



SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

explore,  
enjoy,  
and protect  
the planet

# Sierra Club Lake Group

## March-April 2016 Newsletter

### Next Meeting: Caring for Clearlake

The next Lake Group general meeting will take place at **7PM on Wednesday March 23**, at the Lower Lake Methodist Church Community Room, 16255 Second Street. We're looking forward to a presentation by Barbara Christwitz, founder of Citizens Caring for Clearlake. In the year since the formation of this all-volunteer group they have made remarkable progress clearing up the highway trash, illegal dumpsites, and contaminated creekbeds that are spoiling the beauty of our community and polluting our streams and lakes besides. Barbara will share some inspiring stories, show some appalling pictures, and let us know what we can all do to help. The meeting is free and open to the public as always. For more info, contact Chair Ed Robey at 994 8304 or [edrobey@wildblue.net](mailto:edrobey@wildblue.net).

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### Clear Lake Hitch: off and running

For the first time in several years, Clear Lake's tributaries contained sufficient water in mid-February to support a spawning run of the hitch (*lavinia exilicauda chi*), an endemic fish listed as Threatened under the state Endangered Species Act.

The first reports of sightings came from Adobe and Kelsey creeks on February 16, followed by the really exciting news of substantial schools of a thousand or more fish moving up into the Middle and Clover Creek complex, where almost no hitch have been seen for nearly ten years.

Although no additional sightings in Adobe Creek have been reported to the Chi Council, the spawning schools in Kelsey Creek were also reported to contain well over 1000 fish.

Then the big March 5 storm led to very strong flows and opaque water. Although it was no longer possible to see below the surfact, presumably any adult fish remaining in the creeks were washed back down into the lake along with any eggs or fry.

The next Chi Council update included the gloomy surmise, "it seems unlikely that any eggs or fry could have survived the (con't)

<p><b>Monumental Celebration March 19! Details inside</b></p>
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**Hitch run (con't) downpour**—only to receive this much more optimistic assessment from fish biologist Rick Macedo:

*Regarding high flows and displaced eggs and fry, I believe that many fertilized eggs and fry could very well survive high storm flow events. Unlike salmon, trout and other fish species that build redds (fish nests) and have prolonged juvenile development periods, hitch eggs and fry could very well move with, and survive in spite of, high stream flow events, even if they end up being washed into Clear Lake. I wouldn't count them out.*

A secondary run is also possible later this spring. To see full observation results to date, including several excellent photos and a link to a video of the big school in Middle Creek taken by Deputy Director of Water Resources Will Evans, visit [www.lakelive.info/chicouncil](http://www.lakelive.info/chicouncil).

#### Lake Group Executive Committee

Ed Robey (Chair, Treasurer, Political Chair): 994 8304, [edrobey@wildblue.net](mailto:edrobey@wildblue.net)

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#### Other contacts:

Steve Devoto (Outings): 279-8308,  
[sdevoto@mchsi.com](mailto:sdevoto@mchsi.com)

*ExCom meetings are held at 7PM on the first Wednesday of every other month, at locations that vary. All members are cordially invited to attend, but requested to contact the Chair first to confirm time and location*

## KONOCTI POST

[www.konoctipost.blogspot.com](http://www.konoctipost.blogspot.com)

**a lake county naturalist's blog**

TAKE A RAMBLE. IT'S FREE.

## Rent This Space

The Lake Group now accepting (in other words, selling) advertisements in this newsletter: a two-inch (business card size) ad like this costs \$25 per issue, or—Great Bargain—\$100 for a year (six issues) To submit an ad send an email to [vbrandon@lakelive.info](mailto:vbrandon@lakelive.info) or call Victoria at 994-1931.

## Berryessa Snow Mountain: the Party!

The Bureau of Land Management and National Forest Service are about to put on a Monumental Celebration to dedicate Lake County's own national monument, which they poetically describe as "the hidden gem in the wild heart of California's Inner Coast Range." The festival will take place from 10:30AM-4PM on Saturday March 19, at Cowboy Camp, off Highway 16 about a mile south of Highway 20. Described as a "Spring Festival," this event will include live music and delicious food as well as art, nature photography, hikes, demonstrations of horse packing, camping, and backpacking, as well as interpretive booths about nature and archeology—everything that makes this region so special. Special guest speakers are expected to include two members of Congress, two cabinet members, and other assorted federal and state dignitaries.

Everyone is invited to this free event—don't miss it! By the way the Sierra Club will be staffing a booth and could use a little volunteer assistance. If you can spare an hour or two to help out please contact Victoria at [vbrandon@lakelive.info](mailto:vbrandon@lakelive.info)

# Outings

**MARCH 12 -- Six Sigma Ranch.** We will hike the historic old stagecoach route from Lower Lake to Knoxville, following the ranch road through Six Sigma ranch heading east toward Morgan Valley road. We will stop by the Ranch tasting room on the way, so bring along cash or credit card if so inclined. Much of the hike will follow Asbill Creek and canyon to the confluence with Soda Creek. We will return aboard the ranch's Pinzgauer, a vintage European military 6X6, making the hike approximately 6 miles one way. Carpool 8:30 AM Lower Lake Coffee Company, Main St. Lower Lake. Reservation Only. Leader Tom McFarling (707) 994-5490. Rain cancels.

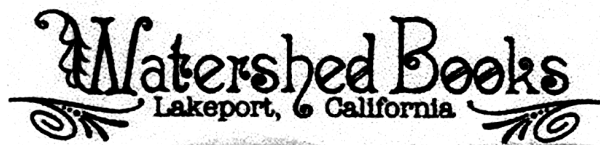
**MARCH 27 -- Turk's Head on Mt. St. Helena.** Moderate two-mile hike on Mt. St. Helena to the ridge that separates the Napa and Russian River watersheds and a beautiful rock formation called the Turk's Head. Great views of Knight's Valley. Pass through the site of the town of Silverado. Meet in the west parking lot of RLS State Park 9:00 am Bring snacks and water Reservation required Leader Pete McGee at 942-1373 or [montesol@hughes.net](mailto:montesol@hughes.net) Rain Cancels

**APRIL 10, 9AM -- Valley Fire Overview Walk.** This short walk will give us an overview of the Middletown section of the Valley Fire. We will also look at maps of the larger fire area and share our own stories about evacuating the area and coping with the tragedy. On a lighter note we will rejoice in the renewal of annual and perennial plants in the area. We will also include a visit to Rabbit Hill, a Lake County Land Trust holding in Middletown, Class E-3-A Meet 9AM at Perry's Deli in Middletown. By Reservation only. Leader Pete McGee 942-1373 or [montesol@hughes.net](mailto:montesol@hughes.net), rain cancels

**APRIL 16 -- Payne Ranch Ponds.** We will do a tour of the ranch ponds of the old Payne Ranch, now a part of the BLM's Bear Creek Unit of the Cache Creek Natural Area. After generous rains, the ponds should be close to full. This 9 mile hike will be in rolling oak and pine covered terrain, and wildflowers should be excellent. Bring water, lunch and hiking boots. Class: M-9- A. Meet 8:30AM at Lower Lake Coffee Company, Lower Lake. By reservation only. Rain cancels. Leader Tom McFarling (707) 994-5490. [tom.mcfarling@gmail.com](mailto:tom.mcfarling@gmail.com)

**APRIL 23 -- Redbud Trail to Cache Creek.** Start in a meadow, wind up a ridge, enjoy oak woodlands and blooming wildflowers reach Cache Creek, then we'll double back the same route. Bring snack, water & hiking boots. M-5-A. Meet: 8:30 am L Coffee Company, Lower Lake. By reservation only. Leader Julie Kreis (707) 671-5947. [tikaljak@yahoo.com](mailto:tikaljak@yahoo.com) rain cancels

## More Hikes on Back Page

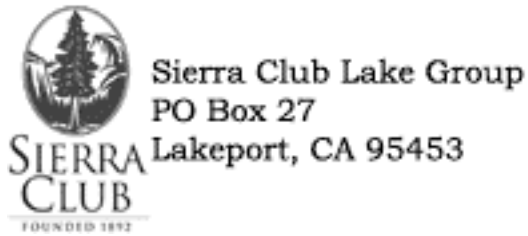
The logo for Watershed Books features the name in a stylized, cursive font. Below the name, it says "Lakeport, California" in a smaller, sans-serif font. The logo is flanked by decorative flourishes on both sides.

305 North Main Street  
707.263.5787

### Let's Go Digital

Lake Group members are invited to help fight deforestation by receiving this bimonthly newsletter electronically rather than on paper. To get it as an email attachment in pdf format instead, send a request to join the "Lake Group Paper Free" list to [vbrandon@lakelive.info](mailto:vbrandon@lakelive.info)—not only does this save some trees, it also benefits the Group financially.

**Help Wanted:** Outing Leaders. No experience needed, just a love for brisk exercise in the out-of-doors. There are many good reasons to become an Outing leader, including an opportunity for autocracy: as leader *you* get to choose where to go, and when. Interested? Get in touch with Outing Chair Steve Devoto at 279-8308 or [sdevoto@mchsi.com](mailto:sdevoto@mchsi.com).



## More Outings

\*MARCH 12, 8:15AM -- Docent Lisa Wilson will lead a leisurely walk to discover what the recent rains are continuing to bring to **Anderson Marsh State Historic Park**. Assuming the ground is dry enough, the guided walk will start along the grasslands of Anderson Flats, go up the Ridge Trail past a vernal pool and then take the Marsh trail past the acorn woodpecker granary. If it rains or if the walk is canceled, the Ranch House tour will begin at 8:30am. Participants should bring binoculars, and wear sturdy shoes. More info: contact [info@andersonmarsh.org](mailto:info@andersonmarsh.org) or call 995-2658

\*APRIL 17 -- California Native Plant Society field trip to **Big Canyon Creek** to observe plant response following the Valley Fire. From Middletown, we'll drive up Big Canyon Road about 8 miles to explore areas of chaparral, grassland, riparian, maybe serpentine woodlands, mixed coniferous forest, and adjacent ecotones (which all burned). Rendezvous at Hardesters Market at 21088 Rd in Middletown at 10AM. Trip leaders: Kerry Heise (707-462-4533) and John Nickerson.

\* MAY 8 -- California Native Plant Society Mothers Day Walk at the McLaughlin Natural Reserve, led by Reserve co-director Cathy Koehler: details later

MAY 14 --**Mt. Konocti**. We will hike to the top of Wright peak on Mt. Konocti, then ascend the fire lookout tower at the top for stunning views of Clear Lake and surrounding mountains. The hike is only 6 miles round-trip, but gains 1600 feet in just half the distance. The other half is back down, of course. M-6-B. Meet 8:30 AM at Studebakers Coffee Shop in Kelseyville, right on I Street, or trailhead on Konocti Road by 9:00. Reservations only. Leader Tom McFarling (707) 994-5490 [tom.mcfarling@gm](mailto:tom.mcfarling@gm). If it rains, the hike is canceled.

\* Not a Sierra Club hike