

# CLEAR LAKE HORIZONS



Fall 2015-16  
C.L.S.P.I.A.

## A Beautiful Season in Lake County

Fall and winter are traditionally seasons of rest, dormancy and survival in our minds. The snow and cold of Mid-West and East Coast winters have shaped and tempered our expectations and descriptions of the outdoors in those “off “ seasons...and driven lots of us to indoor activities.

It doesn't snow everywhere. In Lake County, the coastal influence of our 38 N latitude positioning determines a rather wet yet mild winter and initiates a surge in plant activities which will begin only in spring in much of the rest of the country.

Fall is a good descriptor of those transition months between summer and winter -- and we've certainly recognized fall this year. Seems like everything has fallen from the oaks. The carpet of acorns is a gift to rodents, deer, jays, woodpeckers and many other animals that rely on them for food. It seems to be a year of special abundance. Beyond animal food, the uneaten acorns, their hulls and the leaves and twigs are forming perhaps an even more important first step in a chain of events. Living things in the park -- and all life on earth -- must depend on sunlight and green plants (with, of course, some rare but interesting exceptions).

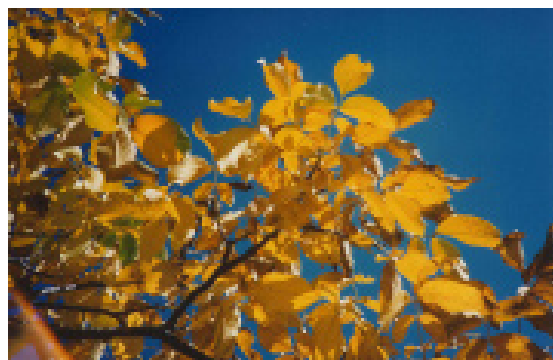
A few months from now, as the green plants grow tall in the spring, they will use lots of water and nutrients from the soil and carbon dioxide from the air to produce sugar and other foods and oxygen, all of which animals (and people... they're animals, too) need.

However, the grass and flowers and trees of the park would wither and die for lack of nutrients if it were not for the very active biological processes just now starting in the fall.

Fall is the beginning work period for the “Decomposers”, the fungi and other organisms that break down dead leaves, acorns and twigs to nutrients which green plants must have. Coupled with fall germination of seeds, mild winters and lots of soil water, late fall and winter are really the beginning growth spurt in the park which is not often appreciated because it's not often noticed.

Beneath leaf carpets and in the first half inch of top soil, seeds sprout to become tiny established plants which will begin to use the soil minerals released by the decomposers. Slowed mainly by temperature, the life processes of the park in winter are, nonetheless, impressive.

So, on your next winter visit to the park or any outside area in the county, check out the working decomposers in every pile of leaves.



## A Message from Madelene



Now that our 'season' is at the end, it's time to look back a bit and look forward a bit.

The past season for CLS-PIA has not a typical one for a variety of reasons. We had to cancel the Wildflower Brunch and several other activities, but we did participate in the Pear

Festival on September 26th, having our usual booth with things to see and things for sale. The Lake County fires did reduce the attendance a bit, but it was certainly a very successful event, as usual.

On October 10th, we showed our appreciation to our Patrons with the annual dinner and speaker. The dinner was catered by Beth Keiffer and our speaker was Tom Smythe, speaking on the Reclamation Project. This event is always a very lighthearted evening at the Pavilion, and this year the weather was perfect!

The store and Visitor Center has continued to stay open on weekends throughout the summer in spite of a shortage of volunteers to work. Our 'old' volunteers have put in lots and lots of time to help, but now we are actively looking for new volunteers to relieve the pressure.

On August 29th, we served a picnic lunch to all the park staff to show our appreciation for their help.

Plans are being laid to create a new Campfire Center so that we can have activities during the summer evenings, possibly to include more campers in our programs. This will certainly be our major project for 2016! Congressman Mike Thompson donated \$1000.00 to CLSPIA this summer, and that is stashed away for the planned Campfire Center. Thank you, Congressman Thompson!!

I'm very happy to welcome new board members Oleta and Rich Simpson, Deni Forbes, Gina Rankin and Ron Hess. We hope they all will enjoy working to enhance our wonderful Park!

We send a huge 'thank you' to all the Park staff who gave so many HARD hours to fight the awful fires here in our area! You are appreciated!

Madelene

### Clear Lake

### Horizons

is published by the

Clear Lake State  
Park

Interpretive  
Association

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

#### Association Officers

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V. President - ???

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Verna Schaffer - Publisher

Bobbi Towne - Membership

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Neil Towne

Oleta Simpson

Rick Simpson

Deni Forbes

Gina Rankin

Ron Hess

## DUES

YOUR DUES MIGHT BE DUE.  
CLSPIA DUES, THAT IS.

If your dues are done ...  
You don't need to do your dues.

**If your dues ain't done,  
Please do 'em.**

So, if your dues are due, do do your dues.



## Superintendent Report

We were all recently hit with unprecedented fast moving wild land fires, three of which destroyed approximately 1343 homes and consumed over 170,000 acres of Lake, Yolo, Colusa, and Napa counties. This was devastating to our residents and created extreme hardships.

California State Parks was tasked with evaluations, closure patrols, involvement in incident command, and our maintenance staff prepared for evacuation of Anderson Marsh State Historic Park Ranch House and grounds.

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, the City of Clearlake, and Lower Lake were saved by the thousands of firefighters who protected life and property. Anderson Marsh State Park was used throughout the fires for a staging area for fire and support staff and equipment. This cooperative effort and partnership helped everyone to safely, effectively and efficiently mitigate the emergency and move forward in an effort to start the recovery process for the community and its citizens.

The ability for all of us to come together, communicate and coordinate was instrumental in the overall success and outcome of this emergency incident.

Bill

### ***CLSPIA's Newsletter Editor, Nancy Cary Smith, Edits her "So-Long" Issue***

It all began 21 years ago in 1994, when Nancy Cary and her husband, Grant, decided to take on the considerable task of editing the Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association (CLSPIA) newsletter. And what a fine job these co-editors did. However, the dual editorship ended with Grant's sudden and untimely death in 2002. Since then Nancy has shouldered the job as solo-editor and managed it with notable excellence.

The process of producing our newsletter Lake Horizons takes not only hours of time but also a lot of creative effort. For 21 years Nancy has supplied both unstintingly. Each and every issue involves making assignments for articles from staff and volunteers, gathering the material, editing it and laying it out in an attractive, eye-catching way. Year after year, issue after issue, Nancy has managed to do an over-the-top job of it.

Now, add decades of membership on the CLSPIA Board of Directors, where she skillfully handled the duties of recording secretary, and you'll begin to comprehend the years of outstanding contributions Nancy has made to our organization and its success.

Nancy deserves only our greatest thanks, and to help us not forget her exemplary gifts of time and creativity, there will be a Nancy Cary Smith page in our CLSPIA Book of Honor. Indeed, it's our honor to do this for our Nancy!



# Board Actions

July 2015

- Approved proposed 2015 budget.
- Noted that camper numbers are up.
- Cabins are full many weekends perhaps due to lower rental fees, heating and air conditioning.
- Current Camp Host on duty 2 days each week.
- Former ranger Darrin Connor hired for four month term.
- Brad has scheduled one per month hikes for four months.
- Membership Chair reports ... 101 current members plus 2 additional patrons.
- Called for a traditional news letter due November 1st
- Future newsletters will be e-mailed to members, printed to those without e-mail.
- Patron Appreciation Event set for October 10th at the Education Pavilion.
- Discussed Campfire Project Center.
- Will place Campfire Center Project in 2015 budget.
- Scheduled Board Membership event at Julie Berry's home, July 23rd.
- Considered progress of a "low cost day pass" for CLSP.

September 2015

- Welcomed Ron Hess as a member of the Board.
- Changed date of Patrons Appreciation Dinner to Oct. 11.
- Noted that all camping spaces are reserved for Labor Day.
- Buyer needed for Park 150th Anniversary Quilt at \$500.00.

## *The Cycles of Nature*

When outdoors, especially when here in Clear Lake State Park, we are constantly observing the many cycles of nature. Perhaps the most pervasive here is the water cycle. Driven by sun power, water evaporates from the land and lake and becomes invisible water vapor.

Vapor in the air can condense back to visible droplets and under special conditions can fall back to the earth or lake as rain.

We owe our existence on earth to the fact there is a foot of top soil in places ... and that it rains. When there are drought conditions, as we have in Lake County at this time, we come face to face with our dependence and reliance on continuing normal rain cycles. Clear Lake is, of course, the anchor of our communities.

We are hoping for more rain!





# CAN YOU HELP CLSPIA REACH ITS GOAL?

The goal of Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association (CLSPIA) is to aid in the education and interpretation of our park for community members and interested campers. We need your help!

We achieve this goal by supporting the salary of a Park Interpretive Aide whose duties include directing the Junior Ranger Program and leading or assisting with visiting groups during the summer season. Seasonal activities are available for camping children and also to community children.

CLSPIA funds are also used for maintaining the Visitor Center Museum/ Store and for ongoing free programs and speakers presented for campers and community folks; they also assist the Park Staff by purchasing helpful items needed by the Ranger staff but not included in Ranger budgets.

Our goals are accomplished by volunteers willing to give time to the park. Various volunteer activities include working in the Visitor Center and store, leading hikes and walks, assisting with local school groups who visit the park, working on our newsletter, keeping park trails clean, assisting with fund-raisers, and even joining the CLSPIA Board of Directors.

You are needed! Please renew your CLSPIA membership or join us by becoming a new member in 2016. Just fill out the membership form and send it to us or go to [www.clearlakestatepark.org](http://www.clearlakestatepark.org) and click on "About Us" to find a membership form.

By all means, take a few minutes to visit various parts of our website...great pictures or you may want to review park passes available. While you are renewing your membership, how about asking a friend to join with you for as little as \$10.00.

Remember, all who join CLSPIA, at any level, will receive our twice-yearly newsletter by e-mail or snail-mail and 10% off all purchases at the Visitor Center store. Those joining at the Patron level will also receive an invitation to a late summer/early fall evening in the park at a Patron's dinner and program.

Become a "friend of the park" and help CLSPIA meet its goals. REMEMBER, our state park is one of the many jewels of California. Come to the park and enjoy the peacefulness and relaxation -- whether you want to picnic, hike, swim, boat, fish, sit, listen or read. You will recreate and learn. It's here for you in our Clear Lake State Park. Hope to see you there soon!

Bobbi Towne, Membership Chairman



# *Lake County's Tules*

Here in Lake County we are blessed with a wide variety of plant life. Oaks, firs, and meadow plants are easily recognized, and during the summer provide thriving habitat for birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. Other types of plants also share our lakeside paradise. Tules, willows and lake weeds are various aquatic plants that grow along our lake shore. But all too often we forget their value. Once despised and destroyed, these misunderstood aquatic plants are now recognized as vital in helping maintain and re-establish a balance of nature around us. Fully realized, tule wetlands will help us restore the natural balance of Clear Lake.

Tules are wonderfully adapted to the dynamic interface of land and water: their buried tubers follow the lake level up and down with the seasons. Thick tule beds provide safe havens for nesting birds such as grebes, red-winged blackbirds, and even pelicans. Under water, bass and crappie attract their mates, raise their young and stalk their prey in and around the tule forest habitat.

Tule, willow and other wetlands habitat also act more subtly by harnessing and channeling the energy of primary aquatic production (sun, nutrients, and photosynthetic sugars) into a diversity of live forms and food webs. This diversity provides stability and balance in nature, and adds the magic ingredient called resilience, which enables a natural system to adjust productively to change.

Take away that diversity by cutting out the wetlands, and all the energy gets channeled into single species like blue green algae or Clear Lake gnats. Uncontrolled, and out-competing all other life forms and food webs, these single species reach epidemic proportions and in the case of blue greens, frequently end up seriously compromising our enjoyment and profitable use of the lake

Restoring tules and willows to our lake shores and watersheds will restore the balance and break the strangle-hold that the blue green scums have on us.

Findings from U.C. Davis and the County of Lake indicate that by restoring wetlands on our major watersheds, eroded soils will be filtered from the creeks before entering the lake. Since soils carry critical phosphate and iron nutrients, these wetlands will trap up to 70% of the nutrients that presently enter the lake and feed the blue green algae.

By protecting and encouraging tules, the natural diversity can be restored; thinking ahead, a policy of enabling recreational sections of beaches to be kept clear of tules will provide for balanced usage also.





# BIRDING CLEAR LAKE STATE PARK

## HOW SWEET IS IT?

Depending on when you look it up and what source you reference, the continental United States (3,794,100 square miles) has about 888+/- species of birds, while California (163,695 square miles) has about 641+/-species. As of today, according to the current Lake County bird List (as compiled by Jerry White), the county of Lake (1,261square miles) has 319-recorded species, or about one half of the birds found in the entire state of California, and almost 36% of the birds found in the continental United States. Clear Lake State Park, which is less than one square mile (600 acres), has 232-recorded species. That's right, 36% of the recorded species in the state and 26% of the species recorded in the entire country. Think about it, -- right here in Clear Lake State Park, less than one square mile in size, you have great birding, with the added benefits of maintained trails, paved parking, a marina, an education pavilion, a visitor center, 147 campsites, 8 cabins, a swim beach, showers and beautiful bathrooms. Now that's pretty darn sweet!



So what's stopping you? It is time to join or renew your membership with the Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association (CLSPIA) and get your State Park Pass so you can help promote and enjoy the state park experience.

## *Turkeys in the Park*

Wild Turkeys, though not native to California, are being seen in ever-increasing numbers around Lake County and other parts of the state because of the California Fish and Game's efforts over the years to introduce wild brood stock from Arizona and Texas and other states where they are native.

While they are strong, quick fliers, they seem to prefer "ground transportation" when possible. However, Turkeys are wary social birds, constantly warning all local flock members of danger with loud "perts" to which all may scatter or fly. They roost in tall trees, perching sometimes on small top or outside limbs, and they may return to these favorite and safe sites each night.



**Note:** If you are reading Clear Lake State Park Horizons for the first time and find the goals and activities interesting enough to pursue further, we would welcome your inquiry into becoming a volunteer docent. It really is lots of fun, as well as highly educational. If you are interested, please call the Ranger's office at 279-2267.



Clear Lake State Park  
Interpretive Association  
5300 Soda Bay Road  
Kelseyville, CA 95451

## 2016 CLSPIA Membership Form

*Clear Lake State park Interpretive Association (CLSPIA)*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**\*ANNUAL CLSPIA MEMBERSHIP FEES for 2016** *(Please check those that apply)*

☐ Individual (\$10)   ☐ Family (\$18)   ☐ Business (\$50)   ☐ Patron (\$100)   ☐ Gift Membership for another

**PAYMENT** *(Please check one):*   ☐ Check   ☐ VISA Card   ☐ Master Card

CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE *(if using credit card)* \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING at the PARK?** *(Please check any and all)*

☐ Visitor Center Docent   ☐ Park Newsletter   ☐ Maintenance; grounds cleanup  
☐ Board of Directors   ☐ Guiding Nature Hikes   ☐ Other *(Please tell us; use back of form.)*

**Clip and Mail to -- CLSPIA -- 5300 Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville, CA 95451**

*\* MEMBERSHIP CARD ENTITLES MEMBER TO 10% DISCOUNT ON VISITOR ITEMS.*