



UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh
Interpretive Center
Vol 21, Issue 4, Fall 2014

Our Mission: To stimulate understanding of the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary, its relationship with Arcata's integrated wastewater treatment system, the surrounding watersheds and bay, and their link with the Earth's water cycle

In This Issue: Members-Only Treatment Plant Tour... November Lecture... October Lecture... Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Lunch... Bird of the Year Awards... Fire at the Marsh... Community Outreach Events... Orion Blog... Annual Report... Thanksgiving Day Walk... New at AMIC... Marsh Clean-up... McDaniel Slough Walk & Talk... Pastels on the Plaza... Kite Movie... Artist Statements... Visitor Log... Calendar... Members/Donors

A Perk for FOAM Members

At its retreat in August, the FOAM Board brainstormed about ways to increase membership, as well as better reward the members we already have. Many years ago, when FOAM operated the AMIC bookstore, members received a 10% discount on merchandise, which can no longer be given now that the facility is operated by the City of Arcata. Of course, FOAM members receive UPWIND, an invitation to the annual luncheon meeting, the opportunity to elect Board members, and the warm, fuzzy feeling from knowing that they support FOAM's educational and community outreach efforts on behalf of our beloved Marsh!

But the Board wanted to do something more for our members. It was suggested that we offer Members-Only tours where any member could attend for free and non-members could join on the spot to come along. So, the first in what we hope will be a series of special tours will be held on Saturday, November 29 starting at 1 pm. Founding FOAM member and wastewater operator David Couch will lead a tour of the treatment plant. It's been several years since the City discontinued FOAM's last-Saturday wastewater tours, so this is a rare treat. Meet Dave at AMIC for a short orientation before heading out to the plant. The tour is a go, rain or shine.

Non-members who want to join FOAM that day should bring a check made payable to FOAM or exact change for either \$18 (student or senior), \$25 (single membership), or \$35 (family membership).

November Lecture

On Friday, November 21, Stassia Samuels and Elizabeth Wu of Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP) will speak on the California Phenology Project (CPP). The project was initiated by the National Park Service, UC-Santa Barbara, and the USA National Phenology Network. CPP uses plant phenology to contribute to our understanding of the effects of climate change on California's ecosystems.

Phenology is the study of seasonal reproductive cycles; phenology monitoring entails observing and recording plant life cycle stages throughout the reproductive season. By comparing phenology data over time, and looking at climate data, one can detect shifts in green up, flowering, fruiting and dying back times that may be due to climate change.

Stassia, who is the plant ecologist at RNSP, will discuss CPP as a

whole, the program at RNSP, and a budding phenology garden at Fuente Nueva Charter School in Arcata. She will offer resources for those wishing to monitor plants on their own, set up a program with another organization, or volunteer with existing programs. Elizabeth, an HSU Master's student in biology who has been interning on the project, will focus on data collection.

Wigeons in October

In the next installment of FOAM's free public lecture series, HSU wildlife student Brendan Leigh will present about his research on American Wigeon on Friday, October 24, starting at 7:30 pm.

Happy 25th
Birthday, FOAM!

2014-5 Board of Directors & Officers

Officers

President: Mary Burke (also Education, Website)

Vice-President: Elliott Dabill (also Education; Lectures; Computer)

Secretary: Katy Allen (also Education; Exhibits; Membership)

Treasurer: Sue Leskiw (also UPWIND Editor; Mailing; Publicity; Exhibits; Scrapbook; Website)

Other Board Members

David Couch (Special Events)

Betsy Elkinton (Education)

John McNeely (Education)

Ivan Soto

Janet Zich (Membership; Website; Facebook)

George Ziminsky (Habitat Concerns)

FOAM website: www.arcatamarshfriends.org



2014-5 FOAM Board of Directors. From left: John McNeely, David Couch, Katy Allen, George Ziminsky, Sue Leskiw, Elliott Dabill, and Betsy Elkinton. Not shown: Mary Burke, Janet Zich. Photo by Gretchen O'Brien.

Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

By Sue Leskiw

On Sunday, October 5, FOAM held its 21st annual meeting and volunteer appreciation lunch. About 35 people attended. A special cake featured an aerial photo of the August 31 fire at the Marsh (see p. 4).

City co-naturalist Camden Bruner presented a Volunteer of the Year award to Darlene Marlow for her more than 100 hours spent staffing AMIC, plus her help at special events for children. The other recipient, Leslie Scopes Anderson, was unable to attend but was recognized for her graphic design and photographic skills that went into two books published by FOAM, as well as Marsh interpretive signs. Each received a certificate and \$25 credit in the AMIC bookstore. (Coincidentally, the two women had been paired as winners of the 2006 awards!)

Sue Leskiw was surprised by a special award from the FOAM Board and the City of Arcata. Katy Allen read a statement from FOAM president Mary Burke where she described Sue as “the glue, the gooey biofilm that filters through the muck and produces a clear, clean message that everyone who visits the Marsh enjoys.” She noted that Sue had been involved with FOAM since she moved to Humboldt in 1998, acting as “a tireless advocate, organizing special events, promoting other’s actions, and providing the energy to help others achieve their potential.” Sue received a Murano glass dove that Katy carried back from her recent trip to Italy. On behalf of the City, Council member Alex Stillman read a letter recognizing Sue for “working tirelessly over the years to bring your love of the Marsh to adults and children alike... her attention to detail and organization.”

A brand-new award—Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year—was given out (see this page).

Treasurer Sue Leskiw reviewed highlights of the 2013/14 Annual Report (see p. 5&6). There were no election results to report, as none of the terms of current Board members was up.

[UPDATE: At its October 9 meeting, the FOAM Board appointed Ivan Soto to fill one slot. Ivan is a junior transfer to HSU majoring in environmental studies with a minor in environmental education. The other opening will be filled in February by Alex Stillman. The current officers—President Mary Burke, Vice-President Elliott Dabill, Secretary Katy Allen, and Treasurer Sue Leskiw—agreed to serve in those capacities for another year.]



(Above) Darlene Marlow and Camden Bruner. Photo by Sue Leskiw.
(Below) Leslie Scopes Anderson. Photo by Camden Bruner.



First Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year Awards Presented

By Sue Leskiw

As part of the FOAM annual meeting, winners and honorable mentions for this new award were recognized by emcee George Ziminsky. The Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year Award is modeled after the Humboldt County Bird of the Year Award that was first given out at Godwit Days 2014. The goal of the award is to recognize rare birds (and their finders) spotted within the borders of the Marsh that are subsequently enjoyed by other observers.

So that FOAM could present the award at its annual meeting, the window for birds to be considered was 9/1/13 through 8/31/14. Candidates were compiled from Audubon Field Notes, eBird, and personal experience of the selection committee, composed of Camden Bruner, Rob Fowler, Tom Leskiw, and George Ziminsky.

Because the scores for the top two nominees were extremely close—both species being first confirmed records for the Marsh—cer-



(From left) Stan Harris and George Ziminsky. Doc's Painted Bunting. George and Alexandra Lamb. Alex's Ovenbird.
 People photos by Sue Leskiw. Bird photos by Rob Fowler.

tificates were awarded for both first and second place.

First place went to Painted Bunting, first seen by Stan Harris on 10/12/13 and last seen on 10/21/13. This bunting—a casual migrant in California—winters in Mexico and points south and summers only as far west as New Mexico. The bird was electric green above paling to lemon yellow below, meaning it was either a female or a juvenile. Doc termed it the “best bird I have ever seen” in all his decades of birding at the Marsh.

Second place went to Ovenbird, first seen by Alexandra Lamb on 12/8/13 and last seen the following day. This warbler—a rare migrant throughout the West—winters in Mexico and points south and summers three states east of California.

Two honorable mentions were also recognized: Dickcissel, first seen by David Fix on 9/17/13, and Brewer's Sparrow, first seen by Ken Irwin on 10/16/13.

Fire at the Marsh

By Sue Leskiw

I was staffing the afternoon of Sunday, August 31. Alan Peterson had just stopped by to take down his photographs that were on display during August. Linda Erickson was lined up to hang her nature-inspired concrete tic-tac-toe boards and other pieces at 2 pm. I was busy catching up on a backlog of articles that needed to be pasted in a scrapbook.

Around 1:50 pm, I smelled smoke. I walked outside and looked around, even going down to the parking lot, but couldn't see where it was coming from—the Marsh or from a business across South G Street. About 10 minutes later, a man ran into AMIC shouting for me to call the Fire Department, as there was a fire near the parking lot. I called 911, to be told that equipment was on the way. City Naturalist Gretchen O'Brien happened to stop by with her dog, Spike, when 10 minutes later, an APD officer burst in the door and ordered us to shut down immediately. I told him that it would take a few minutes to put away the cash box and follow the usual closing procedures. He urged me to hurry and I was lucky Gretchen was there to split the duties.

When we got outside, the air was thick and gray with flying ash.

Hoses were being pulled up the path from the parking lot. I drove down South G to Hwy 101 and saw a towering column of smoke over the Marsh.

By now, you probably know that about 2-3 acres burned that day. It started near a known hang-out spot across from the Log Pond. Once I saw the aerial photos from a drone flown by Humboldt Bay Fire volunteer Gary Stone, I realized how close the blaze had come to AMIC.

A few days later, I was at HSU staffing FOAM's volunteer fair booth. I noticed that Arcata Fire had a table. I thanked the firemen for their quick action at the Marsh. One told me that it was interesting to “be able to walk on water,” as he crossed burned cattails deep into the Log Pond, and that he was never happier to have “mucky, stinky water” dipped from Klopp Lake (full of bird poop?) dumped on his head by the helicopters called in to fight the blaze.

9/24 FIRE UPDATE FROM CAMDEN BRUNER

“I want to give an update on how the burned area is doing, in case you get questions while staffing or wanted to walk through it with a tour. Many plants are starting to sprout again and I suspect that with this rain, we will see many more! George Ziminsky led our Coastal Cleanup Day ef-

fort in the area, which removed broken glass, trash, and Himalayan blackberry growth. The City has sprinkled salt grass seed to provide ground cover that hopefully will prevent erosion this winter. Salt grass is a hearty native that will grow in salty and upland soils and should cover a large part of the burned area. As the trees and shrubs come back in the upland parts of this habitat, they will replace the salt grass with more riparian vegetation. We are considering planting native vegetation in the near future.”

“Wildlife has begun to return to the area. A large diversity of flies have been patrolling the area just an inch or so off the ground, which has brought in some praying mantises! While they are the introduced Chinese mantis, they are still amazing creatures to watch if you spot them! I have found it interesting that only brown morph mantis have come in. The green morphs I thought were more common here must know they don't fit. Ants have also been quick to move in. There is a large colony at the north end of the burn that survived the blaze and now the ground is noticeably well patrolled by these little guys. With all the ants and the new salt grass seeds, Song Sparrows and Fox Sparrows have moved in.

(continued on page 4)



Annual meeting cake commemorating August 31 fire at the Marsh. Aerial photo by Gary Stone.

(Fire at the Marsh, continued from p. 3)

They are foraging boldly near the trail every morning with a look in their eyes like they hit the jackpot. I am hoping this will be a good spot for sparrows as fall migration continues. The fire has not deterred our usual fall warbler rarities from visiting Log Pond! A Tennessee Warbler and American Redstart have been spotted at Log Pond and at least one wintering Northern Waterthrush has returned.”

“I have placed signs on either end of the burned area telling visitors about the fire and to please stay on the trail. Staying on the trail will help plants recover, protect the sensitive burned soil from eroding, and prevents disturbance to wildlife. One interesting part of the burn to check out is a deep small mammal burrow that is awesome to show tour takers, as it is very close to the trail.”



George cleaning up after the fire. Photo by Ted Halstead.

Community Outreach Events

On 8/19, Sue Leskiw took FOAM information to the Humboldt County Fair in Ferndale as part of Outdoor Recreation Day. The blustery weather and placement behind the grandstand translated to poor traffic through the displays.

FOAM participated 9/3 in the Agency/Volunteer and Community Involvement Fair at HSU. Sue Leskiw, George Ziminsky, Milt Boyd, and Barbara Reisman staffed a table that gave students information about volunteer opportunities at the Marsh. Over 50 students expressed interest by giving us their emails. Many who stopped by were new to the area and appreciated our handing out Marsh maps.

On 9/13, FOAM tabled at Paddlefest, an event held on the Eureka Waterfront sponsored by HSU Center Activities. Sue Leskiw, George Ziminsky, Betsy Elkinton, and Mary Burke handed out Marsh information.

FOAM received a \$125 donation from a 9/19 end-of-summer barbeque held by the Beneficial Living Center located across South G Street from the Marsh. FOAM set up an informational table, staffed by George Ziminsky, David Couch, Janet Zich, and Mary Burke.



Betsy at Paddlefest.



George at HSU Volunteer Fair. Both photos by Sue Leskiw.

Arcata Marsh in Orion Blog

By Sue Leskiw

On September 30, an e-mail came to me through the FOAM website from Scott Gast, an associate editor with the prestigious environmental magazine Orion. He noted that Orion publishes a bimonthly online column about green innovations in infrastructure and the blog was looking for a photo to illustrate an upcoming piece about the Arcata Marsh by columnist Peter Brewitt.

“The article is about how communities around the country could pursue wetland conservation and wastewater treatment ment at the same time, and Arcata is the prime example,” he wrote. So, we’re looking for a sort of overview image of the Arcata Marsh, something to show readers that this place looks totally different than what one

might expect upon hearing the word ‘wastewater.’”

Luckily, I had just finished hanging the October art show of stunning aerial photographs of the Marsh by Ellen Land-Weber. I forwarded a couple to Scott, along with some photos taken via drone by Gary Stone, volunteer photographer for Humboldt Bay Fire Department, of the burned Marsh.

I asked Scott whether he wanted anyone local to review the piece, but received no reply before he uploaded it on 10/2 to <http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/newsfrom187/entry/8347/>. Unfortunately, Brewitt’s article contained a few errors that I asked Scott to fix. He incorporated most of my changes and I hope you will agree that the publicity for the Marsh from this article outweighs any misstatements.

2013/14 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 10/5/14)

Tours: Some 18,701 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2013 and August 2014, down 1,561 from the previous 12-month period. Some participated in the weekly 2 pm tours and monthly “Slower-Speed” tours offered rain or shine by FOAM docents. FOAM also provided docents for 49 special-request group tours.

Education: FOAM published “A Pictorial Guide to 101 Common Plants at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary,” a full-color, spiral-bound companion to our 2011 common bird book. Authors were Leslie Anderson, Jenny Hanson, Sue Leskiw, and Rich Ridenhour. An author-led Pre-Mother’s Day Walk & Tea was held in May to celebrate.

FOAM’s free lecture series, coordinated by Elliott Dabill, continued, with presentations by Mike and Leslie Anderson on photobirding, Ted Torgerson on river otters, Nicole Clement and Audrey Sohikian on Arcata Marsh mammals (including cats), Sandra Hunt-von Arb on dragonflies, Alan Peterson on white-tailed kites, and Conor Shea on the McDaniel Slough restoration project.

In July, for the 7th year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society partnered to offer a day-long session for children age 10-12 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. FOAM instructors were Katy Allen, Dave Couch, Elliott Dabill, John DeMartini, and George Ziminsky. Sue Leskiw pulled together the schedule, brought lunch, and took photos.

In March, for the 9th year, FOAM funded awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair. A \$50 prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Nigella Mahal Baur, a 7th-grader at Sunny Brae Middle School. Her project, entitled “Feed Me Sea...More: The Effect of Tides on Nutrients in Humboldt Bay,” investigated whether there are more nutrients on an outgoing or incoming tide. A \$25 second prize was awarded to Zane Taylor, a 7th-grader at Pacific Union School. His project, “Benthic Macroinvertebrates as Indicators of Watershed Health,” measured sediment in three local creeks, relating levels to the number of caddisflies, mayflies, and stoneflies that are highly sensitive to pollution.

FOAM’s Wonders of Wetlands (WOW) was presented to five 5th-grade classes in fall 2013: Coastal Grove Charter School, Union Street Charter School, and Pacific Union School. The WOW curriculum underwent a major rewrite, with input from Sue Leskiw and Mary Burke.

FOAM awarded two HSU research grants: \$150 to senior Nicole Clement for her project to determine what mammal species are utilizing AMWS and the surrounding area and \$857 to senior Gabrielle Ruso to study basking behavior of Western pond turtles.

FOAM reprinted its “Humboldt’s Dog-Friendly Areas” brochure and a Marsh Bird Checklist updated by Rob Fowler and David Fix.

Public Events: In October, FOAM again staffed a table at HSU’s Biodiversity Conference. In November, Art Barab led his 13th consecutive Thanksgiving Day morning “leg stretcher,” with Alex Stillman leading part of the group. Jenny Hanson, for the 6th year, led a New Year’s Day Ramble that attracted 14 attendees.

In February, FOAM again cosponsored with the HSU student chapter of the California Waterfowl Association a Duck Day at the Marsh. It included crafts, educational presentations, and guided walks for ages 5-12. That same month, FOAM cosponsored Take a Child Outside (TACO) Day at the AMWS, a free festival of fun outdoor play for kids and their caregivers.

In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon, FOAM sponsored the 11th Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Over 765 entries—a new record—were received from grades K-12 throughout Humboldt County. Thirty-five cash prizes and 30 honorable mentions were awarded at Godwit Days in April. FOAM again hosted a reception at AMIC in May for the winning artists, combined with the Pre-Mother’s Day Tea.

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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. The kids made peanut hummingbird ornaments, water cycle bracelets, pinecone bird feeders, fish prints, bird sticker refrigerator magnets, and hanging paper birds. HSU CWA students helped kids make rock ducks. Two children's bird walks by Mary Burke were offered as part of the festival schedule. FOAM volunteers also staffed an information/sales table in the vendor area, coordinated by Janet Zich, and helped hang bird art entries.

In September, Sue Leskiw and Milt Boyd staffed a FOAM table at the Volunteer and Community Involvement Fair held at HSU.

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. This past year, Patricia Sundgren-Smith, Thomas Bethune, Talia Rose, Gary Bloomfield, Riley Quarles, Beth Gin & Darlene Marlow, Alan Peterson, and Linda Erickson were featured. Sue Leskiw put together a special "10 Years of Student Bird Art: Evolution of Excellence" exhibit, featuring works by children/siblings who had won at least three times. Sue Leskiw scheduled and Alex Stillman helped hang the shows.

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.

City Relations: In February, July, and September (United Way Day of Caring), FOAM co-sponsored invasive plant workdays at the Marsh.

FOAM funded two "Volunteer of the Year" awards, presented to Jane Wilson and Virginia Jimenez, at the September 29 Annual Meeting. Alex Stillman received a certificate recognizing her help with special Marsh projects.

In May, FOAM hosted a retirement party for volunteers to say goodbye to City Naturalist Denise Homer. Camden Bruner and Gretchen O'Brien were hired to share the naturalist position.

Mark Wheetley replaced Alex Stillman as FOAM's representative to the Arcata City Council. FOAM funded three of the new "You Are Here" signs installed at AMWS.

Membership: As of August 31, FOAM had 140 members in good standing, 63 of which were Life Members and 4 were Honorary Life Members.

Fiscal Accounts: As of August 31, FOAM had a checking account balance of \$37,046.63. Expenditures totaled \$13,292.01 and revenues totaled \$8,412.22. The largest expenditures incurred in the past year were \$2,959 for interpretive signs, \$2,213 for printing the plant book, \$1,300 for insurance, \$1,058 for UPWIND newsletters, and \$1,042 for research grants. Main revenue sources were membership dues (\$2,845), donations (\$3,001), and merchandise sales (\$1,866). Overall, organization expenditures exceeded revenues by nearly \$4,900.

Board of Directors: All nine current Board Members will be continuing, with two slots open. Sue Leskiw took over as treasurer and Mary Burke as president.

-- Mary Burke, President

Holiday Sojourn

After 14 years of leading a Thanksgiving morning Marsh walk, Art Barab is stepping down. Thanks, Art, for coming up with the idea and carrying it through for so many years! But have no fear—another long-time Marsh volunteer, naturalist Jenny Hanson, has stepped up to fill the slot. So, if you'd like to set out on a 90-minute leg-stretcher before your big dinner, meet Jenny on the AMIC front deck (center will be closed for the holiday) at 10 am on Thursday, November 27.



New at AMIC

☛ FOAM logo tees are in stock! Choose from women's short-sleeved (light blue), unisex short-sleeved (tan), and unisex long-sleeved (stonewash blue). Short-sleeved are \$12; long-sleeved are \$19.95.

☛ An animal track display has replaced the insect display as part of a plan to rotate interpretive materials at AMIC. Camden and Gretchen built it using tracks donated by the HSU Wildlife Department.

☛ The hydration station addition to the water fountain has been installed. Already, more than 300 bottles have been refilled.

☛ Plans are underway for a native plant garden in front of AMIC. Camden met with Carol Ralph and Pete and Judy Haggard about what to remove and what to plant. He has begun to clear Himalayan blackberries and designed a trail. Several local nurseries have offered to donate plants. To volunteer with the project, contact Camden at 826-2359.

☛ August set an all-time monthly sales record of \$1536.04, in large part due to Camden's campaign to sell required guidebooks to HSU students.

Cleaning up the Marsh

By George Ziminsky

September 20 was busy at the Marsh, with United Way Day of Caring and California Coastal Cleanup occurring on the same day. The Day of Caring mobilizes college students to volunteer in their communities, and HSU had hundreds of students participating at dozens of locations.

At the Marsh, the students focused on invasive plant removal in two areas. Members of the Natural Resources Club worked with Redwood Community Action Agency to dig out *Spartina* clumps from the salt marsh southeast of the oxidation ponds. The other HSU students worked in the recently burned area northwest of AMIC. While the fire was an unfortunate event caused by human negligence, it did create an opportunity to manage the recovery to favor native plants. Invasive Himalayan blackberries covered much of the higher ground in the burned area and were poised to reclaim their patches. The students dug up and pried out the root crowns (many of which were re-sprouting!) along the trail edges and areas that had previously obscured views of the Log Pond and Butcher Slough.

Organized by the Northcoast Environmental Center, California Coastal Cleanup Day brought an additional 11 volunteers to the Marsh, from both HSU and the community. One crew concentrated on the burned area, which was still littered with glass from discarded bottles broken by the heat. This was tedious work, but the end result was taking the edge off of the fire's unpleasant revelation that so many people still treat the Marsh as a trash can. Another crew focused on abandoned campsites in the Little Lake Industries property (the parcel east of South I Street when entering the Marsh—proposed location for an off-leash dog area). The remaining volunteers roamed the trails, roads, and parking areas, gathering up detritus from careless visitors. This included hundreds of cigarette butts, [Fun fact: Smoking has been prohibited at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary since July 2013].

The weather was beautiful, which was icing on the cake for a day that saw over 50 volunteers give back to the Arcata Marsh.

What Did They Do at McDaniel Slough?

By Elliott Dabill

On September 19 and 20, Connor Shea gave a talk about, then led a walk through the newest section of the Marsh, McDaniel Slough. Dr. Shea, who works for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, helped design and implement the 154-acre project.

We walked to the break in the 1860-era levees created to make the land suitable for crops and cows, which were breached because tidal marsh created will be vastly more productive than pastures. A dozen egrets were in line for lunch at the new section and a family of four river otters greeted the crowd. Dr. Shea was pleased that this slough, breached only a year ago, was sheltering plenty of fish to feed predators. As tidewater enters and erodes the levee, it passes through a new channel that then distributes the water throughout existing branches inside the new marsh.

The brackish pond next to South I Street and north of Gearheart Marsh will someday become the terminus of the wastewater treatment, where final enhancement of the water will allow its release into the bay. In the meantime, springs and rain keep it high with water, enough that the bird-habitat islands are protected from predation. Two freshwater ponds west of the constructed pond are kept flush with spring water, even during the drought. Throughout the area, changes in plant life were evident as the salt water marsh succession proceeds.

Conor will be providing a DVD and wall chart about McDaniel Slough to AMIC in October. For those of us that saw parts of the slough as Terra Incognita, the talk and walk filled in many unknown parts of the map.





AnaCena and Sarah enjoy a rest after the creative process ends.

FOAM Square on Plaza

FOAM again participated in Pastels on the Plaza on October 4. Artwork by Sarah Matik Anderson and AnaCena Zander of Arcata's City Arts Program featured a Lesser Goldfinch and House Finch, modeled after a photo by Leslie Scopes Anderson. FOAM shared the cost of the square with the City of Arcata.

Alan Peterson's Kite Saga

By Elliott Dabill

Have you seen that guy stomping around the Marsh carrying a big camera? Did you wonder if he was an eccentric homeless man? Alan Peterson is not homeless, he just spends a huge amount of time at the Marsh. Those countless hours added up to an extraordinary film called "Into the Wind: White-tailed Kites of the Redwood Coast" that premiered at a FOAM lecture in August.

The movie was of such high quality that you could see breath vapor emanating from the birds on a cold day. We followed the kite pair through a nesting season that produced a male and a female offspring, which then grew up and produced their own young. The action was so close that you would be forgiven for wondering if Alan was somehow in the tree as an adult brought in a vole, then cleaned out the innards before feeding the nestlings! Kites

are protective parents; the footage of them defending the nest from a much-larger red-tail hawk was unforgettable. Eventually, the nestlings became adolescents and family squabbles forced them to move to new territories. Then, the male disappeared and his son ended up with this ideal marsh territory to raise his own young.

All we Marsh lovers have probably watched a zillion nature videos; I would wager that this one would rank high. Alan is filming a series of similar videos and plans to put them together into a feature-length film focused on the Arcata Marsh.

OCTOBER ARTIST ELLEN LAND-WEBER

"The Arcata Marsh If You Were a Bird"

To a person strolling the Marsh trails, cues to its artificial origin and purpose—to treat secondary wastewater for Arcata—are not readily detected. It appears that birds and other small animals are equally clueless. Clearly a beneficial intersection of nature and human endeavor, the idea of the Marsh begs the question, what is natural about nature?

Over years of being a frequent Marsh stroller, my appreciation for this constructed landscape has deepened; meanwhile, the Marsh has enlarged, developed, and evolved.

Back in 1993, I began what turned into a series of photographic projects about the significance of the Marsh, a subject I return to often. Looking for a way to portray the Marsh other than as lovely landscape, many of the photo-collages imagined it populated with impossible birds and animals [see UPWIND winter 2008 issue] due to climate change or genetic modification. Others involved comparing micro- and macro-views of Marsh details.

The current series of photographs began in 2013, the result of a fortuitous reconnection with David Marshall, who in the years we were out of touch had become a pilot and owner of a small plane. Viewing the Marsh from above had been in my mind from the beginning. When photographing at ground level, the



exceptionally flat landscape makes it difficult to understand the relationship of the ponds, lake, estuaries, and bay. From a bird's eye view, it is all clear and can be exceptionally surprising and beautiful.

Aerial photography is full of challenges: time is limited, there is no chance to deliberate as the scene moves quickly past, and planning a flight is near impossible more than an hour or so ahead due to the vagaries of weather and pilot-friendly availability. Still, it is an exciting opportunity, one that I look forward to continue in the future.

I am a photographer and emeritus professor of art at HSU, where I taught photography and digital imaging for more than 30 years. My work has been featured in exhibitions since 1968 and in the permanent collections of museums in the US and abroad. Grants received include National Endowment for the Arts Photographer's Fellowships, Polaroid Artist's Support, and a Fulbright Senior Fellowship. My photographic work has appeared in many books and other photography publications. I am author of *The Passionate Collector* (1980), *To Save a Life: Stories of Holocaust Rescue* (2000), and the iBook *Gettysburg Monuments: A Picture Album* (2013).

A Halloween closing reception will be held on Friday, October 31 between 4 and 6 pm at the Interpretive Center. Get in the spirit and come dressed as a Marsh animal!

**NOVEMBER ARTIST
LOUISE BACON-OGDEN**

As a life-long bird and nature lover, I have embraced my creative nature on paper. Since retiring from owning Strictly for the Birds, a nature store in Old Town Eureka, I have turned my attention to art. For several years, I have engaged in numerous art classes.

I love any medium that creates black-and-white images: graphite, pen and ink, Sumi-e (Japanese ink painting), and scratchboard. I have also dabbled in watercolor, colored pencil, oil paint, and mosaics. Most of my work features animal and nature themes.

I am a member of the Redwood Art Association, Ink People, Fortuna Art Council, and Humboldt Arts Council. My creations have been displayed at the NEC, Ink People, Strictly for the Birds, the Hagoian Gallery, Curves, and many local businesses. My award-winning work has shown at the Redwood Art Association Gallery, as well as juried and shown at the Morris Graves Museum. I won several ribbons at the Humboldt County Fair.

To see more artwork or discuss a commissioned piece, call 445-8304.



**DECEMBER ARTIST
YVONNE KERN**

I discovered oil painting by taking a photorealist oil painting class at Diablo Valley College in Concord, CA in pursuit of a business degree. In 1983, I moved to Eureka, changed my major to art, and graduated from HSU in 1985. Since then, I have been painting professionally. I work primarily in my studio, but get my inspiration from the abundant images that I glean from my surroundings in photographs that I collect.



Marsh Egret (detail from painting)

The sky, the trees, the water and all that encompasses in this area provide endless visions of beauty and drama. My inspiration, like a perfect flower or stunning sunrise, takes time to materialize. I am constantly in search of the image that will call my 'creative self.' It may take many months to discover the image that calls me. I will do drawings, watercolors, and small oil paintings to study images I find, and sometimes I am delightedly surprised to find a piece of art that is so wonderful that I can no longer pursue the image.

A rural quality of life is rapidly fading for most people in our country and in our world, and I see this beauty in a historical perspective. My paintings are a record of simple, clean, uncluttered landscapes where there is a place to connect with nature and solitude. Arcata works hard to keep this dream alive, and my hope is that the rest of the world will be inspired to do the same.

A opening reception with light refreshments will be held on Sunday, December 7 from 2 to 4 pm. Prints and greeting cards will be available for purchase at the opening only, with 20% of sales donated to FOAM.

Visitor Log

The Interpretive Center saw 1404 visitors in August and 1325 in September.

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Marsh**

Calendar of Events

[Docent tours leave the Interpretive Center every Saturday at 2 pm]

October—Marsh aerial photographs by Ellen Land-Weber (reception Friday, October 31, 4-6 pm)

October 24—Wigeon lecture by Brendan Leigh, 7:30 pm (see p. 1)

November—Nature art by Louise Bacon-Ogden

November 13—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

November 21—lecture on phenology by Stassia Samuels & Elizabeth Wu, 7:30 pm (see p. 1)

November 27—Thanksgiving Morning Ramble with Jenny Hanson, 10 am (see p. 7)

November 29—Members-only tour of wastewater treatment plant with David Couch, 1 pm (see p. 1)

December/Jan—Oil paintings by Yvonne Kern (reception Sunday, December 7, 2-4 pm)

December 11—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm



Recognition & Thanks, August-September 2014

- ☛ Best Friend (\$100): Don Staudenmaier
- ☛ Sponsors (\$50-99): Katy and Tom Allen; Elliott Dabill
- ☛ Friends (\$18-49): Margaret, Paul & Jason Abels; Mark & Melinda Bailey; Richard & Chris Beresford; Mary Burke; Karen Cunningham (Coos Bay); Betsy Elkinton; Francis & Frances Ferguson; Cindy Kuttner; Jim Lennon; James Lindberg & Sandra Renshaw; Christine Lyons; Anne Merryfield; Beverly Post; Barbara Reisman; Chuck Swanson; George Ziminsky
- ☛ Donations: Beneficial Living Center, \$125; Life Members Bill Thompson and Nancy Reichard, \$50 each

FOAM
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Arcata CA 95518

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Mark Your Calendar for:

Wigeon Lecture, Oct. 24
Art Closing Reception (Halloween), Oct. 31
Phenology Lecture, Nov. 21
Thanksgiving Morning Walk, Nov. 27
Members-Only Wastewater Tour, Nov. 29
Art Reception, Dec. 7

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Name _____

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Please check the appropriate membership category:

Individual \$25 Family \$35 Student/Senior \$18

Sponsor \$50 Best Friend \$100 Life Member \$750

I would like more information about volunteering for FOAM,

FRIENDS OF THE ARCATA MARSH, PO Box 410, Arcata CA 95518

www.arcatamarshfriends.org

A tax-exempt, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN #68-0232871. All donations are tax deductible.

If you are receiving a complimentary copy of this newsletter, please consider joining FOAM.

If you were a member, but have allowed your membership to lapse, please renew.

(See mailing label for your expiration date.)

Interpretive Center street address is 569 South G Street, Arcata.

FOAM mailing address is PO Box 410, Arcata CA 95518. You can reach us by phone from 9 am to 5 pm Tuesday through Sunday and 1 to 5 pm Monday at 707-826-2359.