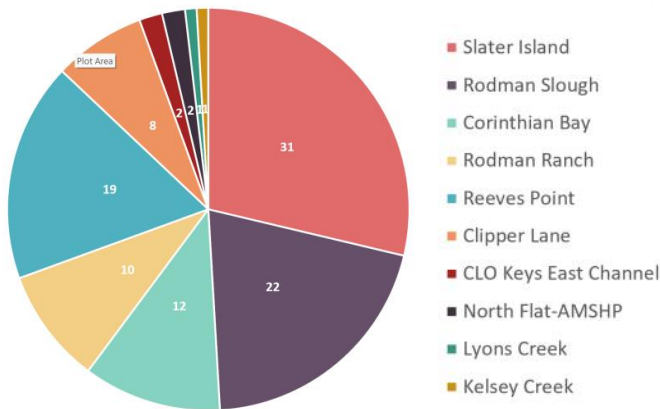
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Keys in Clearlake Oaks, has documented about 12 GBH nests in trees near the channel near her house. The Rodman Slough rookery, which could be viewed from the Reclamation Area hiking path near Upper Lake, was not active either this year or last.

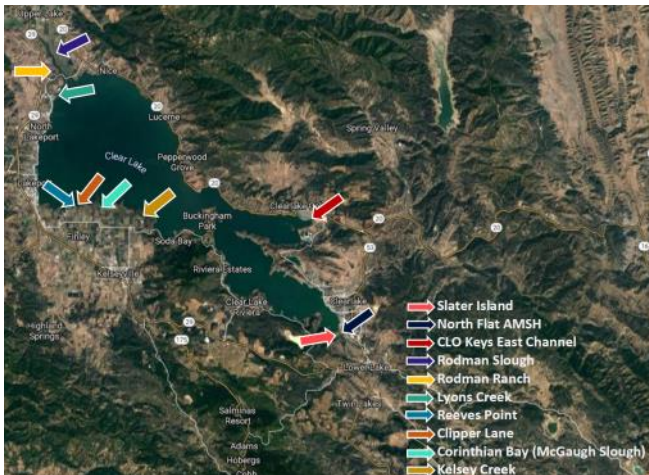
Two new rookeries have been noted; one in Clear Lake State Park, being tracked and photographed by Herman Strik who walks the park often, He reported 7 GBH nests. The other small rookery is on Lyons Creek north of downtown Lakeport.

Although this is a Great Blue Heron report, Donna reports that also at the Clearlake Oaks rookery were 40 Double-crested Cormorant nests, 11 Black-crowned Night Herons; five Great White Egrets, and at least one Green Heron that was spotted nesting in a neighbor's yard.

Active Years for Great Blue Heron Rookeries



Great Blue Heron Rookery Sites Lake County, CA



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(Above) A group heads out at Highland Springs.

Highland Springs field trip highlight was a Peregrine Falcon

A small but adventurous group met at the Highland Springs Reservoir last month to enjoy a challenging walk to the dam, while some simply gathered by the lake where they were treated to the sight of a Peregrine Falcon. The falcon sat calmly on a branch above one of the picnic tables until everyone had a good view of him.

Other birds of the day were mallards, five Spotted Sandpipers, Pied-billed Grebes, a Belted Kingfisher, five Acorn Woodpeckers, Oak titmouse, Wrentit, Ruby-crowned Kinglet Northern Flicker, Great Blue Heron and two Great Egrets.

Join us at Clear Lake State Park on Nov. 23

Join us on Saturday at Clear Lake State Park at 9 a.m. for a pleasant walk around the park. You will have to pay the fee at the entry way. This is a good time of year to see our wintering birds and possibly still some migrants.



Highland Springs area resident Tom Lajcik, (right), led a small group on an adventurous trail.



This month's field trip will be at Clear Lake State Park on Saturday, Nov. 23.

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) set for Dec. 14

Redbud Audubon Society will carry out its annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, Dec. 14. The CBC is a traditional project of Audubon societies around the country. Former participants will be sent information about meeting times and places by the count organizers, Brad and Kathy Barnwell. The public is also welcome to participate and can do so by emailing Redbud Audubon at redbud.audubon@gmail.com for more information.

On the day of the count, participants will meet at 5 p.m. at a yet to-be-announced pizza venue for the final tally. Pizza is provided by Redbud and all who participate are welcome to attend.

Prior to the bird count, on Thursday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m., Donna Mackiewicz will host a Zoom Bird Identification program. This will be an extensive slide show featuring birds that are often seen on the annual count and birds that are common to Lake County. The program emphasizes the field characteristics of the common and some not-so-common birds here. The Zoom registration will be in the December Western Grebe newsletter. Please note the bird ID program is being held a week earlier than our usual programs because of the date of the CBC.

National Audubon has been holding a Christmas Bird Count for 124 years. The official count period usually starts around the middle of December and ends the first week of January. Local Audubon Societies can decide what day they conduct their counts within this time frame. Every individual bird and species encountered during the day is recorded. Each count group has a designated circle of 15 miles in diameter and tries to cover as much ground as possible within a certain period of time.

Newcomers are encouraged to join in on the bird count. You don't have to be an expert birder to participate. Besides emailing Redbud Audubon, feel free to call Brad or Kathy at (707) 263-1283 for more information.

Welcome new and returning members

Welcome new and returning members: Eugene Gaffney, Clearlake Park; Karen Zurlinden, Clearlake Park; Doug Prather, Kelseyville; and Kimberly Olson, Kelseyville.

2024-2025 Field Trip Calendar

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

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

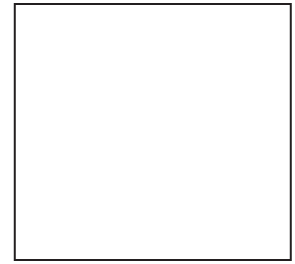
March – 22 – Clark's Island and more Clearlake Oaks

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 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.

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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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