



# UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh  
Interpretive Center  
Vol 26, Issue 1, Winter 2018/9

**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: Upcoming Lectures... Student Bird Art Contest... Godwit Days Help Sought... Pints for Nonprofits Report... What's New at AMIC... Dog Poop Signs... King Tide Tour... New Bench at Brackish Pond... MPA Lecture... Thanksgiving Tour... Artists... Invasive Plant Work Days... Visitor Comments... Calendar... Members & Donors*



*Snowy Plover artwork from 2017 student bird art contest. Best Bird in Habitat winner, Madyson Nelson, Grade 4, Union Street Charter School.*

## Upcoming Lectures

On Friday, January 18, starting at 7:30 pm, come learn about Snowy Plovers from Alexa DeJoannis. Her lecture, entitled "Why Should I Care About Snowy Plovers? A Local Example of What Species Loss Can Mean," will enlighten attendees about the daily life of federally threatened local plovers, how they fit into their environment, and how that environment affects us. While Snowy Plovers have made frequent appearances in news headlines and government reports, they're just one of many species living on the beach. Together, these beach denizens make the dunes "work." Alexa holds a master's degree in wildlife from HSU. She studied the timing of plover's winter feather molt and helped monitor their spring/summer breeding. She previously worked in seabird colonies, deserts, and boreal forests.

Lectures for February and March are in the works. Watch local media for information.

## March 22 Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest

For the 16th year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society are co-sponsoring a Student Bird Art Contest in conjunction with Godwit Days. At least \$550 in prizes will be awarded to Humboldt County students from kindergarten through high school who submit a drawing of one of 40 suggested species or another common local bird. Prize(s) also will be awarded for the best rendition of a bird in its natural habitat.

Awards will be presented at the 24th Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival on Saturday, April 20 at 10 am. All entries will be displayed at the Arcata Community Center during the Festival and copies of winning artwork will be shown at AMIC during May and June.

A flyer with complete rules and a list of suggested birds will be posted

on the FOAM website or can be picked up at the Interpretive Center. Flyers will be mailed to all Humboldt County schools.

Art may be dropped off at the Interpretive Center, 569 South G St, or mailed to Sue Leskiw, 155 Kara Ln, McKinleyville CA 95519. Entries must be received by Friday, March 22 to be considered. Questions? E-mail [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).

## Help Needed with FOAM's Godwit Days Activities

The 24th Annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is just around the corner and FOAM will again be hosting free family nature craft activities. The drop-in session will be held in the Arcata Community Center on Saturday, April 20, from 11 am to 1 pm. Planned ac-

*(continued on p. 2)*

## 2018-19 Board of Directors & Officers

### Officers

*President:* Elliott Dabill

*Vice-President:* David Couch

*Secretary:* Katy Allen

*Treasurer (ex officio):* Sue Leskiw (also UPWIND Editor)

### Other Board Members

Stan Binnie

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**FOAM website: [www.arcatamarshfriends.org](http://www.arcatamarshfriends.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Friends.of.the.Arcata.Marsh](http://www.facebook.com/Friends.of.the.Arcata.Marsh)**



Rock owls from 2018 Godwit Days.

tivities include bird ornaments, bird hats, bird handprint art, owl rocks, wooden bird calls, and refrigerator magnets. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. If you can spend a couple of hours helping kids discover the many wonders of our Marsh, contact Sue at [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).

FOAM also needs volunteers to staff its table at the Bird Fair. Hours of operation are Friday 3-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm (optional 5-7:30 pm shift), and Sunday 10 am-3 pm, divided into 2- or 3-hour shifts. If you can help hand out literature and sell items, email [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).

Another volunteer opportunity is helping to hang the hundreds of entries received in the 15th Annual Student Bird Art Contest, co-sponsored by FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society. This will occur on Friday, April 19 starting at 1 pm. Bring a light-weight hammer and be prepared to push-pin artwork along the hallways and lobby of the Community Center. Contact Sue at [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).

For more information on the Festival, visit [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org).

## FOAM's Successful Pints for Nonprofits Event

By Sue Leskiw

On December 12, FOAM hosted a Pints for Nonprofits fundraiser at our South G Street neighbor, Redwood Curtain Brewing Company.

FOAM Board members, volunteers, supporters, and friends packed the brewery to make merry less than two weeks before Christmas. We welcomed people in the lobby with homemade sweet treats (raising \$163), a silent art auction

(netting \$176), a FOAM literature and book table, and a Marsh critter clay ornament station that five kids participated in.

Although our staffed event lasted only from 5 to 8 pm, Redwood Curtain will be donating \$1 for every pint of beer sold between noon and midnight to FOAM.

FOAM thanks all the volunteers who staffed and set up/cleaned up, plus the cookie bakers and art donors: Tom & Katy Allen, Stan Binnie, Elliott Dabill, Maria Friedman, Sue Leskiw, Mary Ann Madej & Al Wolski, Cosette McCave, Carolyn Prescott, Allison Rafferty, Barbara Reisman, Mary Romaidis, Jean Santi, Kate Sequiera, Collin Slavey, Jane Wilson, Mark Wilson, and George Ziminsky.



Kids make Marsh critter ornaments at Pints event. Photo by Elliott Dabill.

## What's New at AMIC

AMIC staff person Victoria Varela-Yates will be leaving at the start of the new year. She had been seeking a position with the Peace Corps for quite some time, and her assignment came in last fall. Victoria is headed to Panama to teach environmental education. We wish her well! Eddie Valenzuela will be returning to staff AMIC in addition to his Waste Reduction Task Force duties.

Stop by the bookstore! We have new books, Audubon plushie birds, and stuffed otters. New T-shirts will be arriving soon.



## A Letter to the Folks Who Placed Dog Poop Signs around the Marsh

We applaud your citizen action that was intended to make the Marsh a cleaner, safer place for all the wildlife who live here and the people who visit this beautiful and fragile place.

We know it cost money to make the signs, time to add your art and message to them, and energy to place them strategically on the trails.

However, due to City of Arcata municipal regulations, we had to take them down. They are being stored in the back office at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center. Please stop by to pick them up, where some of us would like to thank you and your caring efforts. We hope you find some non-City-owned property that could profit by the message to clean up after your dog.

## December 22 King Tide Tour

By Elliott Dabill

More than 25 people joined me on a special tour of the Marsh to view an 8.5-foot-high tide. The walk and talk naturally divided into four phases:

**#1. Pop Quizzes.** We discussed the natural wonders of tides. Here are some of the questions answered. (In case they make your head hurt, you are not alone, so the answers will be at the end of the article!)

► What causes tides in the first place? Why do they vary in height over each month?

► Why are there two high tides each day? (Hint: Each one has a different answer.)

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► What is a King Tide and why does it have a predicable schedule, usually appearing on January 2?

► What is a good source of information on the subject?

**#2. Fear of Death.** Once the group figured the source of our special tide, we looked out the south window of the Interpretive Center and saw that the water was rising in Butcher Slough, directly in front of the trail we would take leading to the wastewater treatment plant. Would the trail flood? If we survived the passage, would we make it back alive? How bad would it be?

**#3. David to the Rescue.** City planner David Loya invited questions about the fate of Arcata when sea level rises. Any interested parties could talk to him on the trail, stay after the walk, or go to the City's website to check out the planning to date. David also indicated that the height of this tide would not be as great as the one on New Year's Day 2018, unless a current storm in Alaska pushes water up higher than expected. He provided flags to stick in the mud at the high water line, and the participants were encouraged to photograph the flag locations and email photos to the City for mapping purposes.

**#4. We Took a Walk.** Our first stop was the treatment plant, then over the aluminum bridge to look at the high water along the armored banks around Klopp Lake. We talked about survival: for example, if you stand on one leg, you will risk water damage at high tide to only one shoe!

### Quiz Answers

Gravity from the moon pulls on the Earth's surface and water bulges toward the moon. The sun is much farther away but still has an attractive force, so its influence can add to the tides (at a new or full moon) or can make the tide weaker (at the quarter-moon phase).

The second tide each day is caused by the fact that the moon orbits the Earth, but the Earth wobbles because the Earth-moon system causes both to spin around a pivot point inside the Earth. One quarter of the distance to the Earth's cen-



*The King Tides filled up Butcher Slough, with the water reaching the concrete structures south of the Interpretive Center. Photo by George Ziminsky.*

ter is the location about which both bodies spin. That wobble causes the water on the side of the Earth away from the moon to be thrown outward (centrifugal force). The Earth is spinning under this bulging surface water, so we see two tides each day.

So how about them King Tides, eh? The tides described above keep going on their 29-day cycle of the moon's orbit but that orbit is not a circle in space: it's an ellipse (oval). When the moon is closer to the Earth in that monthly orbit, the tides will be stronger. The final piece is the orbit of the Earth around the sun, also an ellipse. The closest point to the sun occurs on January 2 each year. When both the moon and the sun are closest, the effect is to enlarge the tide's height into a King Tide.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has a cool website that explains and diagrams all this. It also points out that their tide charts include all of that information. You can pick up some cool vocabulary as well, such as perigean tide (when the moon is closest) and perihelion tide (at the

closest point of the Earth's orbit around the sun).

Was this a walk for nerds then? Not at all. This terrific group of people clearly enjoyed the event because display but were just as enthused with walking the trails, sharing humor and good stories. There were thousands of marbled godwits on the easternmost two islands of Klopp Lake. The birds put on a swirling, modern-art display as they danced over the islands and then formed a standing wave over our heads as they flew out to the bay. Apparently, their leader got something wrong, because they realized there was no food available yet, so they formed a standing wave returning to the roost islands. We couldn't tell if they were at all embarrassed at the mix-up because their faces are covered, you know, with feathers.





## New Bench at Brackish Pond

By Cindy Kuttner

When Joyce Radke asked if she could sponsor a bench to rest on at the halfway point of the trail between the green wall on South I Street and the rest of the trail after the bend, I told her that I would ask the FOAM Board. The Board thought it was a great idea, so we took it to the City for its approval. However, there was a waiting list of folks who wanted to underwrite benches, so it wasn't prudent to honor Joyce's request before them. Serendipitously, yours truly had requested a memorial bench for my husband, Guy, when he passed away years ago and that bench was at the top of the list!

Joyce and her husband paid for the bench and the plaque and voila! it is there! A beautiful, recycled redwood bench with a plaque that reads "May You Walk In Beauty."

Joyce had been walking this trail for over 20 years, even before it was a formal trail. She walked while pregnant with her daughter, with her infant daughter, and now with her grown-up daughter. A warrior woman, driven by love and a love for life, she has overcome cancer several times. She needed a place to rest.

And so did others. As I walk to Guy's memorial bird blind once a week, I have met a woman who had knee surgery and needed a place to rest, an older couple pushing a wheelchair who needed a place to rest, and others who peacefully sat and regarded the lake where a great blue heron, otters, and others creatures regularly fish and play.

Joyce's bench is a great place to contemplate, relax, and enjoy the enormous gift of this place that has been created for all of us, including nature's wildlife. (And if you come with your dog, you will find a strategically placed dogspot station with bags and waste receptacle!)

Thanks to Joyce and Dana for the gift of this bench. When you sit there, you will be reminded to walk in beauty. That's pretty easy to do at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.

## MPA Lecture

By Jane Wilson

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife outreach coordinator and interpreter explained Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in terms we could understand, both California's 124 and national ones. Marnin Robbins was delightful and flexible in the face of computer problems. Without being able to use most of his photos--on which I'm sure he spent many hours--he explained MPAs in a meaningful, colorful way.

MPAs are difficult to assess because it takes years to see their success stories. They were first created in 1999. If nothing more, MPAs are a way to negate people's beliefs that the ocean is a limitless, robust ecosystem to which we can do anything that's convenient. There are lots of habitats in the ocean. Some are more endangered than others. An MPA is a named geographic area in which some or all "takes" are prohibited. They usually reach from the shore to 3 nautical miles out. "Take" is anything someone can take. It might be hauling off sand, turning over rocks and driftwood under which creatures are living, disturbing sea birds, and fishing or crabbing. Different MPAs have different rules. National MPAs allow fishing but no oil or gas extraction.

Obviously, we can't have the entire California shoreline set up as unbroken MPAs. So compromises were necessary. MPAs are spaced 10-15 miles apart, keeping 84% of the coast still open. Not all species benefit from them. Large, wide-ranging

species—such as whales, sharks, and dolphins—need much larger areas. The species of fish that most benefit are ones that are local to the area. They are the purpose behind the MPAs. BOFFF (for "big, old, female, fertile fish") mostly hang out in one place. The larger they get, the older they become, the more offspring they have, and those offspring colonize the ocean.

There is a great pamphlet at the Interpretive Center that explains all this in a few pictures and words. Just for starters, a 7-year-old rockfish might have 750,000 larvae, whereas a 19-year-old one might have a million.

Marnin Robbins has promised to speak again, perhaps when the computer demons have not been at work. I would suggest you come because you will see a lot of beautiful beings and learn something, too.

Thank you for putting up with me these last years, as I served as the FOAM lecture coordinator. I have enjoyed it a lot. Have fun. Come meet our new lecture people, Collin and Cosette.

## FOAM Sponsors 19th Thanksgiving Ramble

By Jane Wilson

This year it was raining, but not hard, and five brave people joined me for a meander. What a grand way to start a Thanksgiving day, by taking a walk in the Marsh! All of us were grateful, the leader most of all. Dress right and you won't even get wet. The ducks were happy, too.



**Humboldt Pet Supply, our neighbor on South G Street, sponsors Dog Poo Clean-ups one Saturday morning per month. Visit their website at <https://humboldtpetsupply.com> for a schedule.**



Marsh watercolor by Paul Rickard.

### MARCH/APRIL ARTISTS PLEIN AIR PAINTERS

Paul Rickard, Jim McVicker, Jody Bryan, and Steve Porter will collaborate on a show featuring paintings of the North Bay and the Arcata Marsh. It will showcase Paul's informal group of *plein air* (outdoor) painters. A 10 am painting session will proceed a free public reception on Sunday, March 3. More information will be provided through local media closer to the show's opening.

### Invasive Plant Work Days

As this issue went to press, the City of Arcata had not yet scheduled its 2019 cosponsored work days with FOAM. These take place on Saturdays between 9 am and 1 pm. Typically, volunteers remove non-native, invasive plants (e.g., teasel, broom, periwinkle, ivy). It will be important to get as much done as possible early in the year before bird nesting season restricts vegetation removal.

Watch local media for announcement of dates or visit [www.cityofarcata.org](http://www.cityofarcata.org).

**24th Annual Godwit Days**  
**April 17 through 23**  
**Arcata Community Center**  
**[www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org)**



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### Visitor Comments

The Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary is world renowned for its wastewater treatment and "bird-iness." During November and December, international visitors from Argentina, Australia, and Great Britain signed the visitor log in the Interpretive Center. While the number of states was down from busy summer months, the Marsh still attracted visitors from Arkansas, California, Florida, Hawaii, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wyoming.

Some of these people took the time to write comments in the log, which will be reproduced here. "Keep up the good work in conserving this gem"... "Pretty, quite place"... "The Marsh is such a treasure—thank you!"... "A favorite walk"... "Loving this place"... "SO COOL"... "Great birds!"... "We love the Marsh—birds and exercise"... "We love taking a moment outside at the Marsh"... "Really enjoyed the sewage treatment"... "Loved this place since I was a kid"... "Great facility for children and adults"... "Great visitor center and store"... "Great displays and art show"... "Had fun!"

### Calendar of Events

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

January/February—photos by José Quezada

January 10—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

January 18—Lecture by Alexa DeJoannis, 7:30 pm (see p. 1)

February 3—Art reception for José Quezada, 12:30-3 pm

February 14—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

February 15—FOAM lecture, speaker TBD, 7:30 pm

March/April—*Plein air* paintings by Paul Rickard, Jim McVicker, Jody Bryan, and Steve Porter

March 3—*Plein air* art reception and paint-out, times TBD

March 14—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

March 15—FOAM lecture, speaker TBD, 7:30 pm

March 22—Student Bird Art Contest deadline (see p. 1)

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

April 20—FOAM family nature crafts at Godwit Days, Arcata Community Center (see p. 2)

May/June—display of winners of 16th Annual Student Bird Art Contest, sponsored by FOAM and RRAS

### Thanks to Our Supporters, November-December 2018

► Best Friends (\$100+): Sharon Levy (\$150); Jean Santi & Whitney Buck (\$140; NEW Life Members)

► Sponsors (\$50-99): Susan Butler; James Harding; Diane Ryerson

► Friends (\$18-49): Francis & Frances Ferguson; John Helie & Monica Simms; Mary Ann Madej & Alan Wolski; Sheila Marks; Audrey Miller; Johnny Newsome\*; Susan Parsons\*; Collin Slavey\*; Carl Tuck

► Donations: Multiplicity Therapeutic Services, \$1000 (Maria Baron & Charles Chojnacki, NEW Life Members); Linda Rogers (Pullman, WA), \$500 (a NEW Life Member), who wrote "Dear People of FOAM: Thank you so much for your tremendous efforts to show the way it can and SHOULD be done"; Life Member Susan Hansen, \$250; Ira Blatt, \$200; Life Member Milt Boyd, \$200, who wrote "Thanks for many achievements in the past year!"; Life Members Ron & Melanie Johnson, \$200; Life Member Catherine Walling, \$150; Life Member Barbara Barratt, \$100; Miranda Hartridge (Yuba City), \$100, in honor of Debbe Hartridge & Ira Blatt; Life Members Bruce & Pamela Kessler, \$100; Life Member Aldaron Laird, \$100; Life Members Steven & Carol Pearson (Portland, OR), \$100; Life Member Thea Gast, \$50, who wrote "This past year, I've enjoyed many walks at the Marsh, several lectures, and art exhibits. Thanks so much for the time and energy you put into FOAM"; Truist, \$45 (from Costco United Way Campaign); Amazon Smile donation, \$20.94; AMIC donation box, \$61.55

\* = New member

FOAM  
Friends of the Arcata Marsh  
PO Box 410  
Arcata CA 95518

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**Mark Your Calendar for:**

**Snowy Plover Lecture, 1/18**

**Art Receptions, 2/3 & 3/3**

**Student Bird Art Contest Deadline, 3/22**

**FOAM Nature Crafts at Godwit Days, 4/20**

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**



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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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

[arcatamarshfriends.org](http://arcatamarshfriends.org)

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

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*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.*