UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center
Vol 33, Issue 4, Fall 2026

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... Holiday Tours... FOAM Annual Meeting/Volunteer Lunch (with Volunteer Awards, Election Results, Bird of the Year)... Fish Interpretive Sign... Pastels on the Plaza... Marsh Wren Earrings... TACO Day... What's Happening at the Marsh?... Annual Report... Log Pond Work... Bicycle Tours... Pop-up Interpretation... Biodiversity Tours... Visitor Log... Upcoming Artists... Events Calendar... Supporters

Arcata Marsh Research Institute logo.

November & December Lectures

FOAM's First Wednesday Lecture series continues with a November 4 presentation by three members of the Arcata Marsh Research Institute (AMRI).

"The Natural Processes of the Arcata Marsh and the Critical Contribution of Student-led Research" will discuss the many natural processes of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS), with an emphasis on natural cycles that uniquely occur in ponds and wetlands. The lecture will highlight contributions of student research and student-led projects in addressing regulatory hurdles presented by regional and state boards. Finally, the speakers will address how students have been critical in evaluating and creating best management practices and operational guidelines, and in evaluating the life cycle and effectiveness of wastewater treatment at the Arcata Marsh.

Bob Gearheart is one of the many individuals who helped bring AMWS to life through applied research and years of teaching. All the while Bob encouraged student research and participation. The other speakers, Elise Culbertson and Zach Sherman, are environmental resource engineering graduates of Cal Poly Humboldt. Both are working in conjunction with the City of Arcata and AMRI to continue developing knowledge and best practices for the operation and management of the Arcata wastewater treatment facility and natural treatment systems.

December's lecture is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 1, rather than the usual Wednesday,** to accommodate the speaker (and allow her mother visiting from the East Coast attend!) Allison Poklemba will enlighten us about "Wild Foods of Forests, Fields, and Tide Pools." She is a teacher, botanist, herbalist, environmental educator, co-director of Dandelion Herbal Center,



Allison in tidepool, 2022.

co-founder of Backcountry Press, artist, mother, friend, and always curious student of nature. Allison has been concocting potions since childhood and teaching about plants (and seaweed!) since 2002.

(continued on page 2)

2026-27 Board of Directors & Officers

Officers

President: Lynn Jones
Vice-President: Paul Johnson
Secretary: By Committee
Treasurer: Sue Leskiw *(Ex Officio;* also UPWIND Editor)

Other Board Members

Rachael Aguirre
David Couch
Suzanne Castiglione
Elliott Dabill
Ava Iorizzo
Paul Johnson
Fletcher Linton
Gina Rogers
Jenn Tarlton

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

(continued from p. 1)

Have you made tea from the conifers in your neighborhood or pesto from the "weeds" in your lawn? How about pickles from seaweed you found at the beach? Have you considered WHY these may be beneficial (and fun!) things to do? An abundance of tasty, nutritious, and medicinal plants (and marine algae) surrounds us. In this sensory-rich session we'll go on a virtual foraging foray through the forests, fields, and tide pools of the North Coast. You'll meet many familiar plants and maybe some less-familiar seaweeds—erhaps learning to see them as a new pathway for nature connection along the way.

Holiday Tours on Tap

Join leaders TBD on FOAM's 26th annual Thanksgiving Morning Ramble at the Marsh. If you'd like to set out on a 90-minute leg-stretcher before your big dinner, meet them in front of the Interpretive Center at 10 am on Thursday, November 26. (The building will be open between 10 am and 1:30 pm.)

The always popular King Tide tour will be on Thursday, December 24 and once again be led by Elliott Dabill and Barbara Reisman. Meet at 11:15 am on I Street at the first gravel lot south of Samoa Boulevard (across from the green wall). This will be the biggest tide of the year at 8.9 feet! Wear waterproof shoes or boots and be prepared for a crowd.

On Friday, December 25, join leader Paul Wilson for a Christmas Day tour; meet at 10 am at the Interpretive Center. (The building will be open between 10 am and 1:30 pm.)

On Friday, January 1, join leaders TBD for a New Year's Day tour; meet at 10 am at the Interpretive Center. (It's not known at press time whether the building will be open.)

Tours will happen, rain or shine. Call 707-826-2359 closer to the holiday events if you want to know whether the building will be open.





Elliott Dabill presents bittern statue to Leslie Anderson (at right, holding wooden base), as Sue Leskiw looks on. Photo by Paul Johnson.

FOAM Annual Meeting & Volunteer Lunch

By Sue Leskiw

On Sunday, September 27, FOAM held its 33rd annual meeting at AMIC and the amphitheater. Over 40 members, volunteers, and guests attended.

Barbara Reisman and Jeannie Smalley won Volunteer of the Year awards. Barbara has been leading Marsh interpretive tours since 2014 and helmed the most over the past year (13). She also helps out at special events. Others leading at least 10 tours: Lynn Jones, Paul Wilson, Paul Johnson, and Andy Feinstein.

Jeannie spent 91 hours staffing the AMIC welcome desk. FOAM gave a shout-out to other Top 5 desk staffers Susan Halpin (171.5 hours) and Laurie Takao (85 hours). Susan has been volunteering since 2019 and has won the Volunteer of the Year award twice! Laurie has been volunteering just over a year.

Leslie Scopes Anderson was surprised with a Special Recognition Award of a 2-foot-high glass bittern sculpture with an engraved wooden base. Leslie has been volunteering at the Marsh since 2005. Her many contributions include designing over 20 interpretive signs, laying out and providing photos for FOAM's bird and plant guides, producing brochures, contributing photos to the FOAM website, leading interpretive tours, serving on the FOAM Board, judging the Student Bird Art Contest, lecturing on photography, and updating the Life Member plaque in the AMIC lobby!

Elliott Dabill—who has volunteered for FOAM since 2003 in a myriad of roles—was awarded a framed Certificate of Appreciation (featuring dinosaurs!) for his 11 years serving as FOAM president.

This was the 13th year that FOAM has presented an Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year award, which recognized the rarest bird spotted within/from the Marsh between 9/1/25 and 8/31/26. The winner was Royal Tern, a first Marsh record and second County record, seen by Lucas Stephenson on April 7, 2026. Lucas had first found the bird three days earlier at the mouth of the Elk River in Eureka, then respotted it at the Marsh. It was the 345th avian species confirmed at the Marsh!

Elliott reviewed highlights of the 2025/26 Annual Report (see pages 5&6). Over 40 ballots were received from FOAM members. Paul Johnson was elected to another 3-year term, while Fletcher Linton and Gina Rogers had their interim Board appointments confirmed.

To view a digital copy of this newsletter—in color and with working links—go to [www.arcatamarshfriends.org,](http://www.arcatamarshfriends.org) select FOAM, then Publications, then the issue name (26fall-online).



Heather Schmidt & Barbara Reisman. Photo by Paul Johnson.



Heather Schmidt & Jeannie Smalley. Photo by Paul Johnson.



Paul Johnson & Elliott Dabill. Photo by Sue Leskiw.



Enjoying the feast at the Annual Meeting. Photo by Sue Leskiw.



Mark and Sydney Larson with Lily.

Pisces Portrayed at Klopp

By Sue Leskiw

On October 8, a small group gathered at the northeast corner of Klopp Lake to celebrate the installation of the Marsh's newest interpretive sign. The display features the results of Lily Olmo's study of what fish species inhabit Klopp Lake and Brackish Marsh. Lily's research for her Master's thesis at Cal Poly Humboldt was partially funded by FOAM (see UPWIND summer 2025 and winter 2024/25 issues).

Lily was visiting Humboldt on a break for her Doctoral program at Oregon State University and field work in Hawaii. I was able to gather Mark and Sydney Larson—whose generous donation to FOAM underwrote both the interpretive panel and its branching iron base—as well as Board member Lynn Jones, who worked with me and Paul Johnson to determine the final content of the sign (which was distilled down from two signs that Lily had proposed). Unfortunately, Leslie Anderson, interpretive sign designer extraordinaire, was out of town for the event.



Eloise (left) and Lorelai working on the FOAM square.



Pastels on the Plaza 2026

By Sue Leskiw

As soon as the school year began, I contacted art teacher Ken Weiderman at Zane Middle School in Eureka to see whether one of his winning artists from the 2026 Student Bird Art Contest (SBAC) would be interested in taking the lead on FOAM's 3' x 3' square this October.

As a 7th grader, Lorelai Garcia had wowed the SBAC judges with her colored pencil drawing of a Western Meadowlark. Ken asked Lorelai, who said yes, and enlisted her classmate Eloise to help her with the project. I suggested that the design feature a Belted Kingfisher, a favorite avian of mine.

Lorelai and her parents were able to attend the FOAM annual meeting the weekend before the North Coast Children's Services fundraising event, where she unveiled a full-size sketch of her square to oohs and aahs from attendees.

Thank you, Lorelai, Eloise, and Ken, for sharing your artistic abilities with FOAM, to achieve such a stunning result.

[Editor's Note: Ken relayed a heart-warming story about the aftermath of the 2025 SBAC. One of his 8th graders, Timuulin Page, had won an award for his ingenious take on a Great Blue Heron drawn a la Leonardo da Vinci's mathematical work. Soon afterward, a package arrived at Ken's classroom. When opened, it proved to be a leather-bound, deckle-edged book of Da Vinci's drawings, with a note stating how impressed the anonymous sender had been by Tim's SBAC entry!]



Marsh Wren Earrings Earn $ for FOAM

Sequoia Siren, a Eureka-based, nature-inspired jewelry brand, got inspiration for its new earring design from a Marsh Wren photo taken by Rob Fowler at the Arcata Marsh. You can purchase this tribute to these little songsters, often seen perched on top of cattail cobs just like the earring bird, for $40 at AMIC, with 10% of sales going to FOAM.

Ana Ries and Diana DeAnda design all their own pieces out of salvaged and recycled material, creating representations of Humboldt species and themes. Each piece comes with fun facts to educate about the wonderful biodiversity of Humboldt. "The inspiration behind our collaboration series is to highlight key species—flora, fauna, fungi, and more—that make up all the wonderful local habitats, while raising awareness about the nonprofits and conservation groups that work to protect them."

Sequoia Siren jewelry is available through local gift shops and museums and on Etsy.



Ana Ries, Rob Fowler & Lynn Jones, enjoying the Marsh.



Kids turn in their completed passports for prizes. Photo by Sue Leskiw.

A Rejuvenated TACO Day at the Arcata Marsh

By Malcolm Ridings

On Saturday, October 10, FOAM and a whole slew of other organizations participated in Take A Child Outside (TACO) Day at the Arcata Marsh. Children, parents, and community members were invited to walk around the Butcher's Slough Log Pond Trail. Environmental organizations had hands-on educational activity stations set up, including identifying differences in bird beaks and marine animal matching. A bonus was having FOAM Board member Elliott Dabill stationed in the Interpretive Center, offering microscopic views of freshwater macroinvertebrates projected on the big screen.

The weather was sunny, although strong winds created problem for some booths. The event drew over 60 adults and more than 40 children. People were eager to learn more about the Marsh. We even were able to offer tacos at TACO Day from the Los Giles food truck!

TACO Day was brought back through the hard work of the Humboldt County Office of Education's Community of Practice. This nearly annual event was first held in 2007 at Sequoia Park in Eureka, with the most recent (7th celebration) occurring at the Arcata Marsh in 2019. Jesse Wheeler, Marley Conrad, and myself were part of the committee for TACO Day, which hopes to keep this event ongoing and sustainable. If you would like to be involved or have ideas, please contact amic@cityofarcata.org.

We appreciate all the support and help from FOAM (who provided event insurance, as well as tabling by Lynn Jones and Gina Rogers and photography by Sue Leskiw) and the other participating groups and individuals: Bureau of Land Management, Friends of the Dunes, Elliott Dabill, Rob Fowler, Friends of the Lost Coast, Sequoia Park Zoo, CPH Natural History Museum, Telonicher Marine Lab, North Coast Regional Land Trust, Humboldt County Office of Education, Redwood Chapter of Environmental Educators, College Corps, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, City of Arcata, and Big Lagoon Elementary School.

What's Happening at the Marsh?

By Malcolm Ridings & Rob Fowler

We're well into the changing seasons, with fall beginning to feel…like FALL! Temperatures are starting to cool; as I (Rob) am writing this, I'm wondering why the heck I decided to wear flip flops on October 21!

Flocks of wigeon and other dabbling ducks have pretty much cleared out the duckweed from the enhancement wetlands (Allen, Gearheart, and Hauser). Aleutian Cackling Geese made their noticeable fall debut on the last day of September. All the wintering passerines have shown up, with flocks of Sooty Fox and Golden-crowned Sparrows, with a peppering of Lincoln's and wintering Swamp Sparrows in the mix. Seems like a good year for Oregon Juncos, seen daily around the Interpretive Center since the beginning

(continued on page 7)

2025/26 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 9/29/26)

AMIC and Tour Numbers: 13,069 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center (AMIC) between September 1, 2025 and August 31, 2026, an increase of 501 from the previous 12 months. Two hundred sixty-six of them participated in the 51 Saturday tours led by FOAM docents. There were 34 special-request tours with 505 attendees—a decrease of nine tours but an increase of 71 attendees. Some 196 people attended eight FOAM lectures in person, with an unknown number tuning in via Zoom.

Education: In September, FOAM offered five special tours to celebrate California Biodiversity Week. Leaders were Paul Wilson, Lynn Jones, Elliott Dabill, Paul Johnson, and Barbara Reisman.

In February and April, the Cal Poly Humboldt student club, "Redwood Chapter of Environmental Educators and Interpreters," staffed "pop-up" education stations at the Marsh on bird beak adaptations using skull models underwritten by FOAM.

Thanks to the generosity of the late Sharon Levy's husband Hugh and daughter Maya, free downloads of Sharon's out-of-print Arcata Marsh history book, "The Marsh Builders: The Fight for Clean Water, Wetlands, and Wildlife," became available through the FOAM website. Thanks go to Steve and Lynn Jones for getting it posted. Over 300 downloads have occurred since April!

Rhodes Paris, Andy Feinstein, and Malcolm Ridings put together a short video about FOAM and the Arcata Marsh that is playing for free on Humboldt Transit Authority bus "infotainment screens" for a year.

Board members, treasurer Sue Leskiw, Cal Poly Humboldt graduate Lily Olmo, and Leslie Anderson worked to create a new interpretive sign based on Lily's research on fish species in Klopp Lake and Brackish Pond. A generous donation from Mark and Sydney Larson underwrote manufacturing the sign and its branching iron base.

Both of FOAM's Marsh guidebooks are being updated and expanded. Ken Burton is increasing the number of species in "Common Birds of the Arcata Marsh" from 50 to 60 and updating all frequency graphs. Sue Leskiw is updating the "101 Plants at the Arcata Marsh" volume by adding an appendix that covers the more than 70 native species located in the native plant garden in front of the Interpretive Center. Leslie Anderson serves as graphic artist and photo provider for both.

FOAM's First Wednesday lecture series continued, with presentations by Pete Haggard and Jane Monroe (gardening with native plants), Kevin Huntley (Humboldt insects), Lucy and Nick Kerhoulas (old-growth redwood forests and flying squirrels, respectively), FOAM research grant recipient Lindsey Mountz (Pacific tree frogs), Elliott Dabill (exploring Trinidad), Malcolm Ridings (science interpretation), Clint Pogue (butterfly conservation), and Rachael Aguirre (North Coast salmon restoration),

Public Events: FOAM presented its 12th Arcata Marsh Bird of the Year award at its September 28 annual meeting. The winner was Summer Tanager, a first Marsh record found by Rob Fowler.

In October, FOAM participated in Pastels on the Plaza, a fundraiser for Northcoast Children's Services. Five students from Megan Maier's fifth-grade class at Arcata's Fuente Nueva Charter served as artists. Two Spongeplant removal days were held, where volunteers from College Corps, Cal Poly Humboldt's Natural Resources Club, and FOAM helped clean a big chunk of the Log Pond of this South American invasive plant.

In November, FOAM sponsored its 25th Thanksgiving tour, attended by 15 people and led by Barbara Reisman Tony LaBanca, Peter Warner, and Ren Bunce.

In December, Elliott Dabill and Barbara Reisman led a King Tide tour, attended by around 40 people. FOAM's Christmas tour was attended by 30 people and led by Paul Wilson. Rachael Aguirre organized a workday where 15 volunteers removed Himalayan blackberries near the Interpretive Center.

On New Year's Day, Paul Johnson and Barbara Reisman led a tour for 10 people.

In February, Sue Leskiw pulled together a gala thank-you reception for people who joined FOAM during 2025, as part of the "35@35" membership campaign. The end result of the campaign was 67 new members, when the previous year had only 14! In addition to these "newbies," FOAM Life Members were invited, with nearly 65 people attending. Sue provided a plethora of nature-related prizes for new members to select from.

In March, for the 20th year, FOAM sponsored awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair. Judges Sue Leskiw, Lynn Jones, and Paul Johnson awarded three cash prizes. First place went to Olivia Brown and Brooke Webb, 5th-graders at Pacific Union School, for "Flood fighters: testing flood barrier methods." The second prize winner was Quetzal Heacock, an 8th-grader at Jacoby Creek School, for "How benthic macroinvertebrates are a good indicator of stream health." Third place was awarded to Ayla Dunn, Georgia Wilson, and Aidan Pryot, 7th-graders at Northcoast Preparatory Academy, for "Killer walnuts."

In April, FOAM—as well as Sequoia Park Zoo and Friends of the Dunes—participated in the City Nature Challenge, where nature data was collected via an iNaturalist project. Some 2901 observations were collected involving 961 distinct species.

(continued on page 6)

Also in April, in partnership with Redwood Region Audubon Society, FOAM sponsored the 23rd annual Student Bird Art Contest. Six hundred seventy-nine entries were received from Humboldt County students in grades K-12. Forty-two cash prizes and 33 honorable mentions were given out at an April ceremony during Godwit Days, with winning students photographed by Paul Johnson. Seven FOAM volunteers helped post all the art entries during the festival, while copies of the winners were displayed at AMIC in May and June.

For the fourth year, FOAM staffed the Friday opening reception at Godwit Days. Maria Baron recruited seven volunteers to pour drinks and wash dishes. Six FOAM volunteers hosted three tables of activities as part of a Saturday afternoon family nature crafts "mega-palooza." Nine volunteers took shifts at FOAM's information and sales table. Mark Wilson led a kids' nature walk at the Marsh.

In May, FOAM tabled at the Creek Days event in Humboldt Redwoods State Park and at World Otter Day at Sequoia Park Zoo. Volunteers were Lynn Jones, Rhodes Paris, and Gina Rogers.

In June, Redwood Curtain Brewing Company, our South I Street neighbor, hosted a Pints for Nonprofits that brought in $225 to FOAM. Rachael Aguirre compiled and asked questions of seven teams during a Marsh trivia game, while Lynn Jones, Gina Rogers, and Barbara Reisman volunteered at the event.

Andy Feinstein continued his monthly bicycling interpretive tours of the Marsh (every Second Sunday), with backup from Lynn Jones and Gail Coonen. Lynn Jones continued her monthly nature journaling sessions (every last Sunday).

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. Participating artists/photographers were Paul and Nancy Rickard, Louise Bacon-Ogden, Roberta "Berti" Welty, Laura Cutler, winners of the Student Bird Art Contest, and Don Bowlus.

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, art exhibits, and other special events at the Marsh. Lynn Jones handles Facebook and Instagram posting. Sue Leskiw sends out public service announcements and manages the member/volunteer list serve. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND.

City Relations: FOAM funded two "Volunteer of the Year" awards, presented to Lynn Jones for leading 20 interpretive tours, serving as secretary, handling social media, and working on many special projects, while Rhodes Paris was recognized for staffing the AMIC desk, taking on special outreach projects, and booth staffing. Special recognition awards were given to retiring Board members Andy Feinstein and Maria Baron. Sue Leskiw was surprised by a framed Certificate of Outstanding Service proclaiming her "Volunteer of the Decade."

Miscellaneous: The Interpretive Center has new light-blocking blinds and an upgraded audiovisual system for presentations.

Membership: As of August 31, FOAM had 234 members (down nine from last year). One hundred fourteen are Regular members, 83 are reachable Life Members, and 37 are Life Members that either are deceased or have an undeliverable address.

Fiscal Accounts: As of August 31, FOAM had a checking account balance of $29,619.98, plus $101,414.09 in its Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF) account. [NOTE: $25K was transferred from checking to HAF on 8/17/26.]

Expenditures totaled $27,312 and revenues totaled $46,972. ($740 in reimbursements are not included in either total.) The largest expenditures incurred were for 1) new Interpretive Center blinds ($5320); 2) fish interpretive sign and iron base ($3097), 3) new Interpretive Center A/V system ($2636), 4) Marsh brochures printing ($2068), 5) liability insurance ($1865), and 6) UPWIND printing and mailing ($1263). Revenue sources were donations ($39,255, including $30,000 in honor of Ken Conlin), membership dues ($6807), and merchandise sales ($910). FOAM gained $10,609.70 on its HAF Fund between 7/1/25 and 8/31/26 (including one $500 donation), while paying management fees of $1289.89.

Board of Directors: Eight current Board Members—Rachael Aguirre, Suzanne Castiglione, David Couch, Elliott Dabill, Ava Iorizzo, Lynn Jones, Rhodes Paris, and Jenn Tarlton—are continuing their terms. Paul Johnson is running for another term. Fletcher Linton and Gina Rogers are running to confirm their interim appointments.

— Elliott Dabill, *President*

(continued from page 4)



George Ziminsky snagging the pot. Photo by Rob Fowler.

of October. The dominant warbler is Yellow-rumped. Look in wax myrtle clumps, pish, and see how many fly out!

Fall is when many birders look for oddball vagrants that—by varying mechanisms—find themselves off course and where they shouldn't be. The most exciting vagrant this fall was a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher found by CPH student Isaac Ward on October 2 that continued through the 7th. This was the second record for the Marsh and third for Humboldt County. An estimated 100 birders came to search out this tropical species that only makes it to southeastern Arizona as a US breeding bird. Other rarities: warblers (Blackburnians, Black-and-white, Tennessee, and Northern Parula), plus a Clay-colored Sparrow.

The otter family continued most days in Klopp Lake, with the three pups nearly the same size as adults. A few single otters have been seen around the Marsh, likely stalking ducks. On September 7, a mink—rare for the Marsh—was seen by Lynn Jones and her California Biodiversity Week field trip! Almost as rare, a Long-tailed Weasel has been spotted several times, mostly around Klopp Lake, and a Gray Fox also has been seen a couple of times.

FOAM Board member Rachael Aguirre has been organizing workdays. Blackberries and other invasives have been knocked back near AMIC by hard-working volunteers. The native plant garden may be expanded into the newly cleared space.

After Malcolm's failed attempt to recover the large metal pot that had been discarded in the slough in front of AMIC, George Ziminsky came to the rescue, braving muck and brambles to retrieve it. Now visitors and volunteers shall no longer have to bear witness to the ghastly sight of a polluted slough!

Wetlands Mitigation Work Along the Log Pond Trail

By Gina Rogers

Did you notice all the construction activity taking place along the northern segment of the Log Pond trail during September? Maybe you even had a planned walk aborted because the trail was closed? Well, this was work by the City of Arcata to create additional, improved wetland habitat at the Marsh.

Concrete was removed from the banks of Butcher Slough by a long-reach excavator and then hauled out to be recycled locally. Vegetation had to be taken out to facilitate the concrete removal, so a large pile of woodchips was brought in to help stabilize the creek bed.

The work, completed by late September, was funded as mitigation for the 0.08 acre of permanent wetland damage caused by the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Facility Phase I Improvement Project.

It is always jarring to see disruptions along the Marsh trails like those caused by this project. The vegetation removal did include getting rid of invasives like Himalayan blackberry and cotoneaster. But willow trees, alder snags, and berry bushes well-used for wildlife habitat had to be removed as well.

The good news is that the City will be replanting along the slough this winter, using native vegetation. And there are lots of trees on the other side of the trail and across the slough. Getting rid of the concrete will create a healthier, more free-flowing stream and invasive removal will make space for native plants.

One lesson learned from past restoration projects and habitat maintenance at the Marsh is just how



Mitigation work along Butcher Slough at north end of Log Pond. Photo by Rob Fowler, 7/11/26.

quickly wildlife adjusts. Remember when the overgrown vegetation was cut back in Hauser Marsh in September 2025? The wide openness left by vegetation removal and loss of a key otter trail were worrisome.

But Cal Poly Humboldt otter researcher Jeff Black monitored otters' use of that slide between Hauser and Klopp Lake during the construction, capturing video of the otter family crossing there with the excavator right behind them. Wood Ducks and Blue-winged Teal were among the special species enjoying the newly open water. Check out this video showing the otter family crossing with piles of removed vegetation in the background: youtu.be/j6D-kxrwdIY (Jeff Black, 9/7/25).

Another recently completed wetlands restoration project near the Marsh also attracts attention. The former Little Lake Industries Mill Site – located adjacent to the Arcata Marsh – is owned and managed by the City. It has been the location of a long-running wetlands remediation project. The City received a US Environmental Protection Agency grant to remove contaminated soil, with clean-up activities completed in 2026.

You can see some of the results when driving on I Street, looking east, and also from the northwest corner of the Log Pond Trail where the bridge crosses Butcher Slough. Future uses under discussion include wetlands integration with the Arcata Marsh, a public dog park, open space, walking trails, and light industrial or RV residential uses that recognize the future implications of sea level rise there.



Andy and his bike Ernie.

A Virginia Rail Call to Volunteering

By Andy Feinstein

Tomorrow I'm going to ride my trusty bicycle Ernie but today I chose to walk. Ernie is a good bike. A Surly Disc Trucker. Comfy. Heavy. Made to carry lots of gear and climb mountains. He and I rode the 4400 miles from Astoria, Oregon to Yorktown, Virginia on the Transamerica Bike Trail in 2021. Then from Trinidad, California to Santa Barbara in April 2026. Both bike tours were self-supported and some of the greatest events of my life so far.

Today, I park the car near Arcata's wastewater treatment facility on South G Street, across from Redwood Curtain Brewing Company, and wonder if I'll go there afterwards for a Sticky Fingers IPA and halibut and chips, with extra lemon. As I start walking along the Ox (oxidation ponds) Trail, a boy passes me quickly on his bicycle, then stops, while his adult male counterpart slowly jogs behind. The lad is wearing a helmet. I stand aside while the jogger passes to catch up with the young cyclist.

Turning the corner between Oxidation Pond One and Oxidation Pond Two, I hear Brown Pelican wings flap on the water. The floating propeller-type aerators whirr as they draw in air and mix it into the wastewater pond. The added oxygen fuels the algae and bacteria, which break down organic waste in a symbiotic cycle. But an unusual sound catches my attention. I take out my Cornell Lab of Ornithology Merlin app and press record. It listens momentarily, then reveals "Virginia Rail" somewhere among the cattails and pennywort.

I love my bicycle and I love the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. The combination of the two perpetually amazes, entertains, and impresses me, which is one reason why I started Second Sunday Cycling interpretive tours in 2024. At that time, I was leading walking tours for FOAM, which focused on "The Three W's": **W**etlands, **W**ildlife, and the integral, innovative **W**astewater Treatment Facility. I soon realized that the best way to see the major components of the water treatment process and how it integrates with the Arcata Marsh, from headworks to discharge, was by bike. I wrote up a tour proposal, presented it to the FOAM Board of Directors, and have been rolling monthly since.

As the name implies, Second Sunday Cycling meets every second Sunday at 2 pm at the Interpretive Center. Tours lasting 1.5 to 2 hours travel on flat paths, some paved, some gravel. Typically the tour visits the Log Pond, passes the wastewater treatment facility, and rolls out to the oxidation ponds and treatment marshes. It then continues around Klopp Lake, over Mount Trashmore, past the three enhancement marshes, then back to the Interpretive Center, stopping to see the red-legged frogs. Unexpected beauty unfolds in every direction on every tour, as participating cyclists add their knowledge, questions, and humor.

That said, after almost 3 years of being the primary tour leader, I'm looking to expand and enhance the program. Interested volunteers could lead tours, help with marketing, and/or provide tour development ideas and actions. Being a cyclist is not necessary and the commitment is flexible. It can be a great volunteer opportunity to support this unique, comprehensive, and fulfilling tour of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.

I never did see that elusive Virginia Rail, nor hear its call again. But it inspired me to extend the call to you to be part of the Second Sunday Cycling team. If interested, please email me at hoverbird22@gmail.com.



Pop-up station at Klopp Lake.

Bird Beak Pop Up Interpretation at the Marsh

By Jenn Tarlton

What can a bird's beak tell us about what and how it eats? Visitors to the Arcata Marsh got a chance to explore this question through a new pop-up interpretation station focused on bird beak adaptations.

The interpretation station is built around a bird beak matching activity originally created for the Wonders of Wetlands program. Students from Cal Poly Humboldt's (CPH) campus club, the Redwood Chapter of Environmental Educators and Interpreters, developed additional hands-on and interactive activities, along with a docent guide for leading the station.

Students piloted the station twice, on February 21 and April 25, just off the Klopp Lake parking lot. Each event lasted about 90 minutes and generated around 50 visitor contacts. This gave students a chance to test the activity, assess the docent guide, practice interpretation, and observe how visitors responded to the station. With this valuable feedback, the station is nearly complete and will be delivered to the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center for FOAM docents to use with visitors in fall of 2026.

Students and FOAM are already looking ahead and planning an otter pop-up for next spring.

[Editor's Note: CPH students also set up the bird beak pop-up for the FOAM Annual Meeting on September 27 and Take a Child Outside Day on October 10.]



Biodiversity Tours Held

FOAM once again celebrated California Diversity Day by offering six special tours between September 6 and 13.

Paul Wilson kicked it off by exploring species richness. Next up were Lynn Jones and Paul Johnson, helping attendees complete the "Find 30 Species Challenge" using iNaturalist. The following day, Paul Johnson guided people to find unseen parts of biodiversity (living things most people never notice along Marsh trails).

Then, Lynn Jones,asked "how do we increase and steward greater biodiversity?" Elliott Dabill instructed attendees how to identify eight common Arcata Marsh plant families. The closing tour was led by Barbara Reisman, introducing participants to lichens at the Marsh.

Visitor Log

In addition to California, visitors signing the AMIC logbook since the summer issue of UPWIND hailed from 23 states: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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.



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER ARTISTS PAUL & NANCY RICKARD

Celebrating the Marsh in Watercolor & Pastel: Marsh, Wetland & Bay

Paul and Nancy have devoted the last 14 years to the practice of plein air painting. Paul finds inspiration from the dark pines and tall redwoods and resiliency in the gray skies and ever-changing tides. Above all, he is driven to express the wonder of both the mundane and the magnificent through watercolors. Nancy discovered a passion for soft pastels and interprets the landscape through a prism of color. Her work expresses the rich shades of light, dark, and the atmosphere with the pure pigment of pastels.

They continue to host a weekly free community paint-out every Sunday, help organize the Humboldt Open Paint-out each year, and collaborate with local schools to support the arts.

Join Nancy and Paul for a free opening reception on Sunday, November 8 from 1-3 pm at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center.

Calendar of Events

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

November/December—Paintings by Paul & Nancy Rickard

November 4—Processes of Arcata Marsh/student research lecture by Bob Gearheart, Elise Culbertson, and Zach Sherman, 7 pm (see p. 1)

November 8—Cycling tour with Andy Feinstein, 2 pm

November 8—Rickard art reception, 1-3 pm

November 12—FOAM Board meeting, 6:30-8 pm

November 26—Thanksgiving Morning Ramble, 10 am (see p. 2)

November 29—Nature journaling with Lynn Jones, 10 am

December 1—Wild foods of forests, fields and tide pools lecture by Allison Poklemba, 7 pm (see p. 2)

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

December 13—Cycling tour with Andy Feinstein, 2 pm

December 24—King Tide Tour, 11:15 am (see p. 2)

December 25—Christmas Day Tour, 10 am (see p. 2)

December 27—Nature journaling with Lynn Jones, 10 am

January/February—Plant art by Laurin Picl

January 1—New Year's Day Tour, 10 am (see p. 2)

January 10—Cycling tour with Andy Feinstein, 2 pm

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

January 31—Nature journaling with Lynn Jones, 10 am

Thanks to Our Supporters, August-mid-October 2026

► **Best Friends** ($100+): Elaine Gorman (NEW Life Member); Roger James & Mary Gelinas (NEW Life Members); Carolyn Jones; Jane Riggan; Gina Rogers; Emily Sinkhorn; John & Donna Sloan; James Smith Jr

► **Supporters** ($50-99): Margaret Abels; Karen Angel (NEW Life Member); Kathy D'Or-Reid*; Bob Felter; Nancy Ihara; Bob & Bonita Peck

► **Friends** ($18-49): Blake Bailey; Tatum Carlin; Suzanne Castiglione; Roberta Duggan (Missoula, MT); George Green; Lynn Hornecker; Paul Johnson; Jean Kaiwi; Gabrielle Kirk; Robbin Kohn; Cynthia Kuttner; Ggina Lawrence; Karen Lu; Barbara Reisman; John & Nancy Vanspeybroeck; Tamara Wolski

► **Donations from Life Members:** Susan Holt, $500; Stuart Moskowitz, $500; Dan Hauser, $100; Ed Murray, $100; Rich Ridenhour, $100

► **Other Donations:** AMIC donation box, $410.80

* = New member

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Mark Your Calendar for:

Marsh Processes/Student Research Lecture, 11/4

Art Reception, 11/8

Bike Tours, 11/8, 12/13, 1/10

Nature Journaling, 11/29, 12/27, 1/31

Thanksgiving Ramble, 11/26

Wild Foods Lecture, 12/1 (Tuesday)

King Tide Tour, 12/24

Christmas Tour, 12/25

New Year's Day Tour, 1/1

FOAM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & DONATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please mark the appropriate category. Make any check payable to "FOAM."

___ Individual $25 ___ Family $35 ___ Student/Senior $18 ___ Sponsor $50

___ Best Friend $100 ___ Life Member $750 ___ Donation of $ _____

___ Send me information about volunteering for Friends of the Arcata Marsh.

FOAM, PO Box 410, Arcata CA 95518 www.**arcatamarshfriends.org** **info@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. The Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center street address (not for mail) is 569 South G Street, Arcata. The FOAM mailing address is PO Box 410, Arcata CA 95518. You can reach us by phone from 1 to 5 pm on Monday and from 10 am to 5 pm Tuesday through Sunday at 707-826-2359 or by e-mail at info@arcatamarshfriends.org.