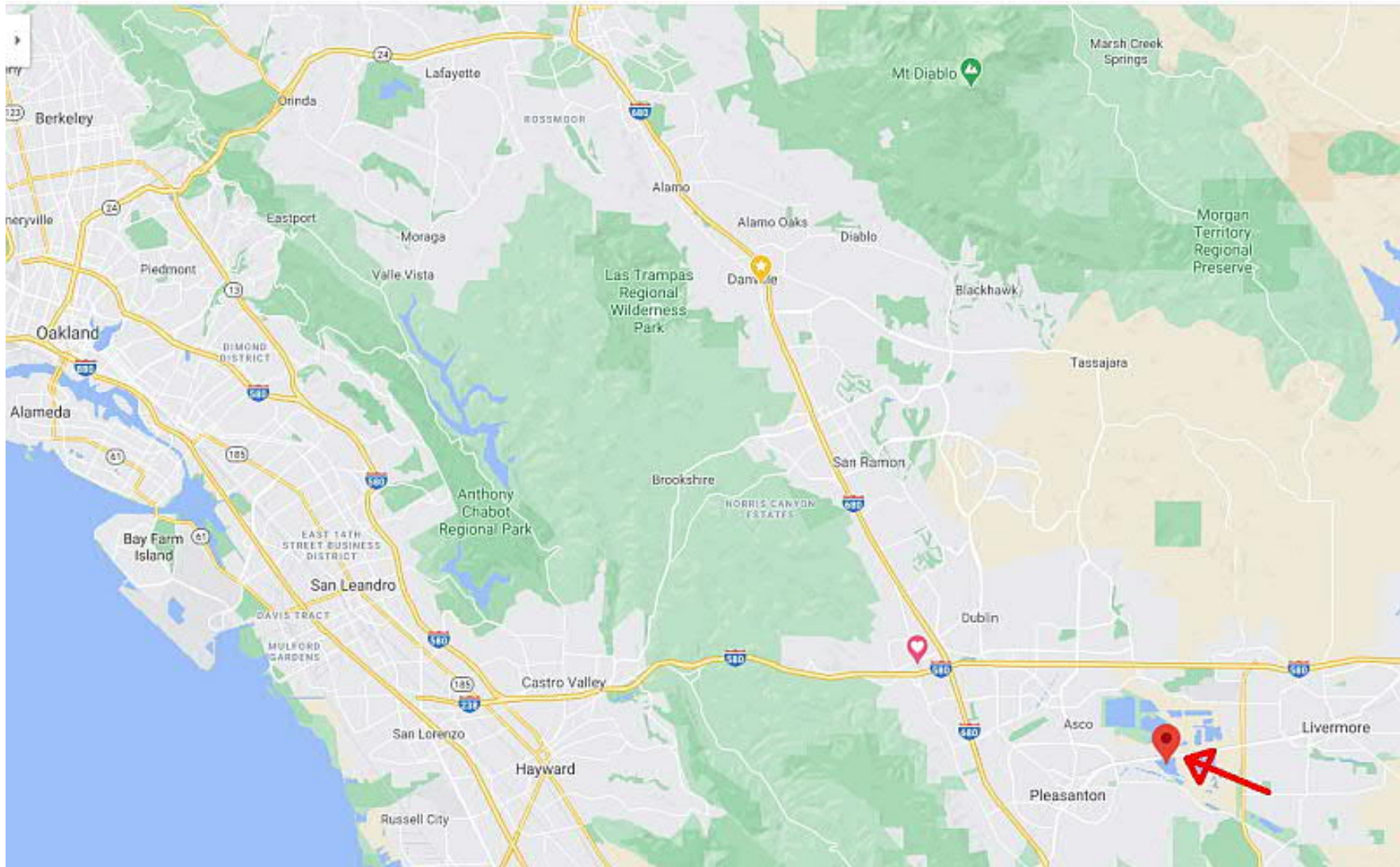


Shadow Cliffs Virtual Field Trip



Steve Lombardi
February, 2021

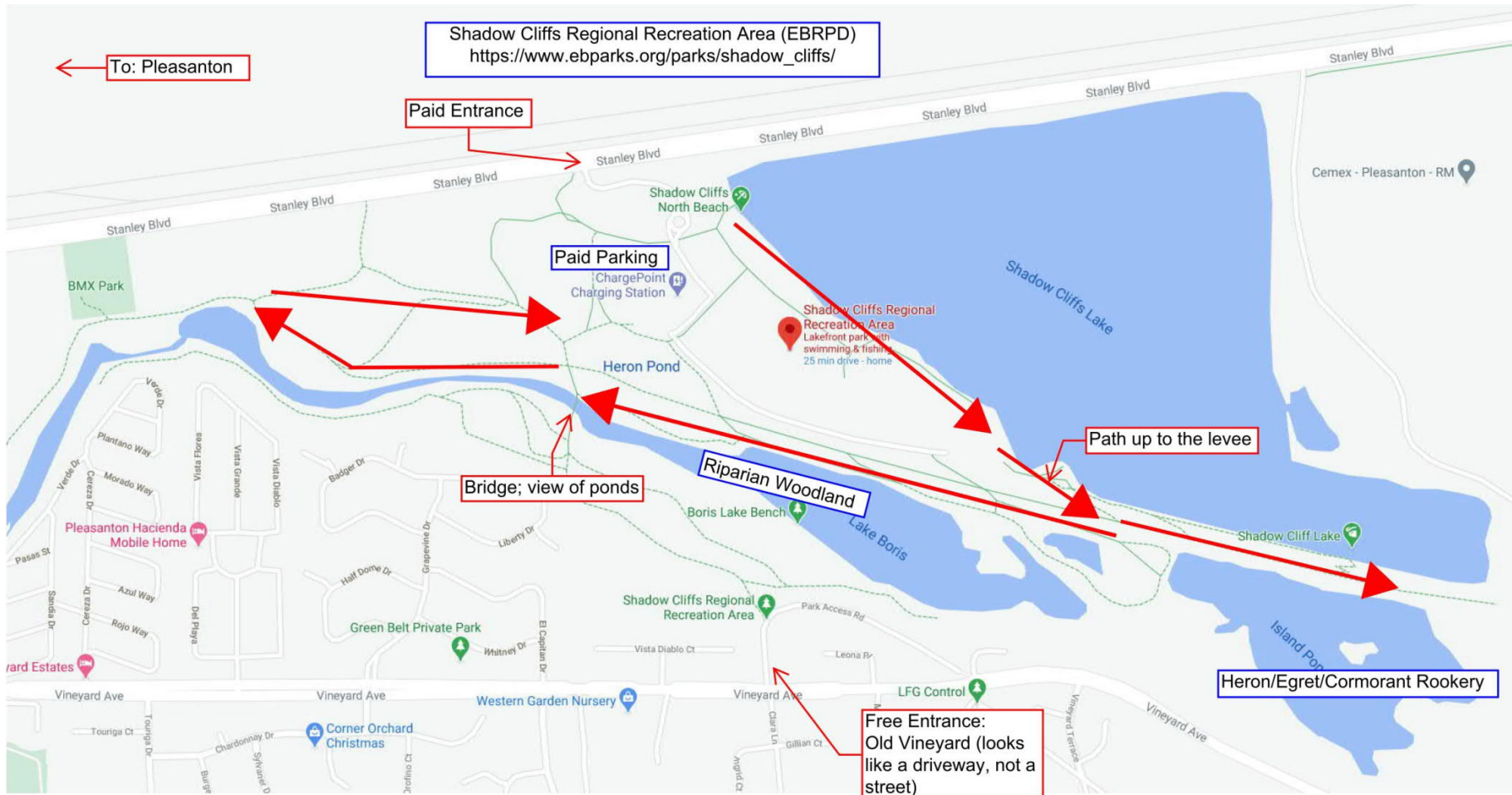


Shadow Cliffs Regional Park is off Stanley Blvd.
between Pleasanton and Livermore.



The park is an old gravel quarry that has a variety of habitats:

- A large lake stocked with fish (and hence, fish-eating birds)
- Open lawn covered with trees
- A riparian forest adjacent to a series of shady ponds



eBird Bar Chart:
<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L391767&yr=all&m=>



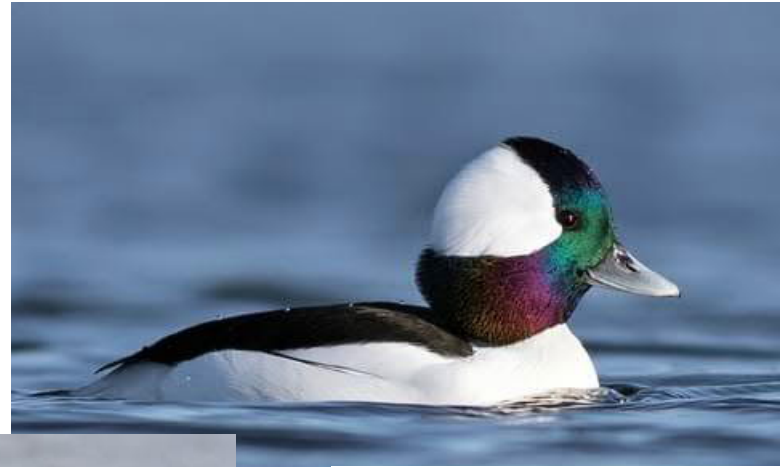
These Killdeer seem to be wondering if they can use the restrooms. Nope. As of Feb. 2021, the only restrooms open were at the fishing dock, which is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of the paid parking lot.



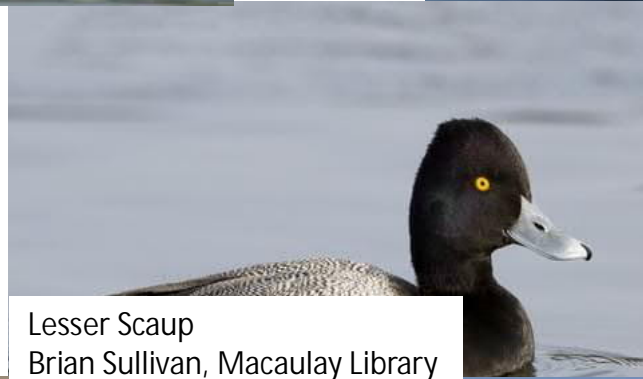
This is the Swimming Beach adjacent to the paid parking lot.
There are often many waterfowl and other birds on or near this beach.
The lake is large, so having a scope is handy.



Clark's Grebes
Nancy Christensen, Macaulay Library



Bufflehead
Liron Gertsman, Macaulay Library



Lesser Scaup
Brian Sullivan, Macaulay Library

Ruddy Duck
Pierre Martin, Macaulay Library



American White Pelican
Paul Hueber, Macaulay Library



We're walking east along the lakeshore.
In the winter, this area is often filled with crowned sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Western Bluebirds, and the inevitable Canada Geese and American Coots.



Yellow-rumped Warbler (male)
John Nelson, Macaulay Library



Yellow-rumped Warbler (female or imm.)
Ryan Schain, Macaulay Library



Western Bluebird (male)



White-crowned Sparrow (yellow-billed subspecies)
Craig Fosdick, Macaulay Library



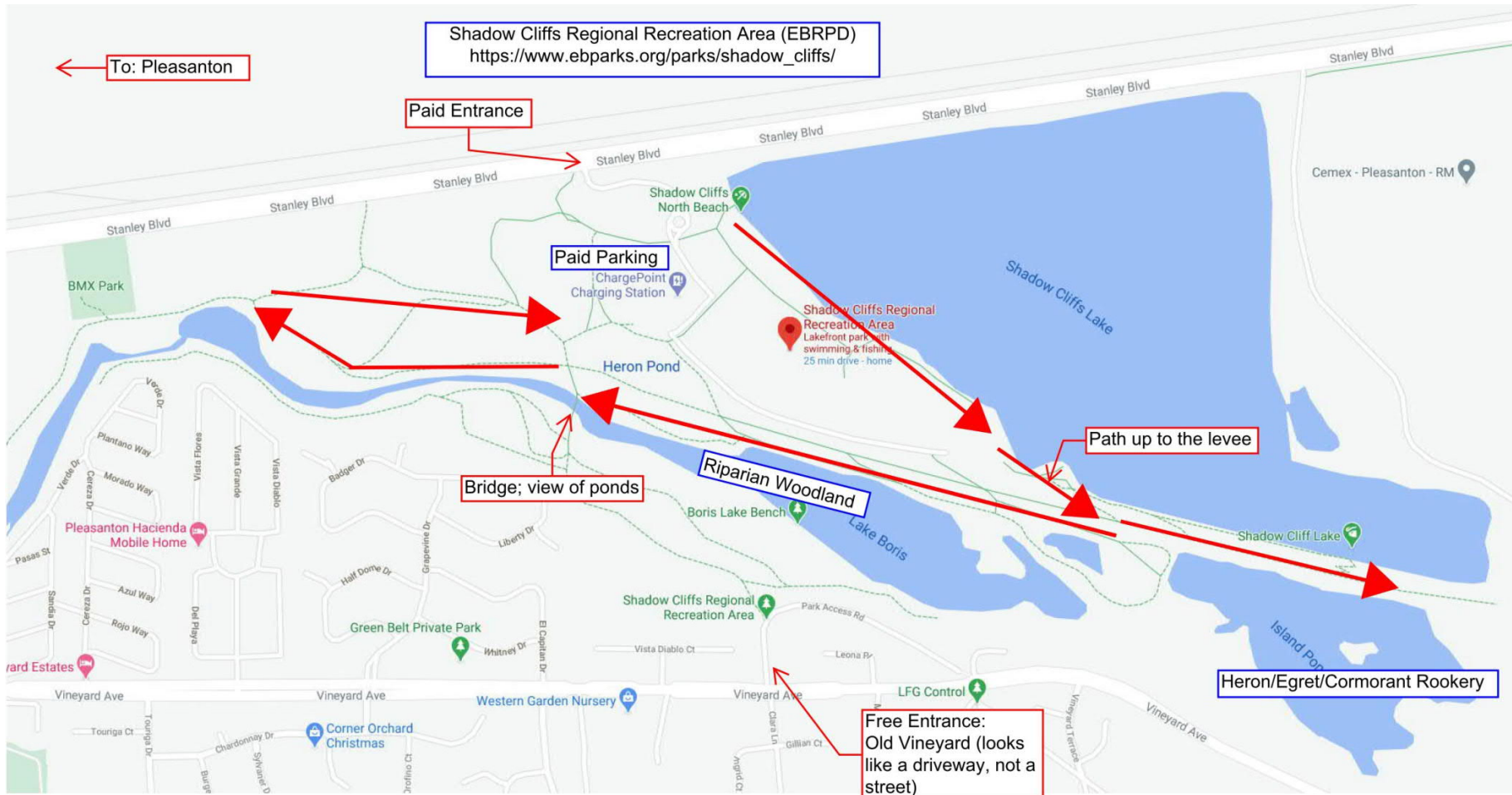
American Coot
Minnesotaconnected.com



And sometimes Cackling Geese, too, along with the odd hybrid.



Along with the other expected land birds, the park hosts a small but noisy flock of Great-tailed Grackles.



eBird Bar Chart:
<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L391767&yr=all&m=>



A 30-foot high levee divides the lake area from the shady ponds on the opposite (south) side. The top of the levee provides good views of the waterfowl on the water, the birds in the treetops adjacent to the levee, and Mt. Diablo in the distance.



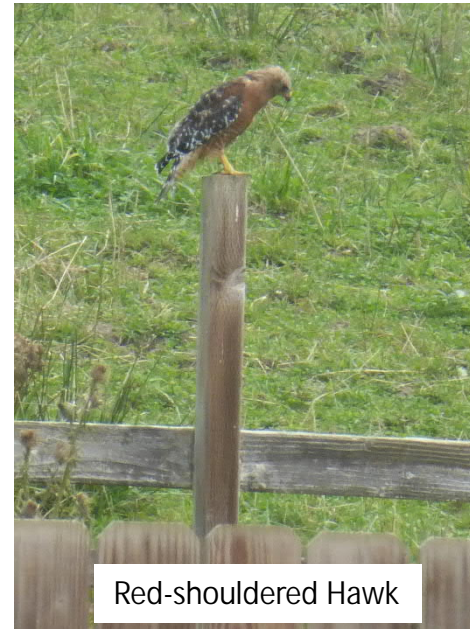
Osprey are resident and are reliably seen and heard.



This immature Red-tailed Hawk was perched in a treetop adjacent to the levee.
Most of the common raptors of the Bay Area are regularly seen here.
Red-shouldered Hawks are resident.



Bald Eagle nest-building,
Laura Macky Photography



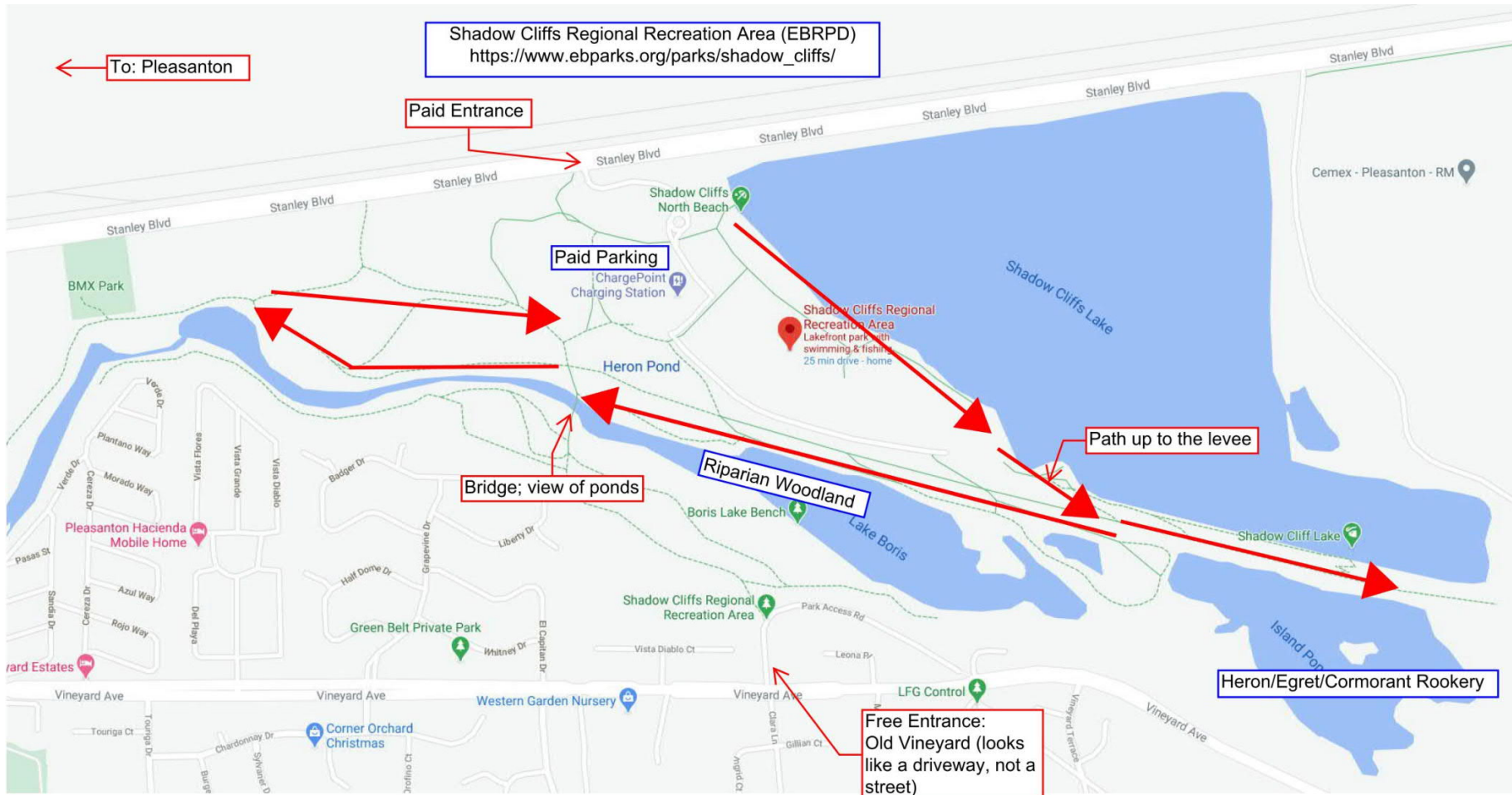
Red-shouldered Hawk



Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle (both immature)
John Reynolds, Macaulay Library



White-tailed Kite
DigiBirdTrek CA, Macaulay Library



eBird Bar Chart:
<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L391767&yr=all&m=>



Walk down to the east end of the levee to see the heron and cormorant rookeries. The Great Blue Herons start the show in late February.



Double-crested Cormorants at the rookery



Clockwise from top-left: Double-crested
Cormorants, Great Blue Heron chicks, Great Egret
All Photos: Maren Smith, Macaulay Library



We'll walk back toward the parking lot by way of the cottonwood forest alongside the ponds. The forest usually has a fair number of woodland birds (e.g., woodpeckers, titmice, kinglets). Besides the water birds in the ponds, you might observe Belted Kingfisher and Green Heron, among others.



Oak Titmouse
Ken Chamberlain, Macaulay Lib.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Evan Lipton, Macaulay Lib.



European Starling
Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.



White-breasted Nuthatch
Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.



Bushtit
Caroline Lambert, Macaulay Lib.



Acorn Woodpecker
Brian Sullivan, Macaulay Lib.



Nuttall's Woodpecker
David M. Bell, Macaulay Lib.



Bushtit Nest



The ponds provide close observations of several species of ducks, as well as coots, Common Gallinules, and Pied-billed Grebes.



Pied-billed Grebes breed (and vocalize) here.



Maren Smith, Macauley Lib.

Wood Ducks are also resident, but only observed occasionally.



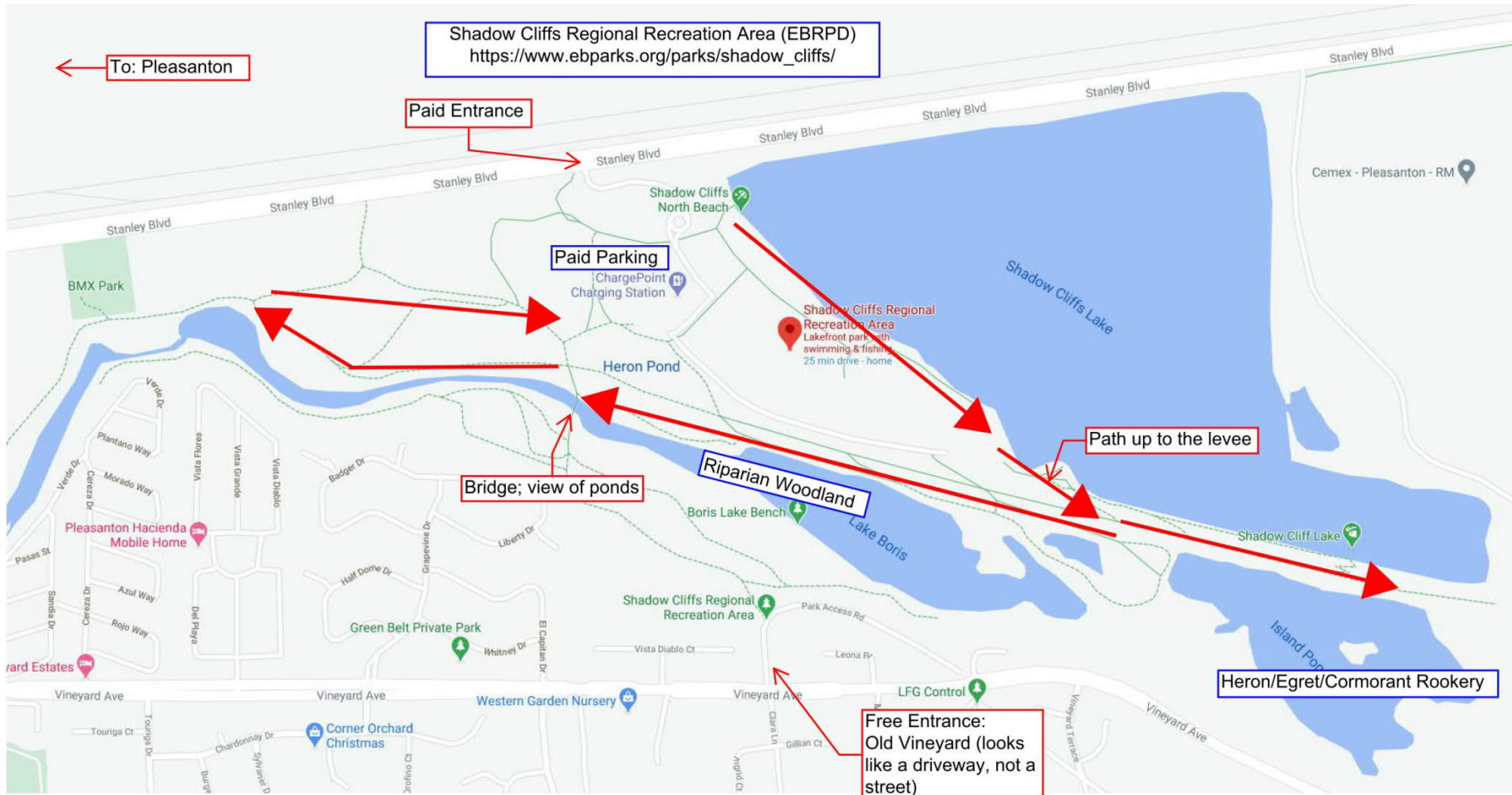
Isabelle Reddy, Macaulay Library



S. K. Jones, Macaulay Lib.



Louis Hoeniger, Macaulay Lib.



eBird Bar Chart:
<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L391767&yr=all&m=>



Here's a view from, and of, the bridge at the north end of the forest. There are often ducks gathered here, but, alas, not today. From here you can continue west to the park boundary or head directly back to the parking areas.

