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... Thanksgiving Day Tour... Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Lunch... Board Member Appointed... Silent Auction for Marsh Print... TACO Day Report... Pastels on the Plaza... What’s New at the Marsh... Dog Brochure Reprinted... Wastewater Treatment System Update Lecture... Annual Report... Artist Statements... Visitor Information... Calendar... Supporters

### Upcoming Lectures

On Friday, December 20, join College of the Redwoods biology professor Maria Morrow for her reading of a seasonal tale, “The Amanita Before Christmas.” As the winter solstice approaches, we bring trees inside and presents begin popping up under them like little mushrooms. Stories of a man who comes down the chimney and rides away on flying reindeer fill our hearts with cheer instead of fear. Maria will provide one possible explanation for these strange behaviors to the tune of a classic poem. Join FOAM for a whimsical and educational telling of “The Amanita Before Christmas”. Hot cider and cookies will be provided; bring your own mug/cup. [Disclaimer: As with any mycology talk, there may be a bit of blasphemy and some mention of illicit activities.]

On Friday, January 17, Damon Goodman of the US Fish & Wildlife Service will reprise his fascinating lecture on lampreys.

On Friday, March 20, HSU biology professor Sean Craig will speak about mudflats and tidal flows.

Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, call (707) 826-2359.

### Turkey Day Exercise

Join Jenny Hanson and Alex Stillman on FOAM’s 20th 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 them on the Interpretive Center front deck at 10 am on Thursday, November 28 (center will be OPEN for the holiday).

### 2019-20 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**

Richard Brown  
Paul Johnson  
Lynn Jones  
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, September 29, FOAM held its 26th annual meeting and volunteer appreciation lunch at the Interpretive Center. More than 30 people came to enjoy an albacore barbecue lunch by David Couch, with FOAM Board members providing side dishes.

FOAM treasurer Sue Leskiw presented Volunteer of the Year awards to Virginia Jimenez for her 88 hours of front desk staffing and to Elliott Dabill for his 60 hours of Marsh tour leading during 2018 (and many additional hours over previous years), FOAM Board service since 2006 (president since fall 2015), docent mentoring, sporadic lecturing, and helping with special events.

Sue also recognized the contributions of some other volunteers: Humboldt Pet Supply, for sponsoring dog waste clean-up events at the Marsh; Cindy Kuttner, for advocating for more dog waste disposal containers, as well as for emptying the cans that City staff don’t handle (aided by Tom Allen and Pam Brown); Pete Haggard, for contributing many hours to keep the native plant garden in front of the Interpretive Center from being overrun with grass; and Bill Prescott (120 hours) and Al Wolski (88 hours) for their stints staffing the welcome desk.

Selection committee chair Tom Leskiw presented the sixth annual Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year award to White-eyed Vireo, which was spotted by Rob Fowler on June 24, 2019. This was only the second Humboldt County record for this species and the first for the Marsh. The runner-up species was a Yellow-green Vireo, found by Rob Fowler on October 4, 2018. This sighting was also a first Marsh record.

Elliott reviewed highlights of the 2018/19 Annual Report (see pages 5&6). David Couch, Lynn Jones, and Cindy Kuttner were elected to the Board.

Board Member Appointed

At the October FOAM Board meeting, Paul Johnson was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Maria Friedman. He recently completed docent training and already has led several Marsh tours, with a focus on photography.

Paul graduated from HSU in 1970 with a BS in Natural Resources, then returned in 1976 for a year of graduate work, earning his MS in 1980. He has worked as a ranger, naturalist, and field researcher in a variety of California state parks, retiring in 2014 after 43 years in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. An avid photographer throughout his working life, he has taught photography for Eastman Kodak and community colleges in San Diego County. In his “other life,” Paul collects antique and ancient beads, making them into jewelry he sells.

Paul finds the transformation of the Arcata Marsh to be a unique and fascinating story. “I am so impressed that this beautiful new natural treasure was born out of the passion of a few far-sighted folks who wanted to find a better way to process sewer water! I feel deeply fortunate to have the opportunity to observe and help protect what is essentially the rapid ecological succession of a brand new natural area taking place on what was, just a few years ago, bare dirt.”

A Humboldt Pet Supply staffer shows off FOAM’s certificate of appreciation for the firm’s sponsorship of Arcata Marsh dog poop clean-up activities and public education efforts about the dangers of canine feces. Photo by Sue Leskiw.
Silent Auction for Marsh Print

Mark Siemens generously donated a 35” by 27” framed silkscreen print entitled “Sanctuary” to FOAM. The artwork of egrets at the Arcata Marsh (complete with a power tower in the background) was created by Blue Lake artist Robert Filby in 1993. Since the Interpretive Center is owned by the City, FOAM does not have a place to display the piece. So, the donor has agreed to let FOAM sell it. The starting bid is $125. If you would like to bid on the art, please email sueleskiw1@gmail.com with the amount. The highest bidder as of 5 pm on Friday, December 13 will receive the piece. The winner is responsible for picking up the item. The artwork can be viewed in the AMIC back office.

TACO Day Enjoyed by Many

By Sue Leskiw

Thanks to funding provided by FOAM, Take a Child Outside (TACO) Day returned to the Marsh this fall. The free event was held on October 5 from 11 am to 3 pm. It featured activity stations both inside the Interpretive Center and set up along the Log Pond loop trail. This nature exploration event for families and teachers also allowed local science-oriented organizations and agencies to showcase their programs and resources. Nearly 200 people checked in at the welcome table to experience environmental education offerings from 18 nonprofit organizations and government entities.

FOAM offered both an inside and outside nature activity. Elliott Dabill and Mark Wilson staffed a microscope set up on the floating dock to examine pond water samples. Katy Allen, Cindy Kuttner, Ila Osborn, and Deborah Watson volunteered at an indoor table where children could decorate clay Marsh critter ornaments as they received a fun fact sheet about their chosen organism.

Besides FOAM, participating organizations were 4 R Planet (waste reduction game), ASK ME (Art & Science for Kids Interested in Media & Education—backyard botany), Bureau of Land Management (Seabird Project), California State Parks, Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center (water safety), Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Humboldt Waste Management Authority, HSU Natural History Museum (skulls, scat, animal signs), Nature Joe’s (animals, adaptations), Northcoast Environmental Center (watershed model, cigarette fish), Redwood Chapter of Environmental Educators & Interpreters (“Talk about Trees”), Redwood Community Action Agency, Redwood National & State Parks, Redwood Region Audubon Society (birdwatching, bird beaks), Save the Redwoods League, Schatz Energy Research Center (solar-powered gadgets), Scrap Humboldt, and Sequoia Park Zoo (iNaturalist, animal tracks).

TACO Day participant shows off her checklist. Photo by Allison Poklemba.

Meguire Bartosz with her drawing of a pair of Cinnamon Teal. Photo by Casse Weaver.
What’s New at the Marsh

By George Ziminsky

» Renee Thibodeau has formally joined the AMIC staff. (She was previously “on loan” from the City’s Recreation Department, until the new staff position was filled.)

» City Recreation Supervisor Heather Schmidt will revisit her interpretive naturalist roots by offering programs for younger children at AMIC. “Nature’s Gifts,” on Sunday, December 8 from 3 to 4 pm, will include story reading and making bird-seed ornaments. A monthly program, “Budding Naturalist,” for youth ages 3 to 5 will begin next spring. Participants, accompanied by a caretaker, will explore and learn about Marsh animals and ecosystems, through stories, arts, crafts, guided walks, and more. Information on participating can be found in the Recreation Division Winter/Spring brochure (out in early December) or at www.cityofarcata.org/Rec.

» Populations of shorebirds and waterfowl have been building up as expected this fall, with most of the usual suspects, such as Eurasian Wigeon, already making appearances. Celebrity birds included a Blackburnian Warbler and Orchard Oriole enjoyed by many observers and a Painted Bunting only seen (and photographed) by the original observer. David Fix’s diligent hawk-watchers have turned up a few migrating Broad-winged Hawks, Northern Mockingbird, Northern Shrike, and a lingering Tropical Kingbird also stand out.

Dog Brochure Reprinted

By Sue Leskiw

In 2017, Friends of the Dunes created a brochure, “Enjoying Humboldt’s Wild Places with Your Dog,” that informed people where they could take their dogs in nearby natural areas. When the initial print run was exhausted, FOAM stepped up with $500 to print an updated brochure. After reviewing the previous version, I submitted several rounds of updates and corrections to be incorporated into the new brochure.

The heart of the brochure is a map that stretches from Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park in the north, to Shelter Cove in the south, and east to Garberville. Areas are color coded to delineate places where no dogs are allowed, where dogs must always be leashed, and where dogs can be off leash when under voice control, either seasonally or year-round.

Other sections of the brochure list contact information for land managers; points of dog etiquette; and examples of how various birds, mammals, and amphibians—including the federally threatened Snowy Plover—can be adversely affected by uncontrolled canines.

The free brochure, already available at the Marsh Interpretive Center, will be distributed to local visitor centers, pet and outdoor stores, and veterinary offices.

Wastewater Update

By Cindy Kuttner

On November 15, City of Arcata employees Doby Class (Special Project Engineer) and Mark Andre (Director of Environmental Services) explained the upgrades coming to Arcata’s Wastewater Treatment Plant at the Marsh.

After months of negotiations with the state, a 5-year permit was signed on October 18. Arcata’s original goals for modernizing the plant were 1) eliminating concentrated chlorine, 2) replacing aged equipment, and 3) adding more habitat for the federally endangered Tide-water Goby fish. All these goals are met by the new permit: chlorine will be replaced with ultraviolet (UV) disinfection, water flow through the marshes will be increased, and old concrete structures will be renewed.

The updates also include long-term plans for sea-level rise. Changes to the plant will stay within its current flow and footprint. The model also supports the biology of the Marsh.

The current process of wastewater treatment is this: Initially, wastewater goes through the various treatment plant processes, then flows through oxidation ponds 1 and 2, then through the treatment marshes, then back to the plant for chlorination, then through Allen-Gearhart-Hauser ponds, then back to the plant for more chlorination, then discharge into Butcher Slough and the Bay.

The completed upgrades will replace chlorination with UV cleaning, send water through the marsh complex once, and then discharge into Brackish Pond and McDaniel Slough.

Phase 0 will start in spring 2020 with mechanical updates to the oxidation and treatment ponds. Phase 1 is set to begin mid to late summer with updating the plant and adding the UV component. Phase 2 is slated for 2020-22 with the building of a mechanical oxidation ditch.

Basically, the completed update of our wastewater treatment plant will trade the current natural/chemical system for a natural/mechanical system. Although there will be structural changes to the ponds during this process, they will remain and be biologically monitored. The cost will be over $60 million, paid in part with grants, loans, and City savings.

The lecture audience had lots of questions about the changes coming to the plant, the wetlands, and the birds. Doby and Mark made sure they addressed our questions. For more information, details, and scheduling, visit www.cityofarcata.org, search on “Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan June 2016,” and click on “Wastewater Treatment Facilities Improvement Project.”
2018/19 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 9/29/19)

**Tours:** Some 15,133 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2018 and August 2019, down 1,204 from the previous 12-month period. Some participated in the weekly 2 pm tours and “slower-speed” tours offered rain or shine by FOAM docents. FOAM also provided docents for 19 special-request group tours. Mary Ann Madej and John DeMartini took over the Slower Speed tours from Jane Wilson, giving the walks a plant and watershed focus. Naturalist Alexa DeJoannis initiated weekly Friday night twilight tours at the Marsh on June 12, ending the series on August 30.

**Education:** FOAM’s free lecture series, coordinated by Jane Wilson, continued, with presentations by Dane St. George on Barn Owls; Marnin Robbins on Marine Protected Areas; Alexa DeJoannis on Snowy Plovers; Elliott Dabill on dinosaurs and global warming; John DeMartini on freshwater Marsh critters Andrea Tuttle on South Georgia Island; Damon Goodman on lampreys; Jessica Coming on the Watershed Stewards Program and salmon restoration; and Jeff Black on “North Coast Otters” (merging citizen art and science).

In March, for the 14th year, FOAM funded awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair. First prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Sean Coontz, a 7th-grader at Jacoby Creek School, for his project comparing the amount of microfiber discharges to Humboldt Bay from the Arcata and Eureka wastewater treatment plants. Second prize was awarded to Caley Miller, an 8th-grader at Kneeland School, for her 2-year study of salinity tolerance of freshwater algae at the Arcata Marsh. Third prize went to the team of Charlotte Brands and Stella Pepper, 6th-graders at Pacific Union School, for their examination of using bioswales to filter polluted water.

FOAM contributed $500 toward reprinting the Friends of the Dunes brochure on natural areas to take dogs in Humboldt County.

FOAM underwrote six HSU wildlife students to attend the keynote lecture on birds and cats at Godwit Days.

**Public Events:** FOAM presented its fifth Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year awards at its September 29 Annual Meeting. The winner was Cassin’s Sparrow, discovered by Noah Sanday. The runner-up award went to Barred Owl, spotted by Rob Fowler.

In October, Humboldt Pet Supply celebrated one year of sponsoring dog poop cleanups at the Marsh. FOAM sponsored a square at Pastels on the Plaza, executed by the team of Amaya Bechler and Meguire Bartosz (both Student Bird Art Contest winners), from a Wood Duck design created by Leslie Scopes Anderson.

In November, Jane Wilson led FOAM’s 19th Thanksgiving Day morning “leg stretcher,” attended by five people who braved the rain.

In December, FOAM held a successful Pints for Nonprofits fundraiser at our South G Street neighbor, Redwood Curtain Brewing Company, that included a bake sale and silent art auction. Also in December, Elliott Dabill and Arcata city planner David Loya led a King Tide Tour at the 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 16th Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Some 910 entries were received from grades K12 throughout Humboldt County. Forty-one cash prizes and 31 honorable mentions were awarded at Godwit Days in April.

(continued on p. 6)
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 and Katy Allen led a kids’ bird walk at the Marsh. FOAM volunteers staffed a table in the vendor area and hung bird art entries.

In June, FOAM volunteers tabled at the Sand Sculpture Festival hosted by Friends of the Dunes.

In July, for the first time since 2012, FOAM resurrected its 2-day docent training, with 16 people completing the sessions.

**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, David Schumaker, Riley Quarles, Joe Quezada, the Plein Air Painters, Paul Rickard, the Representational Art League, and Student Bird Art Contest winners were featured. Alex Stillman, then Jean Santi, scheduled and hung most of the bimonthly shows. FOAM contributed $500 to Dr. Jeff Black’s “North Coast Otters” science and art program, in order to host an otter sculpture at the Interpretive Center next year.

**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.

**City Relations:** FOAM co-sponsored three invasive plant removal/trash pickup work days at the Marsh. FOAM underwrote half the cost of reprinting the general Arcata Marsh brochure. FOAM funded two “Volunteer of the Year” awards, presented to Al Wolski and Jane Wilson. Pete Haggard continued his yeoman work on the native plant garden in front of the Interpretive Center.

Brett Watson continued as FOAM’s representative from the Arcata City Council.

**Membership:** As of August 31, FOAM had 180 members, 93 of whom are Life Members. [NOTE: Twenty-five of the Life Members are either deceased or have an undeliverable address.]

**Fiscal Accounts:** As of August 31, FOAM had a checking account balance of $33,939.27. [NOTE: $2,697.39 of that amount is earmarked for Phase II of the Marsh amphitheater.] As of 6/30/19, FOAM also had $13,093.61 in a fund set up at the Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF).

Expenditures totaled $11,601.88 and revenues totaled $12,308.50. The largest expenditures incurred in the past year were for 1) producing merchandise to sell, 2) cost-sharing with the City of Arcata to replace vandalized interpretive signs and reprint Marsh brochures, 3) insurance, and 4) UPWIND printing and mailing. Revenue sources were membership dues ($5,111), donations ($4,579.35), merchandise sales ($1,534.01), reimbursements ($504.84), and docent training fees ($315). FOAM also earned $612.50 in interest/dividends/capital gains on its HAF Fund between 7/1/18 and 6/30/19 (minus management fees of $231.55).

**Board of Directors:** Eight current Board Members (Katy Allen, Rick Brown, Elliott Dabill, Maria Friedman, Cosette McCave, Bill Prescott, Jean Santi, Mark Wilson) will be continuing, two (David Couch, Cindy Kuttner) are running for another term, and one new candidate (Lynn Jones) is running. Stan Binnie is leaving the Board.

— Elliott Dabill, President
Calendar of Events

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

November/December—Nature photographs by Stilson Snow
November 15—Wastewater Treatment Plant Update lecture by Doby Class & Mark Andre, 7:30 pm
November 28—Thanksgiving Morning Ramble, 10 am (see p. 1)
December 12—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm
December 13—Deadline to bid on Marsh art (see p. 3)
December 20—“The Amanita Before Christmas” lecture by Maria (Friedman) Morrow, 7:30 pm (see p. 1)

January/February—Artwork by Gary Bloomfield
January 9—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm
January 17—Lamprey lecture by Damon Goodman, 7:30 pm (see p. 1)

Visitor Information

Since our last issue, visitors to the Interpretive Center have hailed from nine foreign countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, England, France, Germany, South Korea, and Wales) and 27 states (Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and Wyoming).

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER ARTIST

STILSON SNOW

My first camera was a Brownie pinhole that I got when I was 10. My parents drove to Palm Springs and on the way we stopped at an overlook. I saw the pattern of the smooth, black road winding down the mountain, dipping, curving, disappearing, and reappearing amidst the rugged desert landscape. It looked cool. It was more than a road. I took my first picture. I still have it. Since then, I have had a decades-long, intense relationship with photography.

My images hope to speak to that need to see more of what is: from opulent feathers, to mystical stone, to a solitude. We are metaphoric beings. The way we see our surroundings helps us to develop and convey an inner sense of deep and meaningful mystery. Author Joan Didion speaks of the importance of acknowledging the “shimmer” around objects—that glimmer of a different, deeper meaning. She describes an artistic quest to discover its inner “grammar.” Like Didion, I look for the magic in the world’s elements, to try and find the “grammar in the shimmer.”

I can be reached at clearpix@suddenlink.net and www.stilson-snow.com

JANUARY/FEBRUARY ARTIST

GARY BLOOMFIELD

My show, focusing on “The Illustrative Process,” will include some rough stages of one or more illustration jobs, as well as some ink and/or watercolor pieces.

As a wildlife illustrator, I work primarily in ink and/or transparent watercolor. I have a bachelor’s degree in scientific illustration from Humboldt State. My published work appears in educational coloring books; brochures, pamphlets, posters, maps, interpretive signs and displays, and educational and non-fiction books. My designs also can be seen on numerous T-shirts

I did not start actively birding until I was nine, but since then, I’ve been an avid birder and occasional field ornithologist. I have called Arcata home since 1980.

I enjoy putting extensive research into my work: from personal observation in the field (birding, sketching, and photographing) to comprehensive library, museum, and internet delving.

I can be reached at (707) 362-1226; bloomfieldstudio@me.com. My web portfolio can be viewed at www.flickr.com/photos/bloomfieldstudio/albums/72157642703538265.

Thanks to Our Supporters, August through mid-November 2019

» Best Friends ($100+): John & Julia DeMartini; Cynthia & Jon Forsyth*
   James Harding; Sharon Levy; Rich Ridenhour; Robin Rusk; Don Staudemaier
   » Sponsor ($50-99): Diane Ryerson & Walt Paniak
   » Friends ($18-49): Abels Family; Colette Beaupre*; Katherine Davenport; Lorraine Davis*; Betsy Elkinton & Brett Vivyan; Margaret Flemmer*; Lynn Hornecker*; Nancy Ibara; David Ledger (Redding); James Lennon; Colette McCave; Bobbie McKay & Beth Wingfield*; Anne Merryfield; Sue & Jim Moore*; Rita Orlandini*; Debra Pecaut; Matthew Prescott*; Barbara Reisman; Judith Wendling
   » Donations: Life Member Milt Boyd, $200; John & Julia DeMartini, $50; Mark Siemens, framed silkscreen print “Sanctuary” (see p. 3); Sonja Schultz-Huff, pair of binoculars; AMIC donation box, $203.  * = New member

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Mark Your Calendar for:

Thanksgiving Morning Meander, Nov 28
Deadline for Bidding on Marsh Art, Dec 13
“The Amanita Before Christmas” Lecture, Dec 20
Lamprey Lecture, Jan 17

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,

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.