



# UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh  
Interpretive Center  
Vol 29, Issue 1, Winter 2021-2

**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: AMIC Staffing Help Sought... Student Bird Art Contest Deadline... New Roving Naturalist Program... Native Plant Garden Update... FOAM Activities at Godwit Days 2022... What's New at the Marsh?... FOAM Kids' Crafts Kits at Eureka Natural Foods... Marsh Work Day... King Tide Experience... World Wetlands Day... March/April & May/June Art Shows... Calendar... Members & Donors*



## Help Needed on Weekends at Interpretive Center

A few steadfast volunteers have been keeping the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center doors open on Saturdays and Sundays. More helpers are needed to staff the front desk (4-hour shifts) between 9 am and 5 pm. If you would enjoy welcoming visitors, ringing up bookstore purchases, giving out maps, and answering questions, this is the job for you! To become a City of Arcata volunteer, you must be at least 18 years old and complete paperwork (including LiveScan fingerprinting at no charge). Interpretive Center staff will schedule one-on-one training at your convenience about procedures to open and close the facility. For more info, call 707-826-2359.

## Wiyot Acknowledgment

**The Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary is located on the unceded land of the Wiyot People, who continue to remain in relationship to these lands through ceremony, culture, and stewardship. They are important parts of the history of and continuing knowledge of this place.**

## March 18 Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest

For the 19th year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society are co-sponsoring a Student Bird Art Contest in conjunction with the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival. An estimated \$550 will be awarded to Humboldt County students from kindergarten through high school who submit a drawing of one of 40 suggested species or another bird seen in the county. Prizes will be awarded for the best renditions of a bird in its natural habitat.

Awards are scheduled to be presented on Saturday, April 16 starting at 11 am at the outdoor amphitheater near the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center (AMIC). Copies of winning artwork will be shown at AMIC during May and June.

A flyer with complete rules and instructions is posted on the Godwit Days website ([www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org)) or can be picked up at the Interpretive Center. Flyers will be distribut-



*Pileated Woodpecker by Xatimniim Drake, Hoopa Valley High, 2021.*

ed to all Humboldt County schools.

Art may be dropped off Tuesday through Sunday between 9 am and 5 pm at AMIC, located at 569 South G Street, or mailed to Sue Leskiw, 155 Kara Lane, McKinleyville CA 95519. Entries must be received by **Friday, March 18** to be considered.

Questions? E-mail [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).

## 2021-22 Board of Directors & Officers

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**Website:** [www.arcatamarshfriends.org](http://www.arcatamarshfriends.org)  
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(From left) Roving Naturalists Lynn Jones, Elliott Dabill, and Jean Santi (plus Coco in front!). Photo by Paul Johnson, Rover #4.

## FOAM Institutes Roving Marsh Naturalist Program

By Paul Johnson

A new program has been added to FOAM's regular Saturday afternoon Marsh tours. Starting in January 2022, a Roving Naturalist will be walking the trails at least once—and likely more often—a week. This walk is unscheduled and conducted by one of our regular volunteer naturalists.

The objective is to put an extra naturalist on the trail, mostly on weekdays, to make contact with the many visitors who are unaware of, or unavailable to join, the weekend tours. Each of the roving tours will last for at least 2.5 hours and could occur in the morning or afternoon.

The naturalists will be wearing an olive green vest with a FOAM patch on one pocket and a name tag on the other (see above photo). They will carry the regular Marsh map/brochure to hand out to visitors and be available to talk about whatever subject matter happens to be nearby or which the visitors mention.

Currently, four people—Elliott Dabill, Lynn Jones, Jean Santi, and myself—are involved in the roving naturalist team. Each of us has dif-

ferent specialties, including local birds, plants, history, wastewater treatment, general natural history, and yes, even dinosaurs! Look for these volunteers on the trails and feel free to stop them and ask any of those burning questions you may have about the Arcata Marsh.

## Marsh Native Plant Garden Enters Phase III

By Lynn Jones

As if winter weren't already rather gray and colorless, the rains reminded us how saturated and clay-ey the garden area can be! Undeterred, garden designers Paul and Lynne Abels started preparing Phase III, the next planting area in the flat next to the slough, under the trees.

The California Coastal Commission gave the City of Arcata the go-ahead to extend the trail close to the slough to the paved walk. The first step was to remove a large *Ceanothus*, which is native to the state but not to Humboldt County. That opened up the view to the rest of the garden! The structures of the graceful trees along the waterway are now visible.

While birds love blackberries, the entire area had been a tangle of



The beginning of Phase III.  
Photo by George Ziminsky.

native (*Rubus ursinus*) and Himalaya berries (*Rubus armeniacus*). Now, patches of native berry remain and there is still room for woodland plants and ferns along the future path and among the trees.

Plans for bird cavities and more signage continue to evolve. As the soil dries out, weeding, soil amending, and planting will lead to beautiful spring and summer displays. And the rest of the garden, well established in its second year, promises to be dazzling. Walk through often to watch the progress!

[NOTE: A roster of on-call volunteers has been started for the garden. If you are interested in joining them, to help maintain the garden on an intermittent basis, send your contact information to [sueleskiw1@gmail.com](mailto:sueleskiw1@gmail.com).]

## FOAM's Planned Godwit Days Activities

The Spring Migration Bird Festival is just around the corner and FOAM plans to once again host free family nature craft activities. The drop-in session will be held—following all City COVID protocols—in the Interpretive Center on Saturday, April 16, from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm. Activities may include Marsh critter ornaments, bird hats and masks, painted bird rocks and wooden bird houses, wooden bird calls, and toilet paper tube owls. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

As part of the festival schedule, FOAM Board member Mark Wilson will lead a Kids' Bird Walk at the Marsh on April 16 starting at 9 am. Attendees must register at [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org).





*Rachel Garcia.  
Photo by George Ziminsky.*

## What's New at the Marsh?

*By George Ziminsky*

The lengthening days mean that darkness falls on AMIC after closing time. Things have been fairly quiet here on the rainy days, with more people out and about during the drier spells. The Marsh has responded well to an early “normal” wet winter. The coinciding King Tides brought water levels over the trails in some places, and on one windy day, the bay washed up onto South I Street and across the Klopp Lake parking lot! The shorebirds and waterfowl are back in numbers, with no exceptional rarities yet. Birders are enjoying consistently seeing less-common species like Blue-winged Teal and Eurasian Wigeon. A few lucky observers have caught up with Long-tailed Duck and Red-breasted Sapsucker, both of which are rare visitors to the Arcata Marsh. American Bittern and Green Heron remain elusive. The trails frequently host sparrow flocks and occasionally a covey of California Quail.

The Native Plant garden continues to draw much praise and admiration, with Phase III getting off the ground. We received a big T-shirt order the Monday after Christmas. Stop by to check out a few new styles and a complete range of size selection of old favorites. We anticipate the arrival of a large hat order soon.

Last but not least, we welcome Rachael Garcia to the AMIC staff. Rachael is a 2020 HSU graduate with a major in environmental science management, focusing on environmental education and interpretation. Her favorite topics are ecology, herpetology, entomology, and mycology. She is from the San Diego area and volunteered at nature cen-

ters and on trail crews there before moving to Humboldt in 2012. Her position also encompasses serving as volunteer coordinator with the Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS), so you will find her throughout the Humboldt Bay area at Saturday volunteer workdays. Rachael enjoys walking and biking at the Marsh with her 6-year-old daughter.



## FOAM to Underwrite Free Children's Craft Kits at ENF

This year's Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is slated to be the beneficiary of Eureka Natural Foods' Change for Change fundraising program. Between April 1 and 5, shoppers in the Eureka and McKinleyville stores can opt to round up their total purchase to the nearest dollar, with the difference donated to the Godwit Days nonprofit.

Volunteers will be staffing a table outside the store entrances at yet-to-be-determined times over the 5-day period. FOAM has agreed to provide several hundred give-aways, to entice people to stop by and learn about this year's festival (April 15-17). Included in each goodie bag will be a blank Marsh critter ornament kit (otter, frog, duck, marsh wren, or dragonfly) to paint, a critter information card, a bird sticker, and a temporary bird tattoo.

Visit [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org) for info or to register for the festival.

## Post-Thanksgiving Marsh Cleanup & Holiday Caroling

*By Rees Hughes & Mark Larson*

Thirty-five Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS) assembled at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary on November 27 from 9 am to noon. About a half-dozen volunteers trekked to “Two Rocks” to pick up litter, while another team cut back willows along the Bay Trail on the west side of Allen Marsh. The remaining volun-



*Volunteer Trail Stewards work day.  
Top photo by Rees Hughes; bottom photo  
by Mark Larson.*

teers clipped invasive blackberries, pulled hemlock, and cut teasel to improve the ability of trail users to see Allen Marsh.

The VTS program operates under the auspices of the Humboldt Trails Council and holds Arcata work days on the fourth Saturday of each month (except December). Over the course of a typical year, VTS works in the Community Forest and Sunny Brae Forest, along the Bay Trail, and at Shay Park. Get on the notification list by contacting Rees Hughes at [hughes@humboldt.edu](mailto:hughes@humboldt.edu). No prior experience needed!

Walkers at the Arcata Marsh enjoyed hearing the sound of holiday caroling coming from the back deck of the Interpretive Center on Wednesday, December 22. Five members of the Arcata Threshold Chorus—which sings for those in hospice—met up in person for the first time since the pandemic started to social distance and sing carols together.



*Some of the 45 King Tide Tour attendees at dike break location.*

*Photo by Barbara Reisman.*



*Sea level rise interpretive sign at South I Street parking lot.*

*Photo by Barbara Reisman.*

## A King Tide Experience

*By Elliott Dabill*

On January 2, FOAM docent Barbara Reisman and I led about 45 people down South I Street to the elbow parking lot by the Coastal Trail. I started an astronomy discussion where I explained daily tides (caused mostly by the moon), monthly spring tides (when the pull of the sun and moon are lined up with the Earth), perigee tides (that occur 6-8 times a year when the moon is closer to the Earth), and finally king tides (where the moon is closest to the Earth and the Earth is closest to the sun).

From the Coastal Trail, the group marched down the dike by Gearhart Marsh to the broken section that created a new saltwater marsh at McDaniel Slough (see below photos). We were there at high tide: 11:18 am. I stood on the picnic table and showed photos from the City's website illustrating a future where all the land visible from this spot would be underwater (except, ironically, Mount Trashmore, the former dump). Two photos that showed Arcata's plan to prioritize sections of the Arcata Marsh for preservation, including the wastewater treatment

plant, were also viewed.

We briefly discussed sea level rise and referred to the remarkable pending collapse of marginal glaciers such as the Thwaite glacier in Antarctica that will provide catastrophic amounts of water—potentially, several feet in depth—to the world's oceans within 10 years. A Humboldt State project estimates three feet of increased sea level here by 2030. Unfortunately, the dikes around Humboldt Bay are about that high, so the surface area of the Bay will increase by one third. [More about this will be presented by Aldaron Laird during his FOAM-sponsored free Zoom lecture at 7:30 pm on Friday, January 21. Access at <https://humboldtstate.zoom.us/j/81524243096>; Meeting ID: 815 2424 3096.]

FOAM's King Tide Tour has historically seen higher attendance than most of our tours, and this was no exception. The folks attending were interested in the science and contributed some cool facts and discussion of why an interesting physical event is connected to our lives and the environment. Photos taken during the tour have been sent to the California King Tides Project at [kingtides@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:kingtides@coastal.ca.gov).



*Photos taken by Elliott Dabill from same location on January 1 (left) and January 2 (right) showing dike break.*



**World  
Wetlands Day**  
2 February 2022



**Wetlands Action for  
People and Nature**

## Feb 2 Is World Wetlands Day

*By Lynn Jones*

This year's theme is "Wetlands and Water" ([www.worldwetlandsday.org/](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/)). As scientists and citizen-scientists accumulate data, it is clear that wetlands can play a role in protecting coastal regions from some impacts of sea level rise. Not only do wetlands provide an absorbent barrier to upland areas, they also continue to provide ecosystem benefits, despite climate change. They slow floodwaters, recharge groundwater, and absorb encroaching salt water. They support habitat for native plants and animals and help clean polluted water. In the case of the Arcata Marsh, wetlands also serve as the final step in cleaning wastewater before it is released to the ocean.

While wetlands can be a source of some greenhouse gases when disturbed, healthy wetlands provide a sink for greenhouse gases, where carbon is stored and prevented from entering the atmosphere. Since the 1970s, 35% of the world's wetlands have disappeared—a rate faster than the loss of forests. Humans now realize that in order to mitigate risks from climate change, constructed wetlands may help restore balance to the boundary between land and sea.

Celebrate and honor the beautiful restored wetlands all around Humboldt Bay this winter!





*"Egret" by Lisa Carpenter Landis.*

### MARCH/APRIL ARTIST LISA CARPENTER LANDIS

A California native, I moved to Humboldt County in 1973. I studied art and art history at Humboldt State University. Before discovering the wonder of pastels, I worked as a successful clothing designer, batik creator, and glass artist for more than 25 years.

I grew up in a family of artists, so I have always been conscious of design. The need to express myself creatively has manifested itself in many forms for all my life, but until I picked up a pastel stick in 2002, I realized that of all the things I've done, the process of painting with pastels is the most gratifying.

Painting the Arcata Marsh consistently has been an inspiration these last few years. I find that the expansive views are always changing, no matter the time of day or year. Every time I visit the Arcata Marsh, I'm struck by its breathtaking beauty.

Besides the years of study at HSU, I'm primarily self-taught. I have also studied with professional artists Kim Lordier, Glenna Hartman, Bert Collins, and Raymond Carpenter. And spent 4 weeks in the Corbieres region of Southern France as "artist in residence" with Zaira Vietes.

For art purchases or simply to get further information, I can be reached at [lisaclandis@gmail.com](mailto:lisaclandis@gmail.com) or 707-499-0953. My website is [www.lisalandispastels.weebly.com](http://www.lisalandispastels.weebly.com).



*(Top) Photo of the artist.  
(Bottom) "Morning Glow."*

### MAY/JUNE ARTISTS STUDENT BIRD ART WINNERS

Color copies of first through third prize-winning and honorable mention avian art from the 19th annual contest for Humboldt County K-12 students will be on display. The competition, associated with the Godwit Days Festival, is cosponsored by FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society.



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### Calendar of Events

January/February—Photography exhibit by Aldaron Laird

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

March/April—Art show by Lisa Carpenter Landis (see this page)

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

March 18—Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest entries (see p. 1)

April 1-5—Change for Change fundraiser at Eureka Natural Foods, to benefit Godwit Days (see p.3)

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

April 16—FOAM free family nature crafts (drop-in) and Kids' Bird Walk (pre-registration required), as part of Godwit Days (see p. 2)

May/June—Exhibit of Student Bird Art Contest winning pieces

### Thanks to Our Supporters, Mid-October 2021 through Mid-January 2022

► **Best Friends** (\$100+): Susan Holt\* (\$500); Ed Murray; Daniel & Marilyn Ricketts (Modesto); George Waller

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► **Donations from Life Members:** Maria Baron, \$5,000; Lee & Chris House, \$1,000; Mary Susan Hansen Trust, \$500; Linda Rogers (Pullman, WA), \$300 ("Thank you for the wonderful work you do and the GREAT example you set"); Ira Blatt, \$250; Calista Sullivan & Richard Sanborn, \$250; Milt Boyd, \$200 ("Continue the good work!"); Paula Dawson (Mill Valley), \$200; Jean Santi, \$200

► **Other Donations:** Miranda Hartridge (Yuba City), \$100 (in honor of Ira Blatt & Debbie Hartridge); Janyce Neiman, \$100 (to support Student Bird Art Contest or Science Fair awards, in honor of Stephanie Perret); James Smith, Jr, \$50; Diane Ryerson & Walt Paniak, \$45; AMIC donation box, \$227.75; Amazon Smile, \$25.27

\* = New member

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

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**Mark Your Calendar for:**

**Student Bird Art Contest Deadline, March 18**  
**Change for Change, Eureka Natural Foods,**  
**April 1-5**  
**Godwit Days Festival, April 15-17**  
**FOAM Family Nature Crafts, April 16**

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FRIENDS OF THE ARCATA MARSH, PO Box 410, Arcata CA 95518      [arcatamarshfriends.org](http://arcatamarshfriends.org)

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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.*