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 Lecture... Thanksgiving Tour... FOAM Pints for Nonprofits Fundraiser December 12... Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Lunch... Mail-order Marsh Patches... A Year of Dog Poo Pickup... Poem... Pastels on the Plaza... What’s New at the Marsh... September 15 Work Day... Barn Owl Lecture... Otter Art Lecture... Annual Report... Artist Statements... Calendar... Supporters

Upcoming Lecture

On Friday, November 16, starting at 7:30 pm, come learn about California’s network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the largest ecologically connected MPA network in the world. Marnin Robbins, California MPA outreach coordinator for the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, will be the speaker. In a talk entitled “California’s Marine Protected Areas: Safeguarding an Underwater Wilderness,” he will explore what MPAs are, the scientific principles that underlie their design, and the incredible resources they protect. Included as part of the discussion are two MPAs in/near Humboldt Bay: South Humboldt Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area and Samoa State Marine Conservation Area. The presentation will include photos, videos, demonstrations, and activities.

There is no lecture scheduled for December. Watch local media for info on the January presentation.

Please note: The main room of the Marsh Interpretive Center holds 50 seats. FOAM will no longer be taking reservations for seating, instead using a first-come, first-served arrangement. For more information, call (707) 826-2359.

Turkey Day Exercise

Join Jane Wilson on FOAM’s 19th annual Thanksgiving Day tour of the Marsh. If you’d like to set out on a 90-minute leg-stretcher before your big dinner, meet Jane on the Interpretive Center front deck at 10 am on Thursday, November 22 (center will be closed for the holiday).

Join FOAM for a Pints for Nonprofits Event December 12

On Wednesday, December 12, between 5 and 8 pm, FOAM will host a Pints for Nonprofits fundraiser at our neighbor, Redwood Curtain Brewing Company. Redwood Curtain will donate $1 for every pint of beer sold between noon and midnight to FOAM. The brewery is located at 550 South G Street, Arcata.

Come bid on Silent Auction items (they make great holiday gifts!), purchase sweet treats from our bake sale, and make free Marsh critter clay ornaments. We invite all community members to come mix and mingle with FOAM Board members, volunteers, and organization members.

If you’d like to donate an item to the Silent Auction (e.g., artwork, jewelry), please drop it off at the Marsh Interpretive Center by Sunday, December 8. Be sure to complete a form to accompany your tax-deductible donation.

2018-9 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
Richard Brown
Maria Friedman
Cindy Kuttner
Cosette McCave
Bill Prescott
Jean Santi
Mark Wilson

FOAM website: www.arcatamarshfriends.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Friends.of.the.Arcata.Marsh
Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Lunch
By Sue Leskiw

On Sunday, October 7, FOAM held its 25th annual meeting and volunteer appreciation lunch at the Interpretive Center. Nearly 30 came to enjoy an albacore barbeque lunch by David Couch, with FOAM Board members providing side dishes.

FOAM president Elliott Dabill presented Volunteer of the Year awards to Jane Wilson for her work on monthly lectures, slow-speed tours, and community outreach staffing and to Alan Wolski, for his 92 hours of front desk staffing.

Selection committee chair Tom Leskiw presented the fifth annual Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year award to Cassin’s Sparrow, which was spotted by Noah Sanday on October 7, 2017. The bird, whose usual western limit is southeastern Arizona, represented a third Humboldt record and won second place in Humboldt County Bird of the Year contest for 2017. The runner-up species was a Barred Owl found by Rob Fowler on November 29, 2017 in the alders just west of the garbage can at the southeast corner of the Log Pond. The Barred was the tenth species of owl recorded at the Arcata Marsh. Both birds were first Marsh records for their species!

Elliott reviewed highlights of the 2017/18 Annual Report (see pages 5&6). Treasurer Sue Leskiw reported that 41 ballots had been received. Katy Allen, Richard Brown, Elliott Dabill, Maria Friedman, Cosette McCave, Jean Santi, and Mark Wilson were elected to the Board. Retiring Board members Jane Wilson and Alex Stillman were thanked for their service.

Marsh Patches by Mail

Our new Arcata Marsh patches have proven to be very popular with our members and visitors. In response to requests from out-of-towners, FOAM has decided to sell Marsh patches by mail order. To order, send a check for $3.00, payable to “FOAM,” to FOAM, PO Box 410, Arcata, CA 95518. You must enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope (50 cents postage for one patch), in which your patch will be sent. If you have any questions, call (707) 826-2359.
Celebrating One Year of Poo Pickup

By Cindy Kuttner

Humboldt Pet Supply (HPS) on South G Street, just a short walk from the Marsh, has been cleaning up dog poop on our trails. On October 20, the firm celebrated one year of sponsoring this task. Volunteers meeting that Saturday morning were rewarded with coffee and snacks before they hit the trails.

With scoops and gloves and bags and buckets, folks cleaned up 16.2 pounds of dog waste. After one hour, they headed back to the Interpretive Center parking lot for a reward of pet supply deals at HPS.

Jen and Marni of HPS report that they have noticed better hygiene on the trails over the year. People they meet are friendly and supportive of their effort. It has become the norm to meet dog owners carrying their own bags and throwing them away in poop dispensers located along many Marsh trails.

Our state senator, Mark McGuire, sent HPS a letter in November 2017: “Congratulations on teaming up with 11 volunteers to remove 28 pounds of dog poop from the Arcata Marsh. Aside from the inconvenience to hikers and bird watchers of stepping in the unwelcome mess, dog droppings contain bacteria known to negatively impact our wetland and wildlife. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by all and we thank you.”

Additional volunteers are needed. While there was more participation during the summer, sturdy Humboldtians have come out to every cleanup for a year. Families and their dogs are welcome. The more the merrier, as more trails are cleaned! To generate more volunteers, HPS is doing outreach to other businesses in the Marsh District. In 2019, they plan to liven up the morning with games, raffles, and of course coffee and snacks.

No matter what, the good folks at Humboldt Pet Supply continue to clean up the dog poop at the Marsh and they appreciate all the help they have had over this year.

The next two clean-ups are on November 10 and December 8. Meet at 9:30 am in the Marsh’s South G Street parking lot. FOAM applauds HPS and thanks its volunteers so much for their commitment to the health of our precious wildlife sanctuary! For more info, go to www.humboldtpetsupply.com or find them on Facebook.

P.S. HPS is broadening its poop-cleaning drive in another big way: researching ways to compost pet waste, as well as selling more compostable bags made of corn or wood pulp. This research could provide advice for pet owners in their homes and our city. Some cities do compost pet waste collected in public areas. Check out “Waste Awareness” on the City of Arcata website.

Why She Bags

By Cindy Kuttner

I met a woman on the trail, a foggy, getting cooler fall-ish morning.

On her leash a frisky pup waggy, pulling closer, friendly marsh walkers.

One hand held 3 bags, heavy, full-ish, bags of poop she carried.

“My, my that’s lots for a small dog!” wryly I said, smiling.

“Oh, it’s not just hers, I pick up others. I do it for the waters, and I do it for the otters, and I do it for all birds and fish, all frogs and plants. For a healthy marsh, I pay my dues. I also pick up poop to keep it off our shoes.”

FOAM Square on the Plaza

FOAM participated in Pastels on the Plaza on October 6. A beautiful portrait of a male Wood Duck was drawn by two 2018 Student Bird Art Contest winners—Amaya Bechler and Meguire Bartosz—from a photograph contributed by Leslie Scopes Anderson. Thank you for sharing your talent to promote FOAM!

What’s New at the Marsh

By George Ziminsky

As we head into fall, AMIC welcomes two new staff members. One is Monicá Bueno, who will also be coordinating volunteers for the Humboldt Bay Trail on behalf of the Humboldt Trails Council. She worked for many years at Redwood National Park and is currently a Board member of the McKinleyville Land Trust. The other is Victoria Varela-Yates, who splits her time with the City of Arcata’s Waste Reduction Program (as did recent AMIC staffer Eddie Valenzuela). She previously worked locally in the California Conservation Corps and for the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards.

(continued on p. 4)
The Marsh is enjoying the return of wintering shorebird and waterfowl populations. The productive blackberry season has led to large flocks of Cedar Waxwings. Fall migration yielded Magnolia and Blackpoll Warblers, an elusive Catbird, and a Yellow-Green Vireo, the first ever for the Marsh!

**Fall Cleanup at the Marsh**

On September 15, the statewide Coastal Clean-up event intersected with an Arcata Marsh work day, cosponsored by FOAM, the City of Arcata, and Redwood Community Action Agency. One group of volunteers collected trash from Marsh trails, parking lots, and along South G and South I streets. Another team pulled weeds along the trails and near the outdoor amphitheater. Ten employees from GHD Consultants cleaned the Bay Trail through the Marsh, while Humboldt Pet Supply helpers picked up dog waste.

**Barn Owls Redux**

_by Jane Wilson_

Dane St. George, an HSU graduate student studying barn owls in Napa, was just as much a pleasure as a speaker as last year. And he had more to report.

Barn owls are smaller than most owls (13-16 inches), but with a wingspan of 40-50 inches. The species is found worldwide, with American individuals being twice as big with lighter coloring. Females are bigger than males, perhaps because they sit on their eggs and chicks and they are also more buff in coloring. With their really wide wings, they can hunt, flying very slowly, only 10-16.5 feet off the ground. Normally they fly 10-20 feet high. They fly with less noise than rodents can hear. They don’t ambush or dart but fly in loops, slow flapping, 15-20 mph. Barn owls are strictly nocturnal and can be spotted at dusk and dawn. Their scream is often used as a symbol of death—Halloween scary. They do not migrate and are not territorial but occur in density, unlike most other owls. They are rodent specialists, mostly voles and gophers, but also mice, frogs, and insects.

The first mention of using barn owls for rodent control was in the late 1900s. They were used to wipe out a rat problem in Malaysia this century.

While logging has reduced their habitat, fire may have opened up hunting areas. Barn owls are mostly monogamous, though cross-pair copulations have been noted. They have a shorter life span than other owls. When there are eggs or chicks, the male does all the feeding until the female can leave the chicks unattended. Usually 4-5 chicks survive and are fed 2-3 rodents a night. Up to 29 rodents a night have been observed brought to a nest! Usually after a heavy night of feeding, there will be a lighter one, with fewer prey brought to the nest.

Napa has 65 vineyards that are experimenting with barn owls to wipe out rodents. The climate is perfect. The vineyards build owl nest boxes and elevate them on poles more than 10 feet off the ground. Other countries, including Israel and Argentina, are also using this sustainable pest control method. The owls seem to prefer that the vineyards be surrounded by unmodifed habitat.

The HSU researchers fitted barn owl chicks with GPS transmitters in summer 2018.

Our hats off to the vineyard owners who are using this method because they think it works and to Dane St. George and his fellow students who are trying to prove its efficacy. We wish you well.

**North Coast Otters: Merging Citizen Art & Science**

_by Cosette McCave & Collin Slavey_

Otters are among the most beloved, adorable animals of today. However, in Humboldt, not much is known about the species that resides in our backyard. Jeff Black, a wildlife professor at Humboldt State University, wanted to change that. Black started the HSU River Otter Science Project to study river otters and raise awareness of these charismatic critters.

One fascinating aspect of otters is their scat, which has a special name: spraint. A strange thing about spraint is that it always smells like fish, even if the associated otter has not eaten fish. HSU student Alana Oldham decided to study whether otters use spraint to communicate through their olfactory sense. Oldham performed an experiment where she replaced the resident otters’ spraint at a crossing with a different otter family’s spraint. Fresh sand was laid down to see how the otters would react. The experiment found that swapping spraint caused the otters to react significantly different, even jittery, when crossing by the foreign spraint rather than their own. Oldham discovered that spraint added a familiarity to the area where it was placed. This let their otter family know that they were in the right place. Foreign spraint indicated an intruder.

Small families of river otters hop along the North Coast. Their territory is commandeered by the matriarch and her family: daughters, sisters, and young sons. One of these groups of otters lives at the Arcata Marsh! Traces of the band can be found at the intersection of the lakes and sloughs of the Marsh, marked by piles of fishy smelling spraint. Female otters mark their territory this way to send a message to roving bands of bachelor male otters who migrate up and down the North Coast looking for mates. Otter matriarchs drive out their sons as they mature. This movement of male otters ensures no inter-breeding with family members. This also challenges the males’ fitness to make sure strong pups are born. According to Dr. Black, survival rates are approximately 10% due to predation, environmental stress, and habitat loss.

Black has been working hard to find a way to increase community awareness of river otters to support the animals in the region. Since 1999, the HSU River Otter Science Project has had a specific aim to

(continued on p. 7)
**2017/18 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 10/7/18)**

**Tours:** Some 16,337 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2017 and August 2018, up 1,062 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’s free lecture series, coordinated by Jane Wilson, continued, with presentations by Bob Gearheart on natural wastewater treatment processes; Ron Fritzsche on Humboldt Bay fishes; Gordon Leppig on riparian habitat; David Narum on tradition and technology at the Blue Lake Rancheria; Ellin Beltz on frogs; James Ray and Katherine Crane on Humboldt Bay fishes; Sean Craig on marine reserves; Maria Friedman on fungi at the Arcata Marsh; Sharon Levy (a repeat of her June 9 Marsh book presentation); Elliott Dabill on the origins of birds (dinosaurs); Doby Class on sea level rise and Arcata wastewater treatment changes; and Jeff Black on “North Coast Otters” (merging citizen art and science).

In September, FOAM contributed $500 to a research endowment in honor of former Board member Dr. Patricia Siering, which will fund undergraduate research in environmental microbiology at HSU.

In March, for the 13th year, FOAM funded awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair. A $50 prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Zoe Macknicki, a 7th-grader at Kneeland Elementary School, for her project on effects of Arcata Marsh parking lot runoff on two species of freshwater crustaceans, Daphnia and Cyclops. A $25 second prize was awarded to Perrin Turney, a 12th-grader at Six Rivers Charter High School, for his research examining effects of acidification on freshwater microorganisms. (The project was the culmination of a 4-year study of components of a warming planet: acidification, temperature, industrial and agricultural pollution, and salinity, using the Arcata Marsh as a sampling site.

Throughout the year, City Naturalist Gretchen O’Brien selected items to equip the toddler area underwritten by a donation from Stephanie McCaleb. FOAM also purchased a tablet to replace the PC in the Exhibit Hall, featuring Sibley’s bird ID app and FOAM lecture Powerpoint presentations.

**Public Events:** In September, Humboldt Pet Supply kicked off its monthly Dog Poo Cleanup Day at the Arcata Marsh. FOAM presented its fourth Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year Awards at its September 24 Annual Meeting. The winner was Bar-tailed Godwit, discovered by Max Brodie. The runner-up award went to California Towhee, spotted by Jude Power.

In October, FOAM sponsored a square at Pastels on the Plaza, featuring a design by Melanie Dabill.

In November, Jenny Hanson and Alex Stillman led FOAM’s 18th Thanksgiving Day morning “leg stretcher,” attended by 20 people. Also in November, banjo performers Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn donated the net proceeds from their HSU Center Arts concert to FOAM—nearly $1800.

On New Year’s Day, Elliott Dabill led a King Tide Tour at the Arcata Marsh.

In February, volunteers tabled on behalf of FOAM at the HSU Career Expo & Volunteer Fair.

In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon Society, FOAM sponsored the 15th Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Some 795 entries were received from grades K12 throughout Humboldt County. Thirty-nine cash prizes and 28 honorable mentions were awarded at Godwit Days in April.

In April, FOAM continued its participation in the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival. Approximately 50 children plus their parents took part in FOAM’s free family nature activities. David Couch and George Ziminsky led a combo bird walk/wastewater treatment plant tour. FOAM volunteers staffed a table in the vendor area and hung bird art entries.


(continued on p. 6)
In July, FOAM hosted a formal unveiling of the outdoor amphitheater that was partially underwritten by funds raised during our capital campaign. Following a blessing, Wiyot tribal chair/cultural director Juwaksh Ted Hernandez gave a talk on how Wiyot dances and ceremonies were reawakened after the 1860 massacre in Eureka.

In August, volunteers tabled on behalf of FOAM at the HSU Volunteer Fair.

**Marsh and Wildlife Through the Eyes of Local Artists:** Since December 1998, FOAM has sponsored art and photography shows at the Interpretive Center that are representative of the scenery, plants, birds, and animals that inhabit the Marsh and Humboldt Bay. This past year, Joan Sikkens, Paul Rickard, Carlos Salas, Gary Bloomfield, and Student Bird Art Contest winners were featured. Alex Stillman scheduled and hung most of the bimonthly shows.

**Publicity & Communication:** We would like to thank newspapers, radio and TV stations, and online websites for helping us get the message out about our weekly tours, monthly art exhibits and lectures, and other special events at the Marsh. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND.

In May, FOAM initiated a quarterly radio show on KHSU, as part of the Northcoast Environmental Center’s weekly EcoNews Report. The first two half-hour shows, hosted by George Ziminsky, featured Sharon Levy’s Marsh book and RCAA’s ongoing salt marsh restoration/Spartina removal at the Marsh.

**City Relations:** In October, January, February, and September, FOAM co-sponsored invasive plant work days at the Marsh.

- FOAM bought another DogiPot bag dispenser/trash can unit.
- FOAM again underwrote half the cost of reprinting the Butcher’s Slough Interpretive Trail brochure.
- FOAM co-sponsored publication of an Arcata Marsh District map.
- FOAM funded two “Volunteer of the Year” awards, presented to Bill Prescott and Kate Sequeira.
- FOAM had an Arcata Marsh souvenir patch featuring Gary Bloomfield’s marsh wren logo manufactured to sell in the bookstore.

Brett Watson replaced Michael Winkler as FOAM’s representative from the Arcata City Council.

**Membership:** As of August 31, FOAM had 172 members, 84 of which were Life Members and 4 were Honorary Life Members. [NOTE: Three Life Members are deceased and 11 have an undeliverable address.]

**Fiscal Accounts:** As of August 31, FOAM had a checking account balance of $33,233.55. [NOTE: $2,697.39 of that amount is earmarked for Phase II of the Marsh amphitheater.] FOAM also had $12,712.66 in a fund set up at the Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF). Expenditures totaled $15,730.56 and revenues totaled $12,836.38. The largest expenditures incurred in the past year were for the outdoor amphitheater [$7,851.51 from Capital Campaign funds], producing merchandise to sell, insurance, and UPWIND printing and mailing. Revenue sources were membership dues ($6,688), donations ($4,605.69), and merchandise sales ($1,542.65). FOAM also earned $1,110.61 in interest/dividends/capital gains on its HAF Fund between 7/1/17 and 6/30/18 (minus management fees of $231.58).

**Board of Directors:** Four current Board Members (Stan Binnie, David Couch, Cindy Kuttner, Bill Prescott) will be continuing. Two current Board members (Katy Allen, Elliott Dabill) are running for another term. Two others (Mark Wilson, Richard Brown) are running to confirm their appointments. Three new candidates (Maria Friedman, Cosette McCave, Jean Santi) are running. Alex Stillman and Jane Wilson are leaving the Board.

— Elliott Dabill, President
bring community and science together. Since Black saw that there was a need to study otters in Humboldt County, he began to think of ways to accomplish that task. He started with the successful citizen science project, Seen Otters, a program that encourages people to report otter sightings.

It's important to know the difference between sea and river otters. Here are a couple of simple characteristics to tell these two apart by their looks. Sea otters tend to have rounder faces. River otters' faces are a rectangular shape. Their ears are also slightly different. Sea otters have rounded ears, compared to the river otters' pointy, triangular ones.

At the September FOAM lecture, Black unveiled his new plan for otter outreach via the North Coast Public Art Initiative. During a trip to England, he was inspired by the Moor Otter project, an artistic way to raise funds and awareness for our furry friends. Three-foot-tall otter sculptures popped up all over the country, uniquely painted by commissioned artists. Black's own sculpture, purchased for a little more than $1,000, showed up at our talk. He plans to get stores, schools, and centers to sponsor artists who would paint similar otter sculptures for display. To have one show up in your space, contact the North Coast Public Art Initiative at www.otter-art.humboldt.edu.

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY ARTIST**

**JOSÉ QUEZADA**

I have lived and worked in Humboldt County for 47 years. I am a freelance photo journalist for the Eureka Times-Standard, after retiring from 28 years of managing workforce programs and supervising vocational counselors for Humboldt County. I helped start the first Head Start preschool here, spending eight years working with children and families after attending Humboldt State University. I and my wife Heather Shelton have begun our 11th year singing and dancing with parents and their babies with our business, North Coast Music Together.

Other than taking one class from Juan Freixas at Swanlund's Camera in Eureka, I am a self-taught photographer. I draw inspiration from my brother Roberto, who's "the real photographer in our family." I recently started two websites that highlight my work and that of other local freelance photographers (www.humLook.com and www.humSport.com).

I will host a free public reception on Sunday, February 3, between 12:30 and 3 pm.

**Thanks to Our Supporters, August-October 2018**

- Best Friends ($100+): John & Julia DeMartini; Robin Rusk; Don Staudenmaier; Berti Welty & Jo Weisgerber
- Sponsors ($50-99): Lorraine Dillon & Mike Metro, Jr; Bob Peck; Bill & Carolyn Prescott
- Friends ($18-49): Margaret Abels; Chris & Richard Beresford; Stan Binnie & Kim Tays; Karen Cunningham (Coos Bay, OR); Katherine Davenport*; Betsy Elkinton & Brett Vivyan; Lynn Hornecker*; Nancy Ihara; Cindy Kuttner; David Ledger (Redding); Jim Lennon; Cosette McCave*; Anne Merryfield; Karolyn Merz; Christine O’Kelly*; Debra Pecaut*; Beverly Post; Barbara Reisman
- Donations: Khashayar Boodjeh & Melissa Bukosky, $250; Nicole & Thomas Hartigan, $200, as a wedding donation for Matty & Michelle; Richard & Carol Laursen, $100; Truist, $52.50 (from Costco United Way Campaign); Lorraine Miller-Wolf, $50 in honor of Tom & Katy Allen; Bill Thompson & Jane Riggan, $50; Anne Saplin, $10, to recognize the “wonderful Marsh tour by Elliott Dabill.”

* = New member.
Mark Your Calendar for:

HPS Dog Waste Cleanup, Nov 10
Riley Quarles Art Reception, Nov 11
Marine Protected Areas Lecture, Nov 16
Thanksgiving Morning Walk, Nov 22
HPS Dog Waste Cleanup, Dec 8
FOAM Pints for Nonprofits Fundraiser, Dec 12

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____________________________________________________________________________
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,

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.