

from the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center Vol 30, Issue 1, Winter 22-23

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

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Docent Training on Tap

By Lynn Jones

If you've ever wanted to lead tours at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary but didn't know where to begin, your opportunity has arrived. For two consecutive weekends — April 29-30 and May 6-7 — FOAM docents and guest speakers will provide tours, information, guidelines, and materials to prepare you to volunteer at the Marsh. These sessions would also be helpful for answering questions while staffing the welcome desk. [NOTE: FOAM's last docent training took place in July of 2019.]

Check local media and the FOAM website (www.arcatamarshfriends. org) in early March for registration information. The four-day training costs \$25 (some scholarships are available) and is limited to 20 people. Participants will receive a PDF Resource Manual, a field and lecture notes booklet, and guidebooks to the Marsh flora and fauna. City of Arcata paperwork that must be completed prior to your beginning your service as a docent will be available.

The group will meet daily at the Interpretive Center (masking will depend on current status of COVID

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.

in our county). The training will start at 8:30 am and end at 3:30 pm, with 30 minutes off midday for lunch. Each day will include walking field trips and outdoor activities, as well as indoor lectures.

Saturday, April 29 will begin with introductions and a workshop schedule and overview. The day's theme is "designing strategies for effective tours and interpretation." Speakers will address Wiyot history on Humboldt Bay and the history of our landmark wastewater treatment system.

Day 2 (Sunday, April 30) will focus on plants and Marsh biomes. The history of the Marsh flora, the importance of native plants to the ecosystem, and restoration of the coastal interface will be the topics of lectures and tours.

The third session (Saturday, May 6) will emphasize animals of the wildlife sanctuary. With lectures

and field trips, the stars of the show will be birds, insects, and otters.

The culmination of this training — Sunday, May 7 — will cover experiential education techniques for leading tours with participants of diverse ages, abilities, and mobilities. A speaker will discuss the history and importance of the Marsh's wetlands, including a tour of the world-renowned wastewater treatment facility.

Put us on your spring calendar! Meanwhile, come check out a Saturday tour (starts at the Interpretive Center every Saturday at 2 pm, rain or shine), if you haven't already been on one. E-mail any questions to info@arcatamarshfriends.org.

Godwit Days Bird Festival
April 13-16, 2023, Arcata
Over 70 sessions!
Register at www.godwitdays.org

2022-23 Board of Directors & Officers

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President: Elliott Dabill
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Spotted Owl scratchboard by Carter Hernandez, 3rd prize, 2022.

March 18 Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest

For the 20th 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 \$600 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 that has been seen in the county. Prizes also will be awarded for the best renditions of a bird in its natural habitat.

Awards will be presented on Saturday, April 15 at 11 am in the Main Hall of the Arcata Community Center. All entries will be displayed April 14-16. Copies of winning artwork will be shown at AMIC during May and June, with a free public reception to celebrate two decades of the contest tentatively scheduled for the evening of Friday, May 19.

A flyer with complete rules and instructions is posted at www. godwitdays.org or can be picked up at the Interpretive Center. Flyers were mailed to all Humboldt County schools.

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

Questions? E-mail sueleskiw1@gmail.com.



Help Needed with FOAM's Godwit Days Activities

The 2023 Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is just around the corner and FOAM will again be hosting free family nature craft activities. The drop-in session will be held in the main hall of the Arcata Community Center on Sunday, April 16, from 11 am to 1 pm. Activities include making Marsh critter ornaments, bird hats, and bird and otter masks. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. If you can spend a couple hours helping kids discover the many wonders of our Marsh, contact Sue at sueleskiw1@gmail.com.

A new volunteer opportunity is staffing the Opening Reception on Friday, April 15. FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society (RRAS) are co-organizing the event, which is free to the general public from 5 to 7 pm. Help is needed starting earlier that day to pick up donated food, arrange it on platters, collect money/tickets for and pour beer and wine, and especially wash dirty dishes and glasses! E-mail sueleskiw1@gmail.com if you can help.

FOAM also needs staffers for its table at the Bird Fair. Hours of operation are Friday 3-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm (optional 5-7 pm shift), and Sunday 10 am-2 pm, divided into 2-or 3-hour shifts. If you can help hand out literature and sell items, e-mail sueleskiw1@gmail.com. We also will be having a membership drive from our booth.

Another volunteer opportunity is to help hang hundreds of entries received in the 20th Student Bird Art Contest, co-sponsored by FOAM and RRAS. This will occur on Friday, April 14 starting at 1 pm. Bring a light-weight hammer and bag for push pins and be prepared to post artwork along the hallways and lobby of the Community Center. Contact Sue at sueleskiw1@gmail.com.

What's Happening at the Marsh?

By George Ziminsky

The first "normal" wet winter in years has had effects throughout the Marsh. Inclement weather has kept potential tour attendees home or pursuing other activities; AMIC visitors have numbered in the low single digits on some of the rainiest days. Even when keeping to the trails, rubber boots have been the footwear of choice. Wind events have brought down quite a few large willow and pine trees and branches, although most have been off trail and did not require immediate attention. The saturated ground and runoff greeting the incoming Bay water led to notable King Tides.

At AMIC, we look forward to Rachael returning from maternity leave, having welcomed baby Luke into the Marsh universe. Environmental Services staffers Jerry and Jaime have been helping out at AMIC, in addition to their duties at City Hall. AMIC has received an upgrade to its exterior lighting system, which will be helpful during the inevitable return of after-hours functions.

The annual Arcata Christmas Bird Count on December 17 fortunately took place on a beautiful day between storms. Celebrity birds were two Nelson's Sparrows first spotted by Rob Fowler on 12/6 at the breach in the McDaniel Slough restoration area. They have continued to the present, best observed during the highest tides. The previous Marsh record for Nelson's Sparrow was 20 years ago!

The December 20 earthquake left AMIC in a bit of disarray but structurally unscathed. Bottles fell over in the display behind the reception desk, miscellaneous merchandise meandered off shelves to the floor, and while the art exhibit paintings stayed secure to their mounting cables, they came to rest at all angles. The lack of power resulted in AMIC being closed that day. A developing situation involving No Name Pond leaking through the levee under the

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trail and into Butcher Slough was first noted by CPH wildlife professor and otter expert Jeff Black at low tide on the 21st. With all the rain, No Name has stayed full and will be monitored over time.

The Marsh continues to suffer from ongoing negative human impacts along I Street, in the parking areas and at several long-term campsites. The east side of Mt Trashmore was only recently vacated by campers who left a significant mess for the City crew to clean up. Long-term camps persist at the Log Pond and on the north side of East and West Ponds. The parking lots and pullouts continue to be inhabited by vehicles staying weeks past the legal 72-hour parking limit. After years of trash dumping, vandalism, and wildlife road-kills, the gate on South I St will be closed overnight starting soon (see article, p. 5).



Elliott talking about the astronomy of a king tide. Photo by Sharon King.

King Tide Tour

By Elliott Dabill

On January 21, Barbara Reisman and I led about 25 people down I Street to the elbow parking lot by the Coastal Trail. There, I gave 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), perigeal tides that happen 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.

The group then marched down the dike by Gearhart Marsh to the broken section that created the new saltwater marsh at McDaniel



Arcata City Council members break ground for Phase I. Photo by Elliott Dabill.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements

On January 18, the City of Arcata invited the public to attend a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase One of the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facilities Improvement Project. Mayor Schaefer announced that the 3-year, \$54 million capital improvement project will include an ultraviolet (UV) system to replace the chlorine gas now used to disinfect the wastewater, as well as new sewer piping, a new pump station, and a new sewer outfall location. Marsh visitors will see I Street dug up this year for a pipe that will carry wastewater that has completed treatment from Hauser Marsh to Brackish Marsh. The gate at Brackish Marsh will then release the treated water into Humboldt Bay.

Slough. We arrived before the peak of the high tide (11:21 am). I stood on the picnic table and showed photos from the City of Arcata website showing a future where all the visible land would be underwater (except, ironically, Mount Trashmore, the former dump). Two photos showing the Arcata plan to prioritize sections of the Marsh for preservation, including the wastewater treatment plant, were also viewed.

We briefly discussed sea level rise and referred to the remarkable pending collapses of marginal glaciers, like the Thwaite glacier in Antarctica that will provide catastrophic water to the world's oceans within 10 years, potentially of several feet. An HSU project estimated 3 feet of increased sea level by 2030. Unfortunately, the dikes around Humboldt Bay are about that high, so the surface area of the Bay will increase by a third.

The 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 were sent to the California King Tides Project at kingtides@coastal.ca.gov.

Four of FOAM's Roving Naturalists Are State Certified

By Elliott Dabill

In the fall 2022 semester, Lynn Jones, Sharon Levy, and I finished coursework at College of the Redwoods to become California Naturalists, certified by the University of California. (A fourth roving naturalist, Jenny Hanson, already had this certification through the Nature Center at the Samoa Dunes.)

So what does the certification do for the folks that walk through the Arcata Marsh? All of our naturalists love their focus on nature, but the

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California Naturalist pin.

certification allows a deeper immersion into the particular wonders of California, from earthquakes, geology, and regional differences to plants and animals that live locally and in the far corners of the state.

Each student was required to produce a Capstone Project where he or she picked a topic and presented it to the class and the University of California. Lynn focused on the plants of the Arcata Marsh and led a tour for the entire class around the Marsh. Sharon took a deep dive into the microscopic world under the various waters at the Marsh, tickling everyone's curiosity about varicella and paramecia and friends. I built a model of a spreading center, like we have off the coast, and demonstrated both how it works to produce local earthquakes and tsunamis and rock samples produced from the subduction zone. Aside from the official certificate, the new students were awarded a gold-plated pin that we can wear on our Roving Naturalists vests.

All you have to do to make our individual investment pay off is to get any of our naturalists in a conversation about nature at the Marsh. We can't give people hugs, but we can certainly get out there and hug our trees and spiders as we appreciate the wonder that is our little corner of California. (The spiders must be hugged delicately, of course.)



FOAM Supports Humboldt Wildlife Care Center

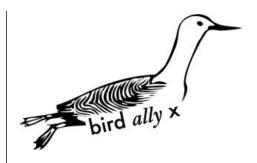
By Sue Leskiw

On New Year's Day, I was scrolling through posts on the NextDoor app and noticed an appeal made on behalf of the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center (HWCC)/Bird Ally X. I knew that the nonprofit organization had lost the lease on its Bayside location and was attempting to purchase a property in Manila. But I didn't realize until after I watched the posted video from HWCC director Monte Merrick that time was about to run out for the organization to raise \$30.000, in order to close on the parcel in mid-January.

Monte's appeal led me to brainstorm ways that I could help raise funds. First, I sent in additional money beyond my usual year-end donation. Next, I e-mailed a message to my party invitation list, plus the Boards of Directors of both FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society (RRAS): "Humboldt Wildlife Care Center needs \$30K by January 15 to close on new site in Manila. Monte Merrick's video link describing the situation is below. I'm donating — it's critical to keep this resource in Humboldt," I wrote.

Since 1979, HWCC has taken care of injured or orphaned wild-life, with the goal of returning these mammals and birds to the wild. The nonprofit organization, which merged with Bird Ally X in 2014, routinely serves over 1000 animals a year coming from Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, and northern Mendocino counties. [NOTE: I myself took a cat-attacked California Quail I found along the road in for medical help about 10 years ago.]

As the volunteer media liaison for the Godwit Days Bird festival, I wrote up an appeal that went out to its MailChimp list of nearly 2000 people. HWCC's Avian Ambassador program had brought live hawks and owls to the festival for many years (from 2006 to 2018), eliciting oohs and aahs from kids and adults alike. I also e-mailed Heather Shelton, Times-Standard lifestyle editor, about the situation, which led to the



newspaper publishing a lengthy article on January 14.

On January 4, I received an e-mail from Cindy Kuttner, FOAM's representative on the RRAS Cat/ Bird Committee: "Just left the Cat-Bird meeting. We all felt it would be good for our boards to donate to the wildlife care center to help their move. Can we please put this on our agenda?" Both organizations agreed to consider making a donation, with the FOAM Board voting to give \$1000 and the RRAS Board \$1500. [NOTE: FOAM received a thank-you letter from Monte with this P.S.: "It means so much to have the support of our conservation colleagues!!"] My last e-mail appeal went out to the FOAM and RRAS list serves as one bullet of a multi-topic message.

When I spoke to Monte on January 10, he was thrilled that the community had stepped forward to meet the \$30K needed to purchase the property. But money was still needed to pay for a Conditional Use Permit, move their belongings, construct new bird and mammal enclosures, and refurbish a building for animal intake and offices, all to be ready for spring baby animal season.

Northwestern California needs this resource, this network of wildlife care providers and volunteers working tirelessly to save a hummingbird whose wings became entangled in a spider web, baby squirrels whose nest tree was cut down and their mother is nowhere to be found, oiled seabirds that inadvertently touched down in a spill. Donations are tax deductible. To help, go to https:// givingtools.com/give/169 and click on the One Time Donation box or https://birdallyx.net/humboldt-wildlife-care-center-2/ and select the Donate Now button along the left side of the page.

The I Street Gate

By Paul Johnson

On June 28, representative from FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society met with Arcata City Manager Karen Diemer, Mayor Stacy Atkins-Salazar, and other City staff to discuss ongoing problems at the Marsh. One of the main subjects was the growing number of illegal campers in the various parking areas along South I Street. The discussion quickly focused on the gate, which has been in place on I Street for many years and was originally installed to block overnight parking and camping (see article, p. 3 of the fall 2022 UPWIND).

No one could remember a time when the gate was ever closed. The group concluded that the problem was that the posted sign stated that it would be closed at midnight and reopened at 4 am. The Arcata Police Department would have been responsible for closing and opening the gate at the posted times, requiring extra manpower during hours when its coverage was stretched to its thinnest. Thus, the gate was ignored and left open for many years. The obvious solution seemed easy: change the times on the adjacent sign and put the gate into use.

At meeting's end, Karen stated that changing the times on the I Street gate sign would require a revision to the City's Municipal Code. She recommended as a first step, conducting a survey of the number of illegal campers using the lots on I Street, to collect supporting data. Several members of the FOAM Board at the meeting immediately volunteered to help conduct the survey. With that assurance, Ms Diemer said she would arrange for a survey to be designed and let FOAM know when it was ready.

Within 3 weeks, the survey was ready and a sign-up schedule was circulated among FOAM volunteers. Each drove South I Street during early-morning or late-evening hours to count the number of vehicles parked in designated parking spots between the gate and Klopp Lake. The City later requested an additional 10-day survey focused strictly

on early-morning hours (5-6:30 am).

The first survey was conducted between July 17 and August 14 and the second morning-only survey ran from September 24 through October 3. These FOAM volunteers participated in the survey: Katy Allen, Tom Allen, Elliott Dabill, Andy Feinstein, Ava Iorizzo, Paul Johnson, Cindy Kuttner, Barbara Reisman, Jean Santi, Alex Stillman, and Mark Wilson. The second survey was conducted by Paul Johnson and Jean Santi.

Using the survey data collected by FOAM, City staff drafted a proposed ordinance to change the Arcata Municipal Code to reflect a gate closure time at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary ftom one hour after sunset until sunrise and submitted it to the City Council. The ordinance was introduced on December 21, 2022, and the Council, following established legal procedures, approved the proposed change on January 4. Thus, the new gate closure times could begin as early as February 3, one month after the ordinance was passed.

FOAM members who participated with the survey are to be congratulated on helping accomplish a rapid and significant change to City law, to help protect the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary! (Unfortunately, someone ran a vehicle into the gate post but repairs are underway.)



Ken Burton (center) with Christmas Tour attendees. Photo by Sonali Bera.

Special Holiday Tours Prove Popular

This year, FOAM was able to return to its full complement of special holiday tours: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's.

Twenty people turned out for the Thanksgiving "leg-stretcher," led by Jean Santi and Alex Stillman, with contributions by Tom Leskiw (birds) and Jenny Hanson (plants). The group stayed together on the walk along the dike by Butcher's Slough to Klopp Lake, then back via Mount Trashmore. The weather was sunny and windless, but on the cool side. A jogger told us that otters had been sighted swimming in Klopp Lake, but we weren't able to catch up with them.

The Christmas Day walk was led by Ken Burton and Paul Johnson. Over 20 people showed up, so the group was split into two.

The New Year's Day walk, led by Paul Johnson and Barbara Reisman, drew about 20 people, which were split into two groups for separate tours. Barbara reports having an enthusiastic bunch. "No one shared any resolutions for the new year but we all just enjoyed the lovely first day of 2023."

WHAT INDOOR CATS MISS...

- BEING HIT BY A CAR
- BEING STOLEN
- BEING ABUSED/TORTURED BY STRANGERS
- RAIN, SNOW, VERY HOT or COLD WEATHER
- FIGHTS WITH CATS, DOGS, SKUNKS, FOXES COYOTES, BEARS & RACCOONS.
- BEING SOLD TO LABS FOR TESTING
- BEING USED AS BAIT IN DOG FIGHTING
- DISEASE, SICKNESS & INFECTIONS
- UNWANTED PREGNANCY
- ANTIFREEZE POISONING
- FLEAS, TICKS & WORMS
- ROCK SALT BURNS
- RAT POISONING
- ANIMAL TRAPS
- GETTING LOST
- FIREWORKS



Cole & Marmalade



Leslie and Mike.

MARCH/APRIL ARTISTS MIKE ANDERSON & LESLIE SCOPES ANDERSON

"A Celebration of Local Birds"

What began as a lark has become a passion! Soon after Leslie, a long-time film photographer, moved to Humboldt County from Utah, she and Mike got into digital photography and began taking advantage of the wealth of wildlife found in this area. Their new interest started at the Arcata Marsh, with photographs of egrets in Hauser Marsh. It then escalated to exotic trips to locations around the world. However, they still value the diversity and abundance of wild creatures, especially birds, in our own backyard.

Leslie, a career graphic designer, owned an agency in Salt Lake City for 25 years. She has served on the boards of several environmental organization and offers pro bono use of her photos to further conservation.



Northern Shoveler by Mike Anderson.

Mike is an emeritus professor of Environmental Resources Engineering, with 40+ years of teaching at Cal Poly Humboldt. Both have a lifelong love of the wonders of nature.

Their photographs have appeared in Audubon, Nature Conservancy, and National Wildlife publications and in local guidebooks.



Barn Swallows by Mike Anderson.

MAY/JUNE ARTISTS STUDENT BIRD ART WINNERS

Color copies of first through third prize-winning and honorable mention avian art from the 20th 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 Audu-

bon Society (RRAS). In recognition of the two-decade milestone, FOAM and RRAS will host a reception for the general public at AMIC (tentative date: Friday, May 19, 5-7 pm).

Calendar of Events

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

February—Paintings by Steven Taylor

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

March-April—Photographs by Mike Anderson & Leslie Scopes Anderson

March 9—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

March 18—Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest entries, 5 pm

April 13—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

April 13-16—Godwit Days Bird Festival (see p. 2)

April 29-30 & May 6-7—FOAM Docent Training (see p. 1)

May-June—Winners of Student Bird Art Contest on display

May 11—FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm

May 19—Public Reception for Student Bird Art Contest winners, 5-7 pm (tentative)

Thanks to Our Supporters, mid-October 2022 through mid-January 2023

- ▶ Best Friends (\$100+): Katherine Davenport; C Michael & Wendy Finen* (Cameron Park, CA; through the Carol Irving Foundation), NEW Life Members!; Marilyn & Daniel Ricketts (Modesto); Jeannie & Steven Smalley
 - ▶ Supporters (\$50-99): Carl Tuck & Susan Eigenbrodt; George Waller
- ▶ Friends (\$18-49): Renshin Bunce*; Gail Coonen; Ellen Weiss & Nathan Copple; Cynthia & Jon Forsyth; Kathleen Lee; Beth Wingfield & Bobbie Mckay; Lorraine Dillon & Mike Metro; Johnny Newsome & Christine O'Kelly; Kelly Nord & Steven Porter; Matthew Prescott; Patricia Sennott; April Small; Roy Dixon & Judith Wendling; Mary Ann Madej & Alan Wolski
- ▶ Donations from Life Members: Susan Hansen, \$500; Susan Holt, \$500; Stuart Moskowitz, \$500; Calista & Daniel Sullivan, \$500; Lorraine Miller-Wolf, \$300 (through the Dr Richard Wolf Memorial Fund); Linda Rogers (Pullman, WA), \$300; Lee & Chris House, \$200; Aldaron Laird, \$100; Wilson Family Trust, \$100
- ▶ Other Donations: Richard Rayburn (Sacramento; \$250 in memory of his mother, Marianne Mitchell Rayburn, who taught school in Orick and St Mary's in Arcata in the 1970s); Janyce Neiman, \$100 for Humboldt County Science Fair awards; Miranda Hartridge (Yuba City; in honor of Ira Blatt & Debbe Hartridge); Lorraine Dillon & Mike Metro, \$5; AMIC donation box, \$236; Amazon Smile, \$10.12
 - * = 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, 3/18
Godwit Days Bird Festival, 4/13-16
FOAM Docent Training, 4/29, 4/30, 5/6, 5/7
Student Bird Art Reception, 5/19 (tentative)

stiends or executive at a Main	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			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.