

# EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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*Special thanks to: historians Douglas Nareau and John Gallardo; article-contributor Jim Hiatt; Ernie Lehman--and all the faithful subscribers, donors and advertisers! I couldn't do this without you! And a big thanks to my Printer-Angel, Jane!*

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Elizabeth "Betsy" Monroe,  
writer-editor-publisher

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Above: Black-crowned Night-Heron taken by Betsy Monroe at the Capay Dam at dusk in 2012. "Chunky and squat, it is one of the most common and widespread herons in North America and the world...but mainly active at twilight and at night (so) many people have never seen one. However, its distinctive barking call can be heard at night--even at the center of large cities...a loud, distinctive *quark* or *wok*, often given in flight and around colonies. Large stick nests built usually 20-40 feet up in trees; 3-5 eggs; 1 brood; November-August. Feeding primarily on aquatic animals; also eggs and chicks of colonial birds, such as egrets, ibises, and terns," according to *Birds of North America*. Smaller than the more visible blue herons (see lower left) or white egrets we have here, these are about 23-26 inches tall and live up to 21 years. While the male and female are similar coloring, the male's plumage is longer. The juvenile is brown speckled, looking very little like its eventual black top and back with white under carriage.

I asked bird-man Jim Hiatt about it and got this: *These are a common pasture bird, but even more so in riparian areas--areas along a waterway. If you've hunted ducks, you know very well about those times when you are scared half to death on the way to the duck pond way before the sun's come up, and you can still see the stars very well, and it's dead quiet--suddenly you are startled with "KAUUUGHHHH!!!" right overhead. Even at 30 yards up it's L-O-U-D!!! It's likely just as startled by seeing you, thus eliciting that outcry--but even THAT'S debatable. Happens even out here in Hungry Hollow during my campfires when I've stayed by the fire until I can see the stars, and one of these herons is heading to roost way up in my eucalyptus trees--but it's waaaay past its bedtime, and it can only just barely see, so my campfire startles it, I guess.*

*Left: Blue Heron in Capay Valley English walnut orchard; Betsy Monroe, 2012  
We followed a lovely one on Cache Creek in our kayaks--no camera, alas!*

