



UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh
Interpretive Center
Vol 27, #2, Spring/Sum 2020

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: Board Candidates Sought... When Will AMIC Reopen??... Signs Spruced Up... Joint Cat/Bird Project with Audubon... Camper Binoculars Purchased... Board Candidate Application Form... DoggiPot News... 2019 Humboldt County Bird of the Year Found at Marsh... Student Bird Art Contest Winners... The Good, the Bad & the Ugly at the Marsh... Calendar... Members & Donors

Why Wouldn't YOU Make a Good FOAM Board Member?

We are looking for one FOAM member (or a person willing to join the organization) who care about the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary and would like to translate that feeling into action. If you've wondered about a new way that you can help the Marsh, here's your opportunity! Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings and volunteer at least 4 hours/month (see page 3).

FOAM has a small membership base on which to draw. You'd be working with a great group of people to improve a place we all love. Please call me at 502-5080 to find out more.

P.S. Board applications are due by Friday, August 14.

Elliott Dabill

Still Unknown When AMIC Will Reopen

By Sue Leskiw

We have been unable to get an update from the City of Arcata, but know that there are no plans to reopen the Interpretive Center to the general public until after Marsh camps finish for the summer (August 21).

FOAM is assuming that the Center will not be open for large gatherings any time soon and is planning to hold its annual meeting virtually via Zoom. The selected date is Sunday, September 13. Details on how to participate will be included in the FOAM election mailing in mid-August. Sorry we can't transmit Dave Couch's famous barbecued albacore at the volunteer recognition lunch over the Internet!

We also have no information about when FOAM's docent-led Saturday afternoon tours will resume.

Board members Rick Brown and Mark Wilson collaborated to Zoom a lecture on odd local wildlife diseases on July 17, but when this issue went to press, no lecture had been scheduled for August.

We are hoping to have the winners of the 2019 Student Bird Art

Contest (see article, p. 5) on display at AMIC during September and October.

Sprucing up Marsh Signs

By Lynn Jones

While the Marsh trails were being appreciated by crowds of walkers, runners, bikers, and birders enjoying spring, the closed Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center (AMIC) was get-

ting a facelift. The City of Arcata got busy cleaning and gardening, but the weather-worn signs at both the parking lot and the Center cried out for refurbishing. Repainting was the perfect job for me: I was now at home all day, every day, and I had an excuse to paint and be outside!

The original Great Blue Herons among the cattails have been freshened up and rehung at the South G Street parking lot entrance, await-

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2019-20 Board of Directors & Officers

Officers

President: Elliott Dabill

Vice-President: David Couch

Secretary: Katy Allen

Treasurer: Sue Leskiw (*Ex Officio*; also UPWIND Editor)

Other Board Members

Rick Brown

Paul Johnson

Lynn Jones

Cindy Kuttner

Cosette McCave

Bill Prescott

Jean Santi

Mark Wilson

Website: www.arcatamarshfriends.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Friends.of.the.Arcata.Marsh



*Repainted Marsh welcome signs.
Photo by Lynn Jones.*

ing AMIC's eventual reopening—literally, as I've finished repainting the "open" signs, too!

Cat/Bird Committee

By Katy Allen

A year ago this month, a joint committee comprised of Redwood Region Audubon Society and FOAM Board members was formed. This was in response to alarming studies showing a drastic decline in song-bird populations due, in part, to free-roaming cat predation. The goal of the committee was to search for ways to inform our local community of this threat and suggest ways to ameliorate it.

The committee has met once a month since July 2019. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, we had planned a springtime "Catio Tour." A catio is an outdoor enclosure that can provide a domestic cat with the experience of being outdoors but without the threat to wildlife. We had planned visits to many, quite varied examples, most designed and made by the cats' owners. Needless to say, this tour is now on hold. There soon will be, however, video clips of some of these sites on the RRAS website. (Look under the dropdown Activities section for the "Cats Indoors" page at www.rras.org.)

The committee also has distributed pamphlets created by the American Bird Conservancy to all pet stores in the Humboldt Bay area that describe the problem of out-

door cats and suggest solutions. Another focus has been on the City of Eureka's proposed rewrite of its domestic animal ordinances. These are now on hold, but when they are brought up again, our committee is poised to present suggestions for the section on cats.

Below is a copy of the committee's mission statement:

REDWOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY with FRIENDS OF THE ARCATA MARSH

CATS & BIRDS COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Audubon and Friends Cats & Birds Committee to end predation by free-ranging cats on birds and other wildlife in public and private spaces, and to advocate for humane and responsible ownership of cats.

Steps toward fulfilling the above mission may include:

1. Recognizing that cats as pets have a long association with humans, and that responsible cat owners are to be commended and encouraged to continue caring for them in a way that benefits the cats, themselves, the public, and wildlife.
2. Supporting educational programs and materials that provide scientific information on the adverse effects on feral and un-owned cats of living outdoors, and that call on pet owners to keep cats indoors, in outdoor enclosures, or on a leash.
3. Offering printed brochures, articles and other informational materials at interpretive centers, pet stores, our monthly programs, and other suitable locations.
4. Supporting the passage and enforcement of local ordinances that would prohibit the feeding of feral or un-owned cats, or the release of feral or un-owned cats other than to a cattery or other area designed for their confinement and that prevents predation on wildlife.
5. Supporting the passage and enforcement of local ordinances that would prohibit the maintenance of "managed" (trap/neuter/release) free-ranging cat colonies or any other situation that allows cats to range freely.
6. Providing information to the public about the threat of cat-borne diseases to the health of humans and other animals.
7. Providing information online about responsible cat ownership resources and local spay/neuter and adoption programs that do not release cats to the outdoors.

3/20/20

FOAM Purchases Binoculars for Marsh Camps

By Sue Leskiw

At the beginning of June, FOAM received a request from the City of Arcata asking if we would be willing to purchase an additional six pairs of kiddie binoculars for the upcoming summer Marsh camp sessions. City staff noted that when they inventoried camp supplies, they found only six pairs of working, child-sized binoculars, whereas 12 participants

were expected. To be COVID-compliant, there should be no sharing of binoculars between campers. "This City's budget is extremely limited due to COVID or we would look at purchasing them ourselves," stated Environmental Services Deputy Director Julie Neander.

FOAM president Elliott Dabill asked me to research children's binoculars online and forward him recommendations to consider at the June 11 Board meeting. I visit-

(continued on p. 4)

**Application for Membership on the FOAM Board of Directors
for a 3-year term beginning October 2020**

FOAM bylaws allow for individuals to request nomination for election to the Board of Directors. The election will be held by mailed ballot prior to the Annual Meeting. Information about nominees will be sent to all members in early September as part of the Call to the Annual Membership Meeting process. **To insure inclusion in the membership mailing, this form must be received by Friday, August 14.**

Questions? Contact Elliott Dabill at 502-5080, e-mail edabill@me.com.

1. I would like to be a candidate for the Board of Directors for a 3-year term beginning in October 2020.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home/cell) _____ e-mail _____

2. I have read and do accept the provisions of the “Specific Duties of Board Members” below:

- ▶ Attend the monthly meeting of the Board of Directors and actively participate in its decision-making process.
- ▶ Complete the paperwork and training to become a City of Arcata volunteer within 3 months of taking office.
- ▶ Commit to at least four (4) hours a month of additional activities, which can include staffing the Interpretive Center, leading tours, and/or participating on at least one committee or special project.
- ▶ Participate to the extent possible toward the success of public events that promote the Marsh.
- ▶ Assist with fundraising by making a personal donation so as to be a current member of FOAM and solicit donations from friends and individuals known to support our goals.

3. Candidate statement: Suggested content — What is your vision for the Marsh, your area of active interest in the Marsh, any related background/expertise? (Continue on separate sheet if needed.)

**Snail mail to Sue Leskiw at 155 Kara Ln, McKinleyville CA 95519 or
scan and e-mail to sueleskiw1@gmail.com. Deadline for receipt: Friday, August 14.**

(Binoculars, continued from p. 2)



Campers using FOAM-donated binoculars. Photo by Isabella Norton.

ed several birdwatching and family outdoor websites and sent Elliott the results. The Board voted to purchase 12 pairs of binoculars, with a spending limit of \$400.

I ordered highly rated 8x21 compact binoculars—four each of pink, green, and blue exteriors—from Think Peak Toys, which offered a lifetime replacement warranty on the items. A couple of days into the camp session, one counselor reported that “So far, the binoculars have been awesome! They are kid friendly and have pretty good magnification. Thank you so much for purchasing them, we really appreciate it!”

However, a few days later, AMIC staffer George Ziminsky relayed that “there has been one casualty—a broken-off eyepiece. The side used to adjust to the user’s eyes was probably turned too hard beyond range. Counselors now stress GENTLY adjusting the eyepiece.” I contacted Think Peak Toys and the owner responded “I can send a new one, no problem.” And she did, with the new pair arriving a few days later at no expense to FOAM. Hooray for a true lifetime replacement warranty!

DoggiPot News

By Cindy Kuttner

Since COVID-19 struck, City of Arcata staff have been servicing the DoggiPots previously stocked and cleaned by volunteers. We volunteers are grateful for them stepping in.

An ongoing problem has been that folks use the DoggiPots, which are small and meant for bags of poop,

to dispose of regular trash: lunches and their containers and lots of cans and bottles. Needless to say, these inappropriate uses defeat the purpose of the small containers. Folks should carry out their own trash for recycling or disposal. To remedy this problem, the City has locked the lids so they only will permit bags of poop to be stowed. FOAM hopes that Marsh dogwalkers will respect the purpose of the DoggiPot stations.

Our South G Street neighbor Humboldt Pet Supply has stepped up again, offering a COVID-careful way for folks to clean up the Marsh. On July 25, volunteers could pick up bags and scoopers at HPS, then bring their trash collections back to the store for weighing. The heaviest collection received a prize. Check out Humboldt Pet Supply’s Facebook page for further events.



Newly locked DoggiPot. Photo by George Ziminsky.

Contenders for 2019 HumCo Bird Found at Arcata Marsh

By Sue Leskiw

In 2019, four of the five finalists for Humboldt County Bird of the Year were discovered at the Arcata Marsh!

The winner was White-eyed Vireo, a second County record, discovered at the Butcher Slough Log Pond on June 21, 2019 by bird guide Rob Fowler. The usual range for this songbird is the southeastern U.S. Rob had headed for the Marsh after George Ziminsky notified him about the first Marsh record Great Horned Owl seen there. Upon finding the vireo, Rob reported it to Humboldt Birders Facebook Messenger (with some expletives). Minutes later,



Rob Fowler with HumCo Bird of the Year plaque, at site where he found the White-eyed Vireo. Photo by Tom Leskiw.

other birders arrived, including the finders of the owl. The vireo stuck around for three days and was included on 17 submitted eBird checklists.

The 2019 Runner-ups

The species garnering second place was Trumpeter Swan (six of them!) that were seen on November 30 by Mark and Lucas Stephenson, Amaya Bechler, and Lucas Corneliusen. This was only the second photo-confirmed Humboldt County record for this large bird—which averages 23 pounds, 5 feet in length, with an 80-inch wingspan!—and a first Marsh record. Wintering Trumpeter Swans are usually found in coastal Alaska and along the west coast of Canada.

Kentucky Warbler and Worm-eating Warbler represented two of the remaining Top Five “Best Birds” for 2019. Gary Bloomfield recorded a Kentucky Warbler singing on June 2, only the fourth Humboldt record for this notoriously skulky bird that more properly belongs in the eastern U.S., as far west as central Texas. Gary didn’t get to see the bird but his recording was accepted by the state bird records committee.

A Worm-eating Warbler, found on November 11, was a fifth Humboldt and first Marsh record. The bird stuck around for a long time, with 161 observers filing eBird reports, with the last submitted March 23 by the original finder. Its usual range is the eastern U.S., as far west as eastern Texas.

Results of 17th Annual Student Bird Art Contest

By Sue Leskiw, Contest Coordinator

In this year of the coronavirus pandemic, 160 home-from-school kids pulled out paint, pencils, or pastels to enter the 17th Annual Student Bird Art Contest. Cosponsors were Friends of the Arcata Marsh and Redwood Region Audubon Society.

The contest usually is held in association with mid-April's Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival in Arcata. Although that event was postponed, as contest coordinator, I decided to go ahead with the art contest, viewing it as a project for housebound K-12 students to tackle. Although the number of entries was way down from 910 in 2019, there still were high-quality entries deserving of awards.

[NOTE: I was doubly glad that I opted to continue the 2020 contest after reading these comments from teachers and parents of entrants: "We were really grateful that the art contest went forward even without Godwit Days, though it's very sad to miss seeing the community center atrium overflowing with bird drawings. This contest is a valuable part of our art (and science) curriculum each spring and we're so grateful to all of you who make it happen... Thanks again for keeping this contest going despite the festival being cancelled. I know that my students appreciated having something creative to work on... Thanks for keeping the contest going this year... Thank you for having such a great local contest... Thank you so much! This will make my daughter's day! She has been struggling this last week. Really missing her friends. Your simple and profound offering of giving her motivation to finish her art piece is such a gift. Thank you!... Oh my! My daughter is so thrilled!!!! Thanks so much!!!!"]

Copies of all winners listed below are slated to be hung at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center in September and October, contingent on the building reopening from Covid-19 restrictions. A download-



able booklet containing the artwork is posted at www.rras.org and www.arcatamarshfriends.org.

Some \$380 was awarded: 24 monetary prizes plus 11 honorable mentions. Depending on the number of entries per grade, some levels were combined and others received more than one set of awards, to even out the chances of winning. The winners were:

K through Grade 3

► First Place: Alya Nickell (Grade 2), Northern United Charter, Anna's Hummingbird; Bony McKnight (Grade 3), Coastal Grove Charter, Peregrine Falcon

► Second Place: Fern Dodge (Grade 2), Coastal Grove Charter, Whimbrel; Alysse Gildea (Grade 3), Jacoby Creek Elementary, American Avocet

► Third Place: Winnie Bettencourt (Grade 1), Coastal Grove Charter, American Robin; Tadeus Furaha (Grade 2), Coastal Grove Charter, Bald Eagle

► Honorable Mentions: Anabelle Woodcock (Kindergarten), Greenpoint Elementary, Great Blue Heron; Teresa Russell (Grade 1), Northern United Charter, Bald Eagle; Bailey Wiley (Grade 2), Greenpoint Elementary, Spotted Owl; Ivan Rikwalt (Grade 3), Orleans Elementary, Wood Duck

Grade 4

► First Place: Eliska Crowell, Morris Elementary, California Quail; Hayden Stinebaugh, Morris Elementary, Red-breasted Nuthatch

► Second Place: Zander Garglick, Fieldbrook Elementary, Barn Owl; Nadine McCullough, Forks of Salmon Elementary, Bald Eagle

► Third Place: Keira Dodds, Morris Elementary, Marsh Wren; Tenley Weeks, Morris Elementary, Anna's Hummingbirds

► Honorable Mentions: Meghan Blake, Morris Elementary, Wood Duck; Addison Bailey, Morris Elementary, American Avocet; Talon Turner, Morris Elementary, American Goldfinch; Becker Rine, Morris Elementary, Acorn Woodpecker



Grade 5

► First Place: Valentino Markham, Coastal Grove Charter, Marbled Godwit

► Second Place: Rathlin Hemmingsen-Moon, Mistwood Educational Center, American Goldfinch

► Third Place: Violet Cook, Freshwater Elementary, Belted Kingfisher

Grades 6 through 8

► First Place: Meguire Bartosz (Grade 8), Alder Grove Charter, Northern Flicker

► Second Place: Bizou Massias (Grade 6), Mistwood Educational Center, Tufted Puffin

► Third Place: Shekina McCullough (Grade 7), Forks of Salmon Elementary, Spotted Owl

► Honorable Mention: Madison Finen (Grade 7), Mistwood Educational Center, Red-tailed Hawk

Grades 9 through 12

► First Place: Lena Vassel (Grade 9), Academy of the Redwoods, Pileated Woodpecker

► Second Place: Finn Murphy (Grade 10), Arcata High, Great Horned Owl

► Third Place: Annabelle Pastori (Grade 9), Academy of the Redwoods, American Robin

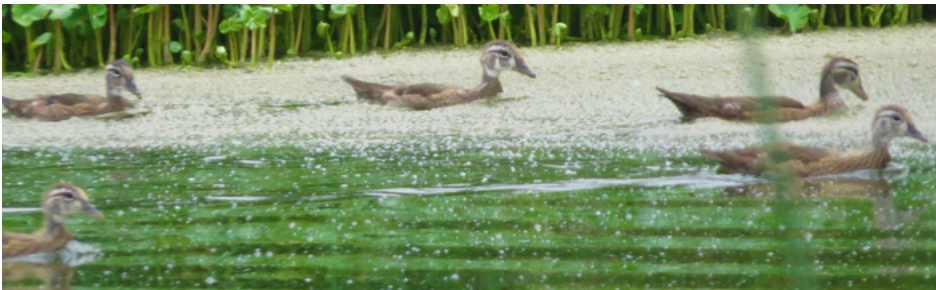
► Honorable Mentions: Chaya Passler (Grade 9), Academy of the Redwoods, Osprey; Trinity Fleming (Grade 10), Academy of the Redwoods, Common Yellowthroat

Best Depiction of a Bird in Its Habitat Awards

► Cadence Fitzmaurice (Grade 3), Jacoby Creek Elementary, Cedar Waxwing; Lily Bazemore (Grade 6), Northcoast Preparatory Academy, Snowy Plovers; Saanvi Virnave (Grade 7), Sunnybrae Middle School, Belted Kingfisher



The Good, the Bad & the Ugly at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary



June 25, Oxidation Ponds. (Top) One hen Mallard shepherding a whopping 24 ducklings! (Middle) Hen Wood Duck with five young'uns. (Bottom) Five juvenile Wood Ducks. (Those "woody" nest boxes are working!) Photos by Tom Leskiw.



(Top) Early June, South I Street. Marsh mural was removed by a camper to roof a shelter built behind the green wall. Repaired by City staff. (Bottom) July 21, south side of Mt. Trashmore near Klopp Lake. Mess left after two campers and their pitbull vacated the site. Photos by George Ziminsky. (Not shown) Soon after solar lights were installed along the pathway leading up to AMIC this spring, someone tried to pry the top solar plates off. Luckily, City staff was able to make repairs to the system, to which FOAM had contributed half of the \$6290 purchase price.

Calendar of Events

August 6—FOAM Board Meeting (via Zoom), 6:30-8 pm

August 14—Deadline to apply for FOAM Board candidacy (see p. 3)

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

September 13—FOAM Annual Meeting (via Zoom), Time TBD (see p. 1)



Follow us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/Friends.of.the.Arcata.Marsh

Thanks to Our Supporters, February through mid-July 2020

► **Best Friends** (\$100+): Susan Halpin; Daniel & Marilyn Ricketts (Modesto)*; Jane Riggan

► **Supporters** (\$50-\$99): Pamela Brown; Glen & Dee Jones; Lisa Monet & Rick St Charles*; Monica Simms & John Helie; James Smith Jr*; Carl Tuck & Susan Eigenbrodt

► **Friends** (\$18-\$49): Gisele Albertine*; Luther Cobb & Mary Mahoney; Steve Conger*; Melanie Dabill; Ann Diver-Stamnes & Stephen Stamnes; Esther & Neil Gilcrist; Janette Heartwood; Joyce Hough & Fred Neighbor; Paul Johnson; Lynn & Steven Jones; Sheila Marks; Patricia Marien (Ft Bragg); Karolyn Merz; Marsha Mielke; Janice Neiman; Paul Pitino; Charmayne Replogle*; Mary Romaidis; Cynthia Rudick (Canton, OH); Frank & Christel Shaughnessy; Patricia Sundgren Smith & Frederick Pierce; Roberta Welty & Jo Weisgerber; Robb & Phyllis Willis; Karen Zeck

► **Donations:** Mary Romaidis (\$45); Roberta Welty & Jo Weisgerber (\$25); Patricia Marien (\$20); Patricia Sundgren Smith & Frederick Pierce (\$15); Susan Halpin, Jenny Hanson, and Jim Hewins (docents who donated their \$35 training fee from last summer's training); pre-shutdown AMIC donation box, \$128

* = New member

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

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Mark Your Calendar for:

Deadline for Board candidacy, 8/14

FOAM Annual Meeting via Zoom, 9/13

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

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.