

2004/2005 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 10/2/05)

Tours: Over 19,000 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center (AMIC) between September 2004 and August 2005, an 8% increase over the previous year. Some participated in tours provided by FOAM docents. Within our schedule of weekly 2 pm Saturday tours were tours of the wastewater treatment plant given the last Saturday of each month by Alan Laurent. In addition to public tours, FOAM provided docents for many group tours, ranging from classrooms – preschool through college — to community groups.

Education: FOAM instituted a grant program for HSU students pursuing research projects that are related to the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS). Financial support came from the estate of Sylvia Fisher, in recognition of the enjoyment that her late son Marcus received from visiting the Marsh. In October 2004, Ginger Tennant, a Master's student with Dr Frank Shaughnessy in the Department of Biological Sciences, was awarded \$400 to study the role of nutrient limitation in determining eelgrass shoot density in Humboldt Bay. Jesse Conklin and Tia Adams, Master's students with Dr Mark Colwell in the Wildlife Department, were awarded \$300 for their investigation of winter roost site fidelity by Dunlin. FOAM will continue to offer the research grants in fall 2005, increasing the possible funding to \$1000.

In spring 2005, FOAM revived its Wetlands on Wheels (WOW) outreach program to local schools. Board members Erik Schwinger and Jeffrey White served as program coordinators. Six instructors – Shannon Carmack, Julia Heath, Lisa Hetherington, Amanda Slinkard, Melissa Smothers, and Julie Van Sickle – worked in pairs to present WOW to 44 classrooms. They reached over 900 elementary students at 14 schools from McKinleyville to Rio Dell. WOW brings components of the AMWS into the classroom to teach important concepts about wetland ecology, wildlife adaptation, and wastewater reclamation via hands-on activities, a slide show, and role-playing dramatizations. Instructors were able to receive course credit through HSU's Extended Education program. Julia Heath has volunteered to be WOW coordinator for 2006.

FOAM again collaborated with the HSU Natural History Museum's summer Marsh Explorers program.

Training Opportunities: Docent training was held twice this year. Over 20 people completed the one-day session on February 26 (including WOW instructors and Audubon tour leaders), while 10 participated in a 2-day training on September 10-11. Ginger Tennant completed the job begun by Jenny Gelber of revising the focus tour packets on marsh history, wastewater, birding, plants, and aquaculture, plus a general one on interpretative technique and rules and safety guidelines. Volunteers were sought via the HSU Volunteer Fair.

Public Events: In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon Society, FOAM sponsored the second Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Some 467 entries – more than triple the previous year! -- were received from grades K-12 throughout Humboldt County. Eighteen cash prizes and 20 honorable mentions were awarded at the Godwit Days opening reception and the winning entries were displayed at the AMIC during May and June.

For the fourth consecutive year, FOAM was the beneficiary of the California AAA Great Battery Roundup, this year splitting the proceeds with the Manila Community Center. During the April collection period, over 2100 dead car batteries were turned into 17 locations throughout Humboldt County, bringing in \$2135 to FOAM.

In October, FOAM continued its participation in Arcata's "Pastels on the Plaza" fundraiser, sponsoring a panel of a whimsical duck drawn by local artist Rick Kruse. In November, FOAM treasurer Art Barab led his fifth consecutive Thanksgiving Day morning "leg stretcher." In May, Denise Homer and Sean Craig led special tours in recognition of National Wetlands Month.

In April, FOAM continued its participation in Arcata's Godwit Days 10th Spring Migration Bird

Festival. A move from the AMIC to the main festival venue at the Arcata Community Center increased attendance to 166 children at FOAM's free one-day family activities coordinated by Ginger Tennant! The kids made Arcata Marsh water cycle bracelets, buttons, pinecone bird feeders, fish prints, and 3-D paper birds and butterflies. Two 90-minute tours — one on history and ecology led by Art Barab and a wastewater plant tour by David Couch — were offered as part of the festival schedule. FOAM volunteers staffed an information and sales table in the Bird Fair vendor area, where the new FOAM T-shirts were unveiled.

Marsh and Wildlife Through the Eyes of Local Artists: Since December 1998, FOAM has sponsored monthly art shows representative of the scenery, plants, birds, and animals that inhabit the Marsh and Humboldt Bay, both above and below water level. Our goal has been to provide interpretive works that reflect the beauty, ecology, and history of the Marsh as well as serve as a sales venue for our many talented local artists. This past year, works by Shawn Gould, Mariana Krattiger, Sara Starr, Alan Justice, Michelle Murphy-Ferguson, Robert Haynes, Ann White, Jill Juree Faulkner, Marjorie Van Meter, and Patricia Sennott were featured. FOAM board member Richard Vincent organized receptions for most of the artists and several included music at their event. Winners of the Godwit Days student bird art contest were displayed during May and June.

Publicity & Communication: Caitlin Collings took over the task of sending out public service announcements to local media. We would like to thank newspapers, radio, and TV stations for helping us get the message out about weekly tours, docent training, art receptions and exhibits, and other special events at the AMIC/AMWS. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND, which is mailed to an average of 400 addresses from Washington to Maine and Florida. Anyone can receive free issues by signing the guest book with a full address.

City Relations: Two exhibits have been on loan from the Jacoby Creek Land Trust. The Hauser Marsh bird blind was demolished. A permit to reinforce the dike at Klopp Lake has been obtained. Trail maintenance, planting, and invasive plant removal continue. The city carpenter constructed two wooden 4-foot wing walls for art display purposes.

Membership: As of September 1, FOAM had 110 members in good standing, down from 128 one year previously. Several of the 36 Life Members continue to contribute on an annual basis, even though their \$750 qualifying amount has long since been met. The Board sends a heartfelt thank you to Anne Weiss for her steadfast service as Membership Chair, keeping the records and mailing out UPWIND.

Fiscal Accounts: FOAM began its fiscal year in January 2005 with total cash on hand of \$9865.05, plus three certificates of deposit having a combined principal of \$24,239.57. As of the September 8 Board meeting, FOAM had total cash on hand of \$10,725.83 and CD investments of \$24,490.87. FOAM's major expenditure this year was for its WOW program, on which \$2218.47 was well spent. FOAM's largest source of revenue was the Battery Roundup, which brought \$2135 to the organization. Expenditures and revenues for 2005 have been virtually equal. Membership receipts have dropped precipitously after 2004's upswing. However, FOAM's financial situation is very solid and funds await creative and useful ideas.

Board of Directors: A Board retreat was held on May 1. Nine current Board Members will be continuing: Caitlin Collings, David Couch, Sean Craig, Patty Siering, Ginger Tennant, Gwen Thoele, Richard Vincent, Jeffrey White, and Janet Zich. Mid-year appointee Julia Heath is running for a first term. Erik Schwinger left to attend graduate school at the University of Nevada-Reno. Seven-year Board Member Sue Leskiw is leaving due to term limits, but will continue to edit UPWIND, serve on the exhibit committee, coordinate the Student Bird Art Contest, and serve as liaison for Godwit Days.