

2010/11 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 10/2/11)

Tours: Some 19,729 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2010 and August 2011, down more than 1400 from the previous 12-month period. Some participated in the weekly 2 pm tours offered rain or shine by FOAM docents. FOAM provided docents for 147 special-request group tours, ranging from classrooms – preschool through college — to community groups.

Education: On June 29, for the 4th year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society partnered to offer a day-long session for children age 9-12 at the Arcata Marsh. The module was part of the Wildlife Biology week of the Arcata Recreation Department's Natural Resources Science Camp. The curriculum consisted of a bird walk, a "Mud Walk," and viewing of invertebrates collected from the Bay and Log Pond through microscopes. Instructors were Elliott Dabill, Bob Rasmussen, Melinda Bailey, Tom Leskiw, Chet Ogan, and George Ziminsky. Sue Leskiw pulled together the schedule and brought lunch. FOAM sponsored one child to attend the camp. FOAM also underwrote the cost of books and provided some supplies for the City's Marsh Explorers and Young Explorers summer camp sessions.

For the 6th year, FOAM funded awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair in March. A \$50 prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Jacob Ireland, a 5th-grader at Arcata Elementary School. His project was entitled "Environmental Chemistry: Phytoremediation of Copper by Water Plants." Due to the quality of the entries, FOAM awarded a second-place prize of \$25 to Keaton Sullivan, a student at Garfield School, whose project was entitled "Floating or Rooted?" Keaton's research was done at the Arcata Marsh, investigating whether a floating marsh would work as well as a rooted one to treat wastewater. Sue Leskiw served as judge.

In January, FOAM co-sponsored another public meeting on *Spartina* (cordgrass) eradication and native salt marsh restoration. About 45 attended the event, held at the D Street Community Center.

In February, FOAM participated in an Environmental Education Teacher Fair held at the Humboldt County Office of Education in Eureka. Mary Burke and Katy Allen staffed the booth, which was visited by approximately 30 teachers and school administrators.

In April, FOAM published a 54-page, full-color book covering the 50 most common birds at the Arcata Marsh. The book represented a collaboration among Ken Burton, Leslie Anderson, and David Fix. Over 200 copies have already been sold, beginning with the FOAM booth at Godwit Days and subsequently through local bookstores and the Interpretive Center.

In recognition of the statewide Coastweeks celebration, two free public lectures were held at the Interpretive Center in October: HSU chemistry professor Matt Hurst, updated results (3rd year) results of Marsh and Bay water analysis and HSU graduate student Mary Burke, carbon sequestration research at Arcata Marsh. City Naturalist Denise Homer led a Twilight Walk on October 19.

FOAM – represented by Mary Burke and Katy Allen -- is collaborating with the Natural History Museum to resurrect a new version of Wetlands on Wheels (WOW). Mary rewrote the classroom curriculum for 5th graders, HSU students under the tutelage of Jen Ortega have been trained to handle the school presentations, and classrooms will follow up with a visit to the Marsh, with some already scheduled in September.

Volunteer Training & News: Docent training was offered once (with the fall session upcoming on October 8-9). Three people completed a 2-day training on March 12-13, organized by Elliott Dabill. Instructors were Bob Rasmussen, David Couch, Rich Ridenhour, Jenny Hanson, and Elliott Dabill. Megan McCue initiated a series of informal evening get-togethers at coffee shops or breweries for volunteers and also organized special group trips on Humboldt Bay in February for FOAM docents through Humboldt Baykeeper.

Public Events: In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon Society, FOAM sponsored the 8th Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Some 470 entries were received from grades K-12 throughout Humboldt County. Thirty-two cash prizes and 20 honorable mentions were awarded at Godwit Days. The winning entries were displayed at the Interpretive Center during May. FOAM continued funding the award category of "Best Depiction of a Bird in its Habitat," with three winners selected.

In October, FOAM continued its participation in Arcata's "Pastels on the Plaza" fundraiser, sponsoring a sidewalk square. In November, Art Barab led his 11th consecutive Thanksgiving Day morning "leg stretcher" for 30 people, while Jenny Hanson for the third year led a New Year's Day walk that attracted 28. Jenny also initiated seasonal plant-focused public tours at the Marsh (April, June, and October, to date).

In March, FOAM cosponsored a Barn Dance fundraiser with the Humboldt Folklife Society. George Ziminsky spearheaded the effort, aided by volunteers David Couch, Katy Allen, Sue Leskiw, Megan McCue, Alex Stillman, Tara Hohoff, and Cindy Moyer, who baked goods to sell or staffed the bar/food area.

In April, FOAM continued its participation in the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival. Approximately 80-100 children and parents took part in FOAM's free family nature activities coordinated by Sue Leskiw and Darlene Marlow, assisted by volunteers Katy Allen, Grace Marton, and four members of the Sequoia Park Roots & Shoots Club. The kids made Arcata Marsh water cycle bracelets, peanut butter pinecone bird feeders, 3-D paper birds and butterflies, fish prints, bird callers, and eagle talon key chains. A tour of the wastewater plant by David Couch and two children's bird walks by Mary Burke were offered as part of the festival schedule. FOAM volunteers also staffed an information and sales table in the vendor area, coordinated by Janet Zich, and helped to hang bird art entries.

In May, Megan McCue started leading jogging tours (early morning, evening) of the Arcata Marsh trails.

In June, FOAM staged free educational activities at the Interpretive Center in conjunction with Arcata's Oyster Festival. Dave Couch put together a sea creature touch tank and Sue Leskiw created the kids craft events. Other volunteers were Mary Burke, Katy Allen, Megan McCue, and Darlene Marlow. Twenty children participated.

In June, FOAM cosponsored – with Greenwheels and the City -- an 8-mile bike tour of McDaniel Slough and Janes Creek restoration projects. About 20 cyclists showed up for the ride led by Julie Neander of Arcata's Environmental Services Department.

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. 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 and photographers. This past year, Snowy Plover art contest winners, the HSU Scientific Drawing class, Michael Van Devender, Lorraine Miller-Wolf's photography class, Ron LeValley, Darlene Marlow, Red Jioras, Amy Granfield, Jim Welsh, and Michael Harris were featured. Leslie Anderson scheduled the shows and hung the artwork.

Publicity & Communication: We would like to thank newspapers, radio, and TV stations for helping us get the message out about our weekly tours, docent training, art exhibits, and other special events at the Marsh. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND, which is mailed to an average of 250 addresses throughout the US. Anyone can receive a free issue by signing the guest book with a full address.

City Relations: In December and July, FOAM and the Northcoast Environmental Center sponsored invasive plant workdays at the Marsh, concentrating on first transplanting, then weeding around, salt grass at the restoration area on South I Street. George Ziminsky worked with students from the Educational Resource Center and founded an "on-call" group to handle spot cleanups between the major efforts.

FOAM funded two "Volunteer of the Year" awards, presented to Elliott Dabill and Ken Burton, at the September 26 Annual Meeting.

Membership: As of August 30, FOAM had 130 members in good standing, up 4 from a year ago. A whopping 6 new Life Members were added this year, for a total of 61 (some of which are deceased or have no current address).

Fiscal Accounts: As of the end of August 2011, FOAM had a checking account balance of \$16,203 plus a time deposit CD for \$30,000. The largest expenditures FOAM has incurred in the past year have been for the production of sale items and its newsletter, UPWIND. FOAM's largest annual revenue source is membership dues and donations, which have provided a total of \$5,437 during the soon-to-end fiscal year. Other significant revenue sources have been sale items, the George Allen Memorial Fund, and proceeds from a barn dance event. The organization has shown a net gain of \$1,914 during the fiscal year and is in excellent position to fund future programs and events.

Board of Directors: Nine current Board Members will be continuing: Katy Allen, Leslie Anderson, Mary Burke, David Couch, Elliott Dabill, Sue Leskiw, Megan McCue, Lance Torgerson, and George Ziminsky. There are two open slots on the Board, due to the untimely death of Guy Kuttner in March and resignation for health reasons of John Clagett. Art Barab continues as treasurer and Janet Zich as database manager.

-- Sue Leskiw, President