



COUNTY OF LAKE
Marketing & Economic Development
255 North Forbes Street
Lakeport, California 95453-5406
707-263-2580 FAX 707-263-1012

www.lakecounty.com

CONTACTS: Jennifer Hammond, (707) 263-2580
Marilyn Waits, (707) 279-1242

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 24, 2011

HERON FESTIVAL TO BE HELD APRIL 30 – MAY 1, 2011
AT CLEAR LAKE STATE PARK IN KELSEYVILLE

KELSEYVILLE, CA – The 17th-annual Heron Festival and Wildflower Brunch, presented by the Redbud Audubon Society and Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association, will be held April 30 – May 1, 2011, at Clear Lake State Park in Kelseyville. The event is a fun, family-oriented weekend that features pontoon boat tours, birding and nature walks, exhibits, nature talks, and children's activities.

The annual Wildflower Brunch, prepared by the Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association, will be held on Saturday, April 30, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. It features a build-your-own omelet with choice of fillings, served with pastries, fruit, and coffee. The cost for brunch is \$15. Advance brunch reservations and payment are requested and may be made online at www.heronfestival.org

On Saturday and Sunday, pontoon boat excursions will take visitors along the shoreline of Clear Lake to view nesting herons, egrets, grebes, and other shorebirds. The 90-minute boat trips will be offered from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Experienced Audubon birding guides will accompany each boat to share information about the birds and wildlife seen on each trip. The excursions depart from the Clear Lake State Park marina. Cost is \$15 per person for the pontoon boat trips. Advance reservations are required and may be made online at www.heronfestival.org

The Visitor Center at Clear Lake State Park will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Throughout the weekend, the Visitor Center Auditorium features speaker presentations, slide shows, and videos on local birds and wildlife. Topics include the weekend's featured herons, wildflowers, and hummingbirds. The center features interpretive displays of Lake County's natural and cultural resources including an erupting volcano, a Pomo Indian village, a mountain lion cave, and dioramas of the woodland and riparian habitats in the park. The gift shop offers educational and entertaining nature items.

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Nature and bird walks are led by local park docents and Audubon guides who are specialists in the park's birds and wildlife. A nature fair with numerous outdoor exhibit booths presents conservation and nature displays and educational materials. Nature-related arts and crafts also are available.

Speakers include noted experts on herons, grebes, and other birds likely to be seen during the festival.

Another highlight of the weekend, especially for children, is "Raptor Speak," where live owls and other birds of prey join Curator Jenny Papkas from Native Bird Connections to offer an opportunity to see raptor behavior up close. Learn about these lively non-releasable raptors in a fun and informative talk and bird demonstration, offered twice on Sunday.

Dr. Harry Lyons, Professor of Biology and Ecology at the Clear Lake Campus of Yuba College, offers an entertaining program on Sunday that mixes biology, music, and humor to tell the story of Clear Lake. In "Myths and Music of Clear Lake," Dr. Lyons gives the history and biology of the lake's more than two million years of existence and the importance of its ecosystem to the birds, fish, and wildlife of Lake County.

Except for the boat rides and brunch, all other festival activities are free. Camping sites are available through the State Park reservation system. Local resort, motel, and bed-and-breakfast reservations are available through www.lakecounty.com or by calling (800) 525-3743. For more information, call (800) 525-3743 or visit www.heronfestival.org

Located in beautiful Northern California, Lake County is just two hours by car from the San Francisco Bay Area, the Sacramento Valley, and the Pacific Coast. Lake County is home to Clear Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake in California and possibly the oldest lake on the continent. Visitors to Lake County experience the state's cleanest air basin, spectacular scenic beauty, fine wines, and unsurpassed recreational opportunities — from hiking, biking, golf, and off-road adventures to boating, fishing, kayaking, birding, and even rockhounding. The local area code is 707. For visitor information, contact the Lake County Visitor Information Center at (800) 525-3743 or www.lakecounty.com

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