



AMIA

THE ANDERSON MARSH INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

Promoting education & interpretive activities at

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park

PO BOX 672, LOWER LAKE, CA 95457 (707) 995-2658 WWW.ANDERSONMARSH.ORG SUMMER 2025



This photo of a mixed colony of Western and Clark's Grebes nesting in Anderson Marsh, taken by AMIA Board Member Gae Henry, was chosen for inclusion in the new Peterson Field Guide to North American Bird Nests. Another huge colony of nesting birds is visiting Anderson Marsh this year, with thousands of nesting pairs. You can find more photos of these amazing birds beginning on page 8 of this newsletter.

President's Message

By
Roberta
Lyons

We're happy to report that we are getting closer to re-opening the Anderson Ranch farmhouse for tours and events. After years of being closed after evacuations due to nearby wildfires, and after repair work to the interior of the house, we are hoping to have the Ranch House open to the public soon.



Roberta Lyons

The Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association (AMIA) board is in discussions now with State Parks personnel about returning the items that were removed from the Ranch House. Issues still must be resolved concerning how the furniture and artifacts will

be protected in case the park is once more threatened by wildfire, but we are hoping to host our first tours before the summer is over.

There have been some other changes at the park that visitors may have noticed. The "iron ranger," is in a different spot with improved handicapped parking. And, you can now pay for parking using your phone – no app needed! There is a new bathroom. It is a "vault" toilet, but it's very nice and kept up well by Action Sanitary. A new accessible trail is being constructed from the parking lot to the Cache Creek Nature Trail. It is not yet completed and is still difficult to navigate with a wheeled walker. We are hoping to see that work completed soon. The second Saturday guided walks at the park are well attended and

lots of fun. This year, they have been led by either Henry Bornstein or me, and it's always interesting to note how the park changes as the seasons progress. We're still looking for volunteers, especially someone who would like to staff the south barn and host people who want to tour our interpretive displays there.

Board members have been watering the Valley Oaks that were planted at the park as a mitigation measure for a development in the City of Clearlake. The survival rate was less than we hoped because the trees were planted during the drought and suffered a brutally hot heat wave last summer. However, those that survived are doing great.

Assuming the Ranch House is re-furnished in time, and enough volunteers are available, the AMIA board has plans to revive the popular Christmas at the Ranch event that was held in the past on the second Saturday in December. This was a popular event for many years with fresh home-baked holiday cookies and other treats, hot apple cider, live Christmas music and best of all, Santa! We also decorate a huge tree in the parlor. It's a fun way to celebrate the holiday. Keep an eye out for more information on this event.

In the meantime, we hope to see our friends and supporters at our second Saturday walks. Enjoy the summer and contact us if you would like to get more involved in your local State Park.

Roberta Lyons
President, Anderson Marsh
Interpretive Association

A Special Thank You to Our Business Supporters

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Law Offices of Mary Heare Amodio, www.lakeportprobateattorney.com

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Volunteer State Parks docent Henry Bornstein leading guided nature walk at AMSHP.

Guided Nature Walks continue at the park

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park continues to hold monthly guided Nature Walks in 2025 starting at 8:30am on the second Saturday of each month except for December. The Nature Walks are led by California State Parks volunteer docents. The hikes usually last about two hours. The route taken will depend on the weather and the condition of the trails. Participants should bring water and wear sturdy shoes and a hat and binoculars if they have them.

On January 1, 2026, there will also be a special hike in the park starting at noon as part of the nationwide First Day Hike program, with state parks systems in many states across the country helping to get American families to start off the New Year right by getting out into nature.

For more information, please contact AMIA at 707.995.2658 or send an email to: info@andersonmarsh.org.

See you at the park!

Are you an AMIA member?

By Anne Riggs, AMIA Membership Chair



Anne Riggs

If you have been a member of AMIA in the past and you are not sure when you are supposed to “renew,” you may have noticed that we are no longer mailing out quarterly renewal notices to our members as their “membership anniversary” arrives. Instead, in the interest of keeping things simple, we have gone to a “one-time renewal” system – all memberships are now due at the end of each year in December. So, if you didn’t renew your membership in December, it’s not too late to join us now in our work to create and sustain new programs for visitors to our park.

If you have not donated before and would like to help AMIA keep Anderson Marsh State Historic Park open and thriving, or if it’s time for you to renew your AMIA membership, please join us now by using the form on the last page of this newsletter or by visiting us online at www.andersonmarsh.org. Any amount is appreciated, and your donation will help ensure that AMIA is here to continue supporting the park and all the benefits it provides to our community, now and into the future.

Looking for another way to get information about events at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park? Ask to be put on our events email list by sending an email to: info@andersonmarsh.org



Over one hundred people participated in the First Day Hike of 2025. Photo by Gae Henry

First Day Hike Tradition Continues at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park

By Henry Bornstein

For over ten years, Anderson Marsh State Historic Park has held its First Day Hike event on New Year's Day. The First Day Hike at Anderson Marsh has become a Lake County tradition, with the event attracting over 100 attendees each year. To allow visitors to "sleep in" on New Year's Day, the hikes begin at noon.

The First Day Hike is part of a nationwide First Day Hike program, with state parks systems in most states across the country helping to encourage American families to start off the New Year right by getting out into nature.

This year was no exception, with over one hundred visitors again taking the opportunity to get a healthy start to 2025 by participating in the hike. Hikers of all ages enjoyed a beautiful, sunny day in the park, and ranged from "old timers" who regularly hike in the park to first time visitors.

The hike this year covered a three-mile loop on the park's trail system and was led by an all-volunteer team of State Park Docents. The hikers were divided into two groups to accommodate the large number of visitors, with each group starting in a different direction and passing each other in the middle of the hike.

Each group stopped periodically to allow the hike leaders to discuss the flora and fauna that was encountered on the trail. The recent rains created a good opportunity to identify animal tracks on the trails, and the sunny day was made brighter by Western Bluebirds finding perches in the trees and shrubs.

The State Park staff and volunteers at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park are looking forward to another year of guided nature walks at the park, culminating with next year's First Day Hike on January 1, 2026. See you there!



AMIA Board members Roberta Lyons, Gae Henry (left) & Henry Bornstein (right) with State Parks Director Armando Quintero and former Director Ruth Coleman.

AMIA Board members attend CALPA Conference

by Gae Henry

In November 2024, the California League of Parks Associations (CALPA) hosted a statewide conference held at the State Parks Asilomar Conference Center. The theme for the Conference was "Connection," and it brought together California State Park staff and "partners" such as AMIA for an opportunity to interact and collaborate.

AMIA is a member of CALPA and AMIA Board members Roberta Lyons, Gae Henry and Henry Bornstein (who is also on the CALPA Board of Directors) attended the Conference, where they attended workshops and networked with State Parks employees and representatives from other park associations. They also were able to spend some time with both the current and former State Parks Directors.

ANDERSON MARSH NEWS

is published by the
Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association
Board of Directors

Roberta Lyons - President
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Nicola Selph - Treasurer
Gae Henry - Secretary
Henry Bornstein - Grants & Newsletter
Anne Riggs - Membership Chair
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Newsletter Layout - Robin Winniford



100 Valley Oaks were planted in 2022. Above, AMIA Board Members Roberta Lyons and Gordon Haggitt watering one of the trees.



AMIA volunteers have been caring for the saplings since 2023. Above, Board Members Henry Bornstein and Roberta Lyons.

AMIA and State Parks partner to protect Valley Oaks planted in the park

By Henry Bornstein

In the fall of 2022, 100 Valley Oak trees (*Quercus lobata*) were planted at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park in a joint project between AMIA, California State Parks and the City of Clearlake, which funded the project using fees paid to the City of Clearlake under its Native Tree Protection Ordinance.

In 2023, AMIA took over responsibility for watering the young oaks during the hot summer months. A crew of State Parks employees and AMIA volunteers built and installed “cages”

around the newly planted trees to protect them from the ever-hungry deer that evidently see oak sprouts as pretty high up on the food desirability list.

During 2024 and 2025, AMIA volunteers have continued to water and monitor the oaks using a “Gator” off-road vehicle equipped with a water tank and pump system.

Thanks to the State Parks staff and AMIA volunteers, in 30 years or so, there will be shady spots to picnic in the park.



A young tree gets a drink from AMIA Board members Henry Bornstein and Gordon Haggitt.



AMIA thanks our generous supporters

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The Western and Clark's grebes returned to Anderson Marsh to breed once more this year in huge numbers. Here are some photos of the colony taken in the Marsh this year. All photographs by AMIA Board member Gae Henry.



Some of the hundreds of floating nests in this year's breeding colony in Anderson Marsh.



Here's a closeup of eggs in a floating nest. The nests are anchored to weeds but are very vulnerable to being tipped into the water from wakes caused by boats. Boaters should stay away from these floating grebe nests.



How can you tell a Western Grebe from a Clark's Grebe? Here is a Western Grebe on a nest. Note that the black cap extends below the eye.



Here are two Clark's grebes. Note that the eye is "in the white."



But – darn it – they interbreed, as shown here. This makes it hard to figure out what to call the resulting youngsters (two of which can be seen being carried on the Western parent's back).



Western and Clark's grebes are famous for being able to run along the water in a mated pair's beautiful bonding ceremony called "rushing."



Sometimes a third bird may join in the fun, perhaps a male attempting to attract a mate (and no – there is no easy way to tell a male from a female grebe).



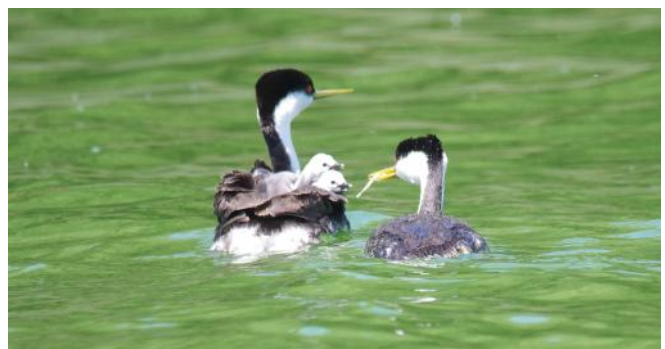
Two Clark's grebes perform the "face-off" ritual that often precedes a "rush" across the water, with a Western grebe watching intently.



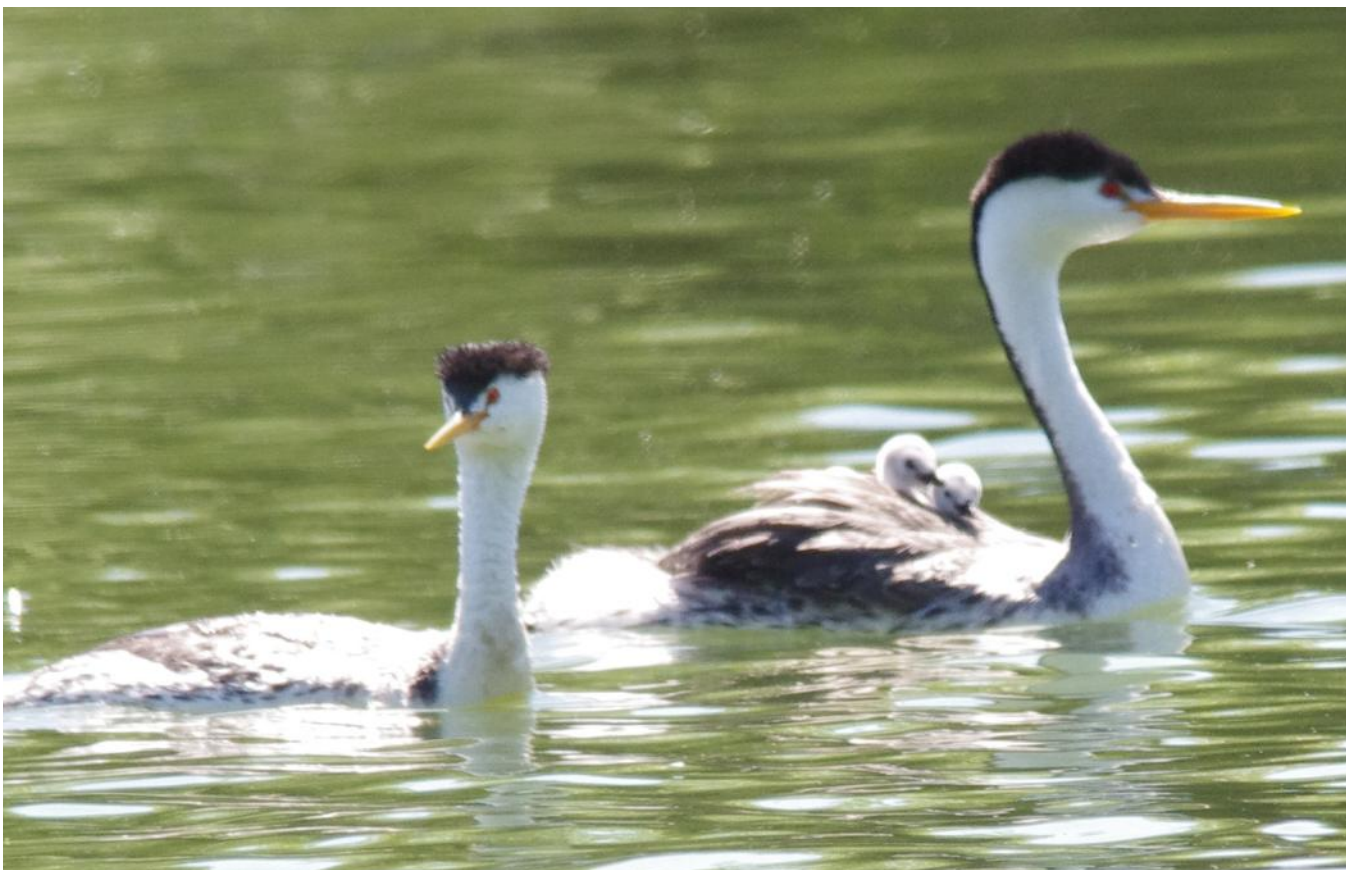
Another bonding ritual performed by these amazing birds is the "weed ceremony," in which a pair "dances" together while holding weeds before constructing their tule nest .



After the babies have hatched, the parents carry them on their backs until they are mature enough to swim on their own.



One parent will hold the babies while the other dives for fish and feeds them.



At this point, the grebes are more vulnerable to boat strikes. Normally, a grebe will dive under the water to escape an oncoming boat, and boaters are often aware of this fact. But when carrying a baby, a grebe will either not dive and may be struck by the boat, or it will instinctively dive, causing the baby to drown.



During the summer months, boaters should watch for grebes carrying babies and avoid them.

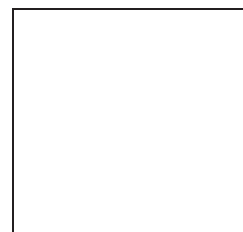


The Western and Clark's grebes – a wonderful part of nature supported by Anderson Marsh.



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WWW.ANDERSONMARSH.ORG — info@andersonmarsh.org



ANDERSON MARSH INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to the preservation of all facets of the park. New members are always welcome! Come Join the Fun!

2025 AMIA Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Special Interest (☐music, ☐education, ☐history, ☐ecology, ☐archaeology, other): _____

☐ **I would like to know about volunteer opportunities**

AMIA members receive the AMIA newsletter, special invitations to attend events being held at the park and the satisfaction that comes from supporting a community treasure and working to preserve it for future generations.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

Annual

Amount	Membership Level	Member Benefits
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	Educator/Student	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	Individual	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	Family	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Supporter	Newsletter and Newsletter Mention
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	Sustainer	Newsletter, Newsletter Mention, Donor Event and DVD of "A Walk Through Time" film
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	Patron	Sustainer benefits + special recognition at event
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	Business Supporter	Newsletter, Donor Event, Newsletter Mention, Website Link
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	Business Sustainer	Business supporter benefits +DVD of AMSHP film

Please send check and completed application to

AMIA

P.O. Box 672

Lower Lake, CA 95457

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visiting us at

www.andersonmarsh.org

For more info call AMIA
at 707-995-2658