

Lake County Land Trust

PO Box 1017, Lakeport, CA 95453 • (707)262-0707 • Winter/Spring 2024



A Wood Duck couple was spotted this past winter at the Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve.

Wood Ducks at LCLT Preserve are among the most spectacular of birds

By Val Nixon

Of the more than 270 species of birds that have been recorded by Dave Woodward on the Wright Ranch side of the Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve, wood ducks are one of the most spectacular. “The Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) is a shimmering spectacle of color with feathers that appear to have been hand-painted by an imaginative artist. Its crested head, wings, and flanks are adorned with iridescence, set-off by crisp white lines, and tipped with a vibrant coral-hued bill and eye.” (Cornell Lab, Alexandra Class Freedman, 2015).

The Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve had abundant sightings of these beautiful and very shy birds this past winter. They are such a delight to watch

as they dabble for food in the water or perch near their cavity nest or on top of a wood duck box. Being elusive, sometimes just hearing their thin rising call as they take flight will let you know they are near.

Most of the time wood ducks nest in trees near water, sometimes directly over water, but every once in a while, they can be found over a mile away.

After hatching, the ducklings jump down from the nest tree and make their way to water. The mother calls them to her but does not help them in any way. The ducklings may jump from

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A Wood Duck family.

Recovery of wood duck populations a success story—

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heights of over 50 feet without injury.

Natural cavities for nesting can be scarce, but wood ducks will readily use nest boxes provided for them. There are many theories as to why, but many females lay eggs in the nests of other females. Sometimes when checking wood duck boxes, you can find one hen sitting on as many as 25 eggs. Most wood ducks pair up in January. It is not uncommon for them to produce two broods in one year.

The wood duck is now considered a species of least concern, but this wasn't always so. A partnership between conservationists, artists, farmers, and hunters saved the wood duck and many other species of ducks from extinction due to overhunting and habitat destruction.

The survival and recovery of wood duck populations in North America are renowned wildlife success stories. By the late 1800s to early 1900s, extinction of the wood duck seemed imminent. Destruction of hardwood habitat and market hunting were the two major factors that contributed to the species' decline. Wood ducks were one of the most hunted waterfowl species prior to 1918. Wood ducks were hunted from September to April. In 1918 the Migratory Bird Treaty Act prohibited the hunting of wood ducks nationwide. Wood duck populations recovered, and seasons were reopened in 1941.

To keep the wood duck population healthy in 1934 a federal plan called the "Duck Stamp Act" played a major role by ensuring that waterfowl



Baby Wood Ducks spring from their homes to land on the ground and follow their mother to water.



An historical duck stamp.

hunters bought into long-term conservation and management.

This Act became an important regulatory power, controlling unrestricted hunting while steering funds from the Act toward alleviating habitat loss. The money from this Act has been directed to purchasing and restoring critical habitat or pur-

(Continued on page 3)



Wood Ducks resting on a submerged log. Photo by Brad Barnwell

CWA celebrates one millionth successful Wood Duck egg hatch—

(Continued from page 2)

chasing conservation easements much of which is on farmland. This program gained acceptance, despite its cost to hunters, by using beautiful waterfowl stamps sourced from an art contest that has gained national prestige. The Duck Stamp Act continues to this day. It is a world-renowned conservation program. It permits anyone, hunter or not, to support the conservation management of critical migratory waterfowl habitats and birds by purchasing a duck stamp.

Locally, Eugene Rentsch organized a chapter of the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to build and monitor wood duck boxes for CWA. Over a 25-year span, Eugene, his wife Glenda, Stan Beach and Peter Scranton monitored 120 boxes in multiple locations around Lake County. They monitored over 15,000 wood duck eggs in that time. I had the great pleasure of working with Eugene as he counted wood duck eggs at Clear Lake State Park. Climbing his rickety ladder while he plugged the wood duck box hole was exciting, especially when a hen was determined

to get out. Eugene gently banded the hens, counted the eggs and studiously recorded the data. Last year the CWA celebrated its one millionth successful wood duck egg hatch.

While the Migratory Bird Act and the Duck Stamp Act have helped ducks return to safe numbers, this program cannot alone safeguard key migratory waterfowl habitats in the face of changing public priorities and continued development. Last Fall when I walked out on the east levee of the Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve, I saw between 20-40 wood ducks flush at the sight of me.

Lake County Land Trust puts aside critical habitat for birds and other wildlife. As we create management plans for these preserves in the Big Valley Wetland Complex perhaps wood duck boxes can play a role. Like the Duck Stamp Act collaboration of artists, hunters, farmers and conservationists, the Lake County Land Trust works to build bridges and partnerships within our community to ensure that we once again have a healthy lake and abundant wildlife corridors.

Restoration plans in the works for Big Valley Wetlands Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve

By Merry Jo Velasquez, LCLT Vice President

The two most recent Lake County Land Trust (LCLT) Big Valley Wetlands acquisitions, the Wright Ranch and the Keithly Family Ranch, are the ancestral home of the Kuulanapo people. Kuulanapo is Pomo for water lily people. To honor this history, the new name for the 287 acres of protected land is the Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve. The LCLT will provide the Big Valley Pomo access to their ancestral lands for implementation of traditional activities, allowing Tribal access to the historic lands and Tribal cultural resources. Planning is underway to hold docent-led walks on the Preserve once the lake level has lowered sufficiently to allow passage without the need for waders.

The LCLT is working with the Big Valley Pomo on a restoration plan. They have engaged FlowWest, who will assist in submission of a grant proposal to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to fund this project. The project will improve fish passage, reactivate a historical tributary channel, and restore native vegetation while suppressing invasive species. Selective regrading will create suitable elevations for diverse wetland plants, increase edge complexity, and create deeper protected inlets for reintroduction of water lilies. The project will enrich ecological diversity by restoring native plant communities and increase complexity of floodplain habitats.

The project will restore Manning Creek to enhance spawning and rearing habitat for the Clear Lake hitch (*Lavinia exilicauda chi*) (*Chi*), a fish species listed as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act that is culturally significant to the Lake County Pomo Tribes. About 75 years ago, Manning Creek was channelized, removing the eastern branch of the creek that emptied into the lake through a delta on the Wright Ranch. The flow of the remaining western branch of the creek on the Keithly Family Ranch was altered as the result of agricultural grading, creating a cut-back waterfall. This waterfall acts as a significant fish passage barrier in years of low rainfall. Reestablishment of the original western meandering stream channel will serve to bypass

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Anna Kladzyk Constantino, Senior water resources Engineer with FlowWest, visited the Keithly Ranch area of the Kuulanapo Preserve to look for potential fish passage barriers on Manning Creek.



Anthony Falzone, a Geomorphologist and founder of FlowWest walks through wetlands with Rick Macedo, retired Fish and Wildlife biologist and now member of the Lake County Land Trust Stewardship Committee.

Restoration of Kuulanapo Wetland Preserve will help reduce cyanobacterial blooms in Clear Lake—

(Continued from page 4)

the waterfall. The project will reestablish the original eastern channel flow out to the delta. Appropriate riparian species will be planted along creek corridors to enhance riparian habitat and provide refuge for fish from predators. Manning Creek will be cleared of other existing fish passage barriers.

Restoring Manning Creek flow to its original delta will increase the health of the delta ecosystem, which will benefit wildlife on the Preserve. Wetland restoration will enhance water quality by filtering runoff from the 8,960-acre Manning Creek Watershed. Distributing flow across the historic delta will reduce flow velocities, resulting in sedimentation and nutrient deposition/capture before reaching the lake, and mitigate agricultural runoff impacts. This will reduce sediment-bound phosphorus entry into the lake and related cyanobacteria blooms in Clear Lake.

Once Manning Creek is restored, decisions can be made on seasonal paths to ecologically interesting places. Nature trails will be developed through the different vegetation types and interesting cultural and/or ecological areas.

Join us for the annual Lake County Land Trust *Spring into Summer Celebration*



Please join the
Lake County Land Trust
Sunday, June 30, 2024
3-5 pm, for our
Spring into Summer Celebration

Hosted by Lynne and Bernie Butcher
in the courtyard of the **Blue Wing Saloon
Restaurant and Tallman Hotel**
in Upper Lake.

Enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music.

Tickets are \$50 per person with
all funds going to support the
Lake County Land Trust

**TICKET INFORMATION:
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**

To purchase tickets online, visit

<http://www.lakecountylandtrust.org>

& click on Spring into Summer Celebration Tickets
on the home page.

Or call (707)262-0707

email **LCLT@lakecountylandtrust.org**

Or send payment to **LCLT**

PO Box 1017, Lakeport, CA 95453.

Payment in advance is requested.

Looking forward to seeing you!

President's Message

By
Val
Nixon



Val Meyer Nixon

Though it has been a tempestuous Spring of weather fluctuations and unpredictable storms followed by short spurts of radiant sun, my husband and I continue to have visitors from out of town. They enjoy the restaurants, small town shops and wineries but they don't come here for them. They journey here for what they consider some of their lifetime best outdoor experiences. Kayaking in marshes amongst a cacophony of nesting herons or the high-pitched calls of western grebes taking refuge in the tules, fill their hearts with wonder at the amazing richness of Clear Lake. Hiking in the State parks or at Boggs Lake Preserve makes them want to come back for more of nature's wonders that those of us who live here can readily enjoy.

It's a reminder of how important the work is that the Lake County Land Trust does. Every time we acquire a new property after a nail-biting process of grant writing and real estate wrangling, I think it's time for a rest. Let's enjoy this accomplishment before we move on. Inevitably we immediately embrace another possible acquisition. We know the opportunity to protect, restore and allow public access to critical wetlands and wildlife corridors can be a one-time possibility. With community support, we move forward.

Throughout this newsletter you will read articles about land acquisition, partnerships, conservation, and exciting wildlife we live amongst. The bridges and partnerships we try to build within our community also include the wildlife community that we are part of. We are on the land observing, recording, and re-creating habitat that is healthy for the plants and animals and while doing that we create a healthier world for us.

There are global lasting side effects of the modern industrial world. As we grow in popula-

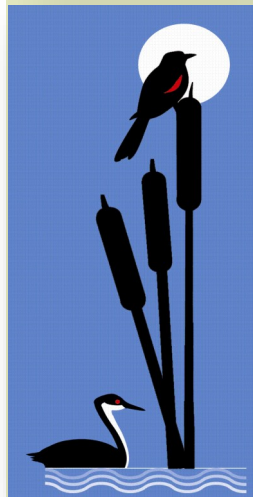
tion and bring businesses to Lake County, we can, in our own area at least, help reverse any side effects of that growth by working together to restore our water ways, leaving wildlife corridors intact and ensuring sustainable businesses and agriculture. With your help, the Lake County Land Trust through education, cooperation, acquisition, and restoration will be an important part of that goal and set an example for other communities to follow.

It is with grateful appreciation to you, our supporters, our hardworking Board of Directors, volunteers, and staff that I close this letter. I look forward to seeing you at our special events, or outdoors enjoying this wondrous spring.

—Val Nixon

"When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

—Aldo Leopold



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choose to
receive your
newsletter
by email**

You can opt to receive your LCLT newsletter via email, postal mail, or both! Please let us know which you prefer.

Contact us at:

LCLT@lakecountylandtrust.org
if you would like anything changed
in the way you receive your
newsletter. Thank You!



Taking a break on the back porch of the Rodman Nature Center.

Rotary Junior Interact group visits the Rodman Preserve for work and fun

By Roberta Lyons

On a beautiful Friday in early May a group of seven young women from the Terrace Middle School in Lakeport gathered at the Rodman Preserve near Upper Lake to lend their time and energy to some projects there.

Accompanied by their advisor, Lisa Prather, a Terrace teacher, the students learned about native California bunch grasses, cleared areas around the grass patches, cleaned up signs and generally lent their youthful energy to a fun day of work, lunch, and education.

The students also learned from volunteer, Chuck Williams, of Ukiah, about invasive Scotch Broom and helped him remove a substantial patch from the northwestern portion of the preserve. Williams travels over from Ukiah on a regular basis to work on this broom removal project.

After working on the very significant projects the girls enjoyed a walk and a sketching session to round out the day. Attending were: Roz Hammons, Abbi Malley, Zoe Templeton, Valeria Ortega, Ariel Perez, Alexa Rodriguez, and Isabella Oschin.

Many thanks to a great group of students – your work was greatly appreciated!



Ariel Perez, Alexa Rodriguez, Isabella Oschin and Valeria Ortega learned of the importance of removing invasive Scotch Broom that is growing in an area of the Rodman Preserve.



Volunteer and nature education specialist, Donna Mackiewicz, shows furs to the students.



Roz Hammons, Abbi Malley and Zoe Templeton learned about *Bromus Carinatus*, or California Brome, a native bunch grass.



Ariel Perez, Jr. Interact Club president was extremely helpful during the groups visit to the Rodman Preserve to weed around patches of California Native bunch grasses.

LCLT 2023 Supporters

It's because we all share a love for our beautiful wild land and the life that it sustains that we come together to protect it. It's because of your support that we are able to protect and preserve Lake County's wildlands in perpetuity. Thank you all for the support that you give us to do this vital work.

Golden Eagle (\$1000+)

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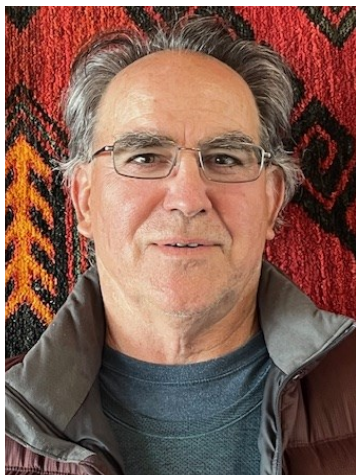
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LCLT welcomes Dr. Eric Woychik to the board



Dr. Eric Woychik

agement, and electric vehicles), largely at the customer level.

This includes work in over 45 countries. He has worked to develop electricity markets and policy initiatives, including working with environmental voices, consumer groups, energy companies, and governments. He has written over 200 reports,

The Lake County Land Trust is pleased to welcome Dr. Eric Woychik, as our newest LCLT board member. Eric has worked on advancement of clean energy policy across five continents, since 1977, with a focus on distributed energy resources (solar, wind, energy efficiency, demand man-

many publications, and made presentations at numerous policy venues. Finally, Eric has been an expert witness in over 50 administrative and civil proceedings.

A resident of Lakeport, Eric and his wife Deborah enjoy living on Clear Lake and appreciate the birds and other wildlife they can view from their home and on Land Trust properties. The Woychiks share their interest in the Land Trust and Deborah is a member of the Development Committee, investing volunteer time and knowledge to advance the financial stability of LCLT. She is a long-time fan of Clear Lake as she spent many summers here in her youth water skiing on the warm and beautiful waters off of Lakeport.

Gifts of stock are a great way to support the LCLT, as well as saving on capital gains

There can be significant tax advantages for giving appreciated stock as a contribution to the Land Trust (LCLT) and we have the ability to accept stock donations. The tax on the gain in appreciated value will be avoided if a stock is contributed to the LCLT since the Trust is a 501c3 qualified organization. The full value of the stock on the date of contribution can be used as a charitable deduction on your Federal income tax.

Your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) is also a great way to donate!

These advantages can make your contribution be even more effective in supporting the work of the Land Trust. Another opportunity to donate to the Land Trust is through your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA. If you direct some of that RMD to the Land Trust, there is no tax on that either. We recommend that you consult your tax advisor for the specifics of your situation, but please let us know if you would like to make a contribution of stock, or some of your RMD to the Lake County Land Trust. You can reach the Land Trust at (707) 262-0707 or contact our treasurer, John Stierna at (571) 331-4452.

Special supporters recognized

The Lake County Land Trust would like to express a special thank you to supporters who may not be recognized in our 2023 list, but who are providing special support to the land trust through pledges, life estates, or large annual donations. Our gratitude and appreciation to: Susan Morton, Bernie and Lynne Butcher, Paul Pennington, Andrew Belschner and Tom DiRenzo, Richard and Angela Birk, Charlotte Griswold, Sarah Shaver, John Sheridan and Andrea Duflon, Richard and Judy McCann, the Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation, Stacy Shumer, the Pitzer Family Foundation, the Rose Foundation, the Roy E. Crummer Foundation, the 1997 Gibbs Family Trust, Pierre Cutler and Gillian Parillo, the Lake County Winegrape Commission, Maryann and Peter Schmid, Salesforce, Steve and Carol Schepper Family Foundation, the Michael Edgerton Revocable Trust, Gallo Winery, Reynolds Systems, Darlene Hecomovich, and Donald Tripp.

Students and teachers enjoy learning and observing at Rodman Preserve

The Lake County Land Trust sponsored an environmental educational program for youth during the month of May. The curriculum, *Caring for Clear Lake*, was developed as a Blue-ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake - approved project and funded by the California Natural Resources Agency. UC Davis Center for Community and Citizen Science and Center for Regional Change along with community input developed *Caring for Clear Lake* with the goal of providing environmental education materials that engage youth in local scientific efforts to restore Clear Lake. The Land Trust volunteered to sponsor a testing of the curriculum.

The Lake County Land Trust gathered together five retired educators to pilot one of the units, titled "Our Environment." Many thanks to the teachers: Anita Swanson, Joann O'Neill, Karen Bettencourt, Donna Mackiewicz, and Meg Harper with a combined teaching experience of over 100 years! Twenty-five students, grades K-8, from Lakeport Unified School District Home School Program and Westlake Adventist School attended five classes at the Rodman Preserve. The students used the Nature Center to gather together for short demonstrations, the patio to have discussions and work, and the Preserve's trails for direct experiences.

Students learned how to be astute and curious observers, the importance of biodiversity, and how to participate in ongoing science in our county. As part of teaching youth about ongoing science in Lake County they learned how and why the Lake County Land Trust is working to remove invasive species on the Preserve and the students were able to participate in the Land Trust's iNaturalist project called Rodman Preserve Flora and Fauna. When students were asked "What did you like doing the most?" it was overwhelmingly: hiking in the Preserve! Thank you to all our supporters who have made the Preserve possible for our youth and future generations to enjoy and appreciate.



Part of the project is using an iPad to take images and then send to iNaturalist, the nature photo ID app.



Molly the Goose was a big hit at the Rodman Preserve during the educational training project.



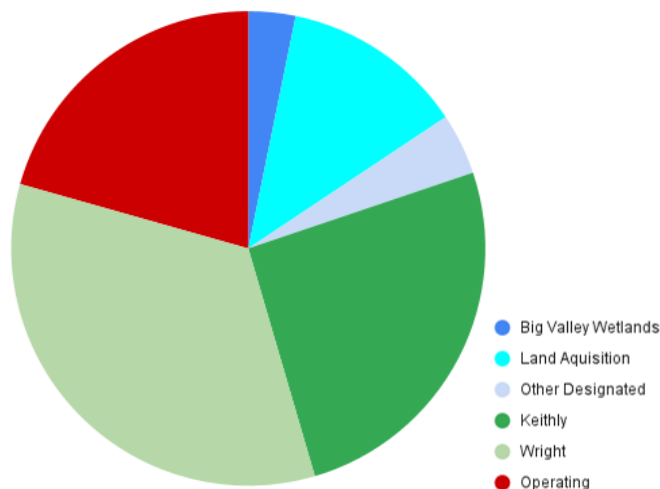
Learning under the shade of the old Blue Oak.



Students and teachers enjoyed several days of learning and adventure at the Rodman Preserve.

Lake County Land Trust		
Financial Results 2023		
Revenue		
	General Donations	\$169,882
	Donations for Keithly Property	90,000
	Donations for Wright Property	108,000
	Other Income	1,350
Total		\$369,232
Expenditures		
	Repair and Maintenance	\$26,525
	Events	17,969
	Staff	52,318
	Office Costs	32,804
	Professional Services	13,959
Total		\$143,575
Net Funding		\$225,657
Monetary Assets		
Funds Balances		\$457,839
Designated Funds		
	Big Valley Wetlands	14,689
	Land Aquisition	57,000
	Boggs	2,753
	Easement Stewardships	9,059
	Keithly	117,406
	Melo	6,344
	Rodman Youth	917
	Wright	155,259
Total Designated Funds		\$363,427
Funds available for Operations		\$94,412

Fund Breakdown



Denis Eucalyptus, Ken Ling and Deb Sally were among the many Land Trust supporters who attended the annual State of the Land Trust Coffee.

Annual Coffee was a fun time to get together and hear about latest projects

Every year the Lake County Land Trust holds this special event for supporters who contribute \$100 or more to the Land Trust on a yearly basis. The Annual Coffee is held at the Nature Center on the beautiful Rodman Preserve.

This event is a chance to embrace the land we all work so hard to conserve and have some fellowship with likeminded nature lovers. We sipped freshly brewed coffee, ate delicious homemade and tasty bakery goodies all while mingling with other LCLT supporters. Our new board member, Eric Woychik, made Fennel Oatmeal Cookies which were the crowd's favorite! Check out our June News & Views, posted on our website, for a link to the recipe.

This year the Annual Coffee was held on April 6. It was a little chilly, but everyone enjoyed gathering on the back porch despite the sometimes cool temps. President Val Nixon gave an update on the Lake County Land Trust's projects and our new website was unveiled. Check it out at lakecountylandtrust.org. We hope you can join us next year for this delightful event. *See more photos next page*

Annual coffee brings supporters together



Supporters Arnaud Hubert and Abby Leutholdt, right, and Gillian Parrillo enjoyed the fellowship at the April State of the Land Trust Coffee held at the Rodman Preserve Nature Center.



LCLT President, Val Nixon always gives an update on Land Trust projects during the coffee event.



Nina Marino, former LCLT board member; John Hess, candidate for supervisor for District One; and LCLT board member Cathy Koehler had a good time discussing issues facing Lake County.



Merry Jo Velasquez, LCLT Vice-president visits with Lakeport resident Susan King.



The day was fine for sitting on the back porch at the Rodman Preserve Nature Center.



Downy Woodpeckers are always a good sighting.



A flock of Band-tailed Pigeons was frequenting the Kuulanapo (Wright Ranch portion) Preserve over the winter.

Fall, winter and spring bring six new birds to Kuulanapo

By Roberta Lyons/ reporting and photos by Dave Woodward

Lake County Land Trust volunteer and retired entomologist, Dave Woodward, is continuing to track the comings and goings of the abundant species of birds at the newly named Kuulanapo Preserve, formerly the Wright Wetland Preserve. Six new species were added between Fall of 2023 and early Spring of 2024, bringing the 31 month total to 176 species. The birds first seen during this interval were Red-breasted Nuthatch, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Varied Thrush, Pine Siskin, Band-tailed Pigeon and American Bittern.

The list now includes 170 species of native birds, an amazing total for any one location in Lake County considering the relatively short time period in which all of these observations occurred. All of the new species were migrants or birds that moved downslope into the Clear Lake

basin in winter with the possible exception of American Bittern. Some bitterns migrate through the county in spring and fall, but others are very uncommon year-round residents in densely vegetated marshy areas around the shoreline of Clear Lake.

Clear Lake and shoreline activity

Above average rainfall last year caused the lake to flood the tule beds along the shoreline of the preserve through all of fall and winter. The flooded tules provided good habitat for Soras and Virginia Rails, but with no mudflats available for resting birds, the counts of pelicans, gulls, cormorants and shorebirds were much lower than they were during the drought. Offshore, the numbers of *Aechmophorus grebes* were also low for unknown reasons, but perhaps the small fish they

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Numerous Wood Ducks are often sighted at the preserve.

Mallards and Wood Ducks were most numerous waterfowl—

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prey were more numerous elsewhere in the lake. Despite the low numbers of grebes, there was a success story; a Clark's grebe was spotted just offshore with a baby.

Early in fall, Mallards and Wood Ducks were the most numerous waterfowl in the lake, but they were later outnumbered by Ruddy Ducks, Buffleheads, Canvasbacks, Northern Shovelers, Ring-necked Ducks and Greater Scaup. Large flocks of Canada Geese, occasionally mixed with a few Cackling Geese, were commonly seen. There were as many as eight Mute Swans offshore on multiple dates in late November.

Eastern Channel

The channel remained flooded through fall and winter providing a densely vegetated, shallow water habitat favored by many species of birds. Dave felt that the most interesting observation of fall occurred on Nov. 19 when he saw an American Bittern flying above the channel before it landed out of sight in the tall vegetation. Groups of Wood Ducks were sighted on multiple occa-

sions both in the water and on emergent snags. Other species commonly observed along the channel included Belted Kingfishers, Pied-billed Grebes, American Coots, Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats and several species of sparrows.

Grassland

Above average rainfall caused vegetation in the grassland to grow much taller this year than during the drought. Some of the Milk Thistle exceeded 5 ft. in height, but it provided good habitat for sparrows and goldfinches. There were large numbers of Savannah, Song, White-crowned, Golden-crowned and Lincoln's Sparrows in the thistle and nearby canary grass all winter. A White-throated Sparrow, an eastern species, was occasionally seen with the crowned sparrows. A flock of American Goldfinches that fed on thistle seeds was estimated to number more than 80 birds in fall, but dwindled to less than 10 birds in winter. Also spotted in the thistle was a pair of Lawrence's Goldfinches on Sept. 14

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Chesnut-backed Chickadees were an unusual sight.



An unusual Lincoln's Sparrow.

Four new species found in oaks and willows near the preserve entrance—

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and a single Pine Siskin on Feb. 8. Western Meadowlarks were seen in the grassland on all fall and winter visits to the preserve.

Forested Areas

Four of the new species were found in oaks and willows near the entrance to the preserve. A flock of Chestnut-backed Chickadees was seen repeatedly in Oct. and Nov. This species is usually considered to be resident in coniferous or mixed forest, but flocks occasionally move downslope into oak woodlands or riparian areas in fall. A noisy Red-breasted Nuthatch was photographed foraging in a Valley Oak on Nov. 3 and heard again later that month. There was a major fall irruption of this species due to low food availability to the north that resulted in many California observations at locations where they are not usually seen.

The eerie calls of several Varied Thrushes were first heard in early November and they were seen or heard multiple times through winter and into spring. These colorful thrushes nest in moist coniferous forest in Alaska and Canada. The number of migrants that winter as far south as Lake County is highly variable year-to-year, so it was a real treat to see them at the preserve. A huge flock of Band-tailed Pigeons flew over the eastern channel late in March. They were later seen landed in oaks where Dave was able to make an exact count of 54 pigeons. Other notable observations in oaks included two Lewis's Woodpeckers on Oct. 15 and a Pileated Woodpecker on Nov. 12. Several migrating Willow Flycatchers lingered in the willows on the shoreline of the lake from late Aug. until mid-Sept.

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An elusive Virginia Rail hunting in the tules.

Observations also included a Red-sided Garter Snake, River Otter and Mule Deer—

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Notes on Raptors

After very few summer observations, two White-tailed Kites were seen on Oct. 8 and they were present on nearly all subsequent fall visits. They were sporadically present in winter. These kites are using the same perches as the pair that was at the preserve last year, so they are likely the same birds. Red-shouldered Hawks were common throughout fall and winter. Raptors seen on multiple dates included Bald Eagle, Osprey, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Harrier and American Kestrel. A Peregrine Falcon and a Merlin were each seen once.

Other Species

There was a California Red-sided Garter Snake, a subspecies of the Common Garter Snake, sunning itself in the grassland on Sept. 20. Dave identified the snake using the California Herps website and later posted a photo on iNaturalist where two participants agreed with the identification. Other observations included a River Otter (near the outlet of the eastern channel on two dates), Coyote, Mule Deer, Black-tailed Jackrabbit and Western Gray Squirrel. Pacific Chorus Frogs were calling during the daytime late in fall and all winter long.



Say's Phoebe are a fairly common site on the preserve.



The channel between the preserve and the Big Valley Rancheria attracts many types of ducks, including this Canvasback.



Orange-crowned Warbler on its migratory journey.

Bequests reveal how important the Lake County Land Trust has become to many people

Significant bequests by two local supporters have revealed how important the Lake County Land Trust is to many people, and some of those people are even unknown to us. Recently the Land Trust was deeply moved by the revelation that two different gentlemen, who were unknown to us, but obviously followed our story, left funds in their estates and trust to LCLT.

Michael Edgerton of Clearlake and Donald Tripp of San Francisco remembered LCLT in their estates for an amount totaling almost \$90,000. This is a significant gift to the Land Trust and we would like any descendants or family members to know that it was greatly appreciated and will be put to good use in furthering our goals of protecting and preserving the beautiful natural areas of Lake County.

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The Lake County Land Trust sends two "appeals," every year – our "Mid-year Appeal," and our annual, or "Holiday Appeal." If you give to either, or both, you are considered a "supporter" of the Lake County Land Trust; or, of course, if you donate any other time during the year, you are a supporter. If you have already donated, or plan to, many thanks!

You may send a check to: Lake County Land Trust, P.O. Box 1017, Lakeport, CA 95453. To donate online, go to www.lakecountylandtrust.org and click on the "donate" button at the top right of the home page.

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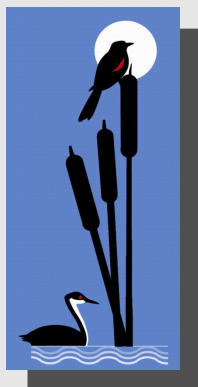
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Some LCLT supporters have chosen to support our mission through planned giving—including LCLT in a will or trust—or making another kind of legacy gift. Their foresight and yours, should you choose to join them, ensures the strength and the sustainability of the Lake County Land Trust.

Your planned gift to LCLT will ensure that conservation efforts continue to preserve and enhance vital biodiversity, improve the health of our ancient lake, allow wildlife to flourish, and encourage sustainable economic growth.

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If you would like more information about Legacy Giving opportunities, please contact Lake County Land Trust board president Val Nixon at (707)331-8321 or email her at 4val944@gmail.com.



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Vision Statement

Dedicated to preserving Lake County's natural resources through conservation, education, and cooperation.



**Walks are now open
every Saturday morning
at the Rodman Preserve!
Join us!**

Who We Are

The Lake County Land Trust is a local, 501 (c) (3) charitable nonprofit organization directly involved in protecting important land resources. These include: wetlands, wildlife habitats, parks, forests, watersheds, riparian stream corridors, lakeside areas, and trails. The trust is also concerned with property that has unique scenic, cultural, agricultural, educational, or historical value.

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Nicola Selph

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