



UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh
Interpretive Center
Vol 16, Issue 4, Fall 2009

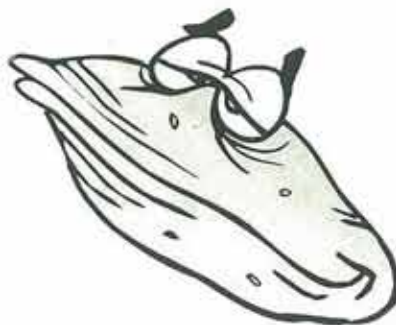
In This Issue: Lectures & Forum... Invasives Workday... Segway Update... Annual Meeting & Election Results... Slow Speed Tour... Thanksgiving & New Year's Day Walks... Naturalist Column... Annual Report... Docent Training Held... Camper Appreciation... Pastels on the Plaza... Artist Statement... Battery Roundup... Visitor Log... Calendar of Upcoming Events... Thanks to Supporters

Special Events Every Thursday in October

In recognition of Coastweeks, FOAM is sponsoring three lectures and one public forum. All events are free and refreshments will be served.

Thursday, October 8, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center. HSU chemistry professor Matt Hurst will report final results of his study of water samples from the Arcata Marsh and Humboldt Bay. Dr Hurst has been examining seasonal variation in heavy metals and other substances.

Thursday, October 15, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Arcata Community Center Senior Room. Forum on Humboldt Bay Regional *Spartina* Eradication Project, co-sponsored by the City of Arcata. Learn about efforts to restore native plants and wildlife to our salt marshes by controlling invasive *Spartina*, a non-native cordgrass, in Humboldt Bay, the Eel River Delta, and the Mad River Estuary. Speakers representing the San Francisco Estuary Invasive *Spartina* Project, California Coastal Conservancy, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District will present information on *Spartina* biology and control as well as the planning process for the eradication project.



Thursday, October 22, 7-8 p.m., Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center. HSU graduate students Teresa Persons and Mary Burke will present on their research at the Marsh. Persons will speak on "Enhancement Marsh Water Quality Study," while Burke (who received a research grant from FOAM) will enlighten us on "Evaluation of Biological Oxygen Demand and Total Suspended Solids in the Arcata Wastewater Treatment Plant."

Thursday, October 29, 7-8 p.m., Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center. HSU graduate students Julie and Robert Koepfel and FOAM Board member David Couch will provide an update on the Native Oyster Restoration research ongoing at the Marsh.

Work Day Changed to Oct. 24

On Saturday, October 24, FOAM and the City of Arcata are cosponsoring a work day at the Marsh. Volunteers will remove invasive plants such as anise along South I Street from 9 am to 1 pm. Meet at the first I Street parking lot in from Samoa Boulevard. Dress to get dirty and bring work gloves. The City will provide tools, bags, drinks, and snacks. To help, call Dennis at 825-2163.

Segway Update

By Sue Leskiw

As this went to press, FOAM was continuing to follow up with the City about possible commercial Segway scooter tours at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary. Much has happened in the month since the FOAM Board became aware of a contract approved by Arcata City Council on 4/15/09 that opened the door for North Coast Adventure Centers (NCAC) to operate such tours.

At our 9/10 meeting, a straw poll of FOAM Board members found 6 against and 2 in favor of Segway tours at the Marsh. Redwood Region Audubon Society's Conservation Committee opposed the project at its 9/17 meeting.

The *North Coast Journal* devoted a full page to the topic on 9/24, precipitated by my husband Tom's post to the Northwest California Birds listserve. On 10/1, the *NCJ* published two letters to the editor, penned by myself and fellow Board member Bob Rasmussen. E-mails, voice-mails, and personal conversations have been happening among your FOAM Board, Audubon representatives, City staff, Council members, and folks who want to keep the Marsh free from motorized recreation.

The NCAC website currently advertises tours of the Arcata Marsh, Community Forest, and Downtown via these "electric personal assistive mobility devices" (no prices and schedules listed). However, on 9/29, Interim City Manager

2009-10 Board of Directors & Officers

Officers

President: Sue Leskiw (also UPWIND Editor; Mailing; Publicity; Exhibits; Scrapbook; Website) — 442-5444

Vice-President: Elliott Dabill (also Education; Computer) — 601-6068

Secretary: Janet Zich (also Membership; Website, Bylaws) — 822-4660

Treasurer: Art Barab (also Saturday Tour Coordinator; Exhibits) — 826-7017

Other Board Members

Katy Allen — 822-2312

Leslie Anderson (Design; Art Exhibits; Website) — 822-6444

Ken Burton (Habitat Concerns; Education) — 825-1124

David Couch (Special Events; Bylaws) — 839-4253

Robert Rasmussen (Education; Bylaws) — 822-5305

Lance Torgerson (Education) — 826-1525

(continued on page 5)

2009 Annual Meeting & Election Results

On Sunday, October 4, FOAM held its 15th annual meeting at the AMIC. Approximately 30 people attended the albacore barbecue lunch by David Couch, with FOAM Board members providing side dishes.

Board president Sue Leskiw reviewed highlights of the 2008/09 FOAM Annual Report (see pages 5&6). She also reported the results of the election: 32 ballots were returned by members in good standing. Confirmed as a Board member was Katy Allen. Re-elected for a second term were Leslie Anderson, Elliott Dabill, and Sue Leskiw. [NOTE: Two seats remain open on the FOAM board.]

City naturalist Denise Homer selected Megan McCue and Colleen Russell as Volunteers of the Year for their many hours staffing the front desk at the Interpretive Center and leading tours. Each received a certificate and \$25 credit in the Interpretive Center bookstore.



Slow Speed Tour Takes Off

By Art Barab

On September 3, FOAM Board members Bob Rasmussen and I conducted a limited mobility tour of the Marsh. The outing was aimed at providing an outdoor experience for those unable to keep up during our regular Saturday tours.

Twelve people attended, nine of them from Eureka's Alder Bay assisted living facility. We began at the Interpretive Center, where Bob spoke briefly about Marsh history and answered questions. We then worked our way toward the wastewater treatment plant, which afforded participants a nice view from the trail on a beautiful afternoon. Ideally, we might have begun the tour at the I Street parking lot, but the Klopp Lake levees were under repair and the area closed to visitors on weekdays.

Our guests expressed their sincere appreciation, making the event a success that could be repeated in the future. Bob and I noted that even well-maintained, relatively level Marsh paths proved a difficult traverse for those in wheelchairs or using walkers. Minor improvements might make the trails more user-friendly for those of limited mobility.



2009-10 FOAM Board Members. Front row (from left): Katy Allen, Janet Zich, Sue Leskiw, Ken Burton, Bob Rasmussen. Back row: Lance Torgerson, Elliott Dabill, Leslie Anderson, David Couch.

Two Holiday Sojourns

FOAM is pleased to confirm the continuation of two special walks at the Arcata Marsh.

First, veteran tour leader Art Barab will lead his 10th annual Thanksgiving morning meander on Thursday, November 26 at 10 am. Meet on the porch of the Interpretive Center (building will be closed for the holiday) for this 90-minute appetite builder.

Then, naturalist Jenny Hanson will help you celebrate the New Year with a 2-hour ramble starting at 1:30 pm on Friday, January 1. Meet her at the Klopp Lake parking lot at the end of I Street.

Seasons Around the Marsh – Fall

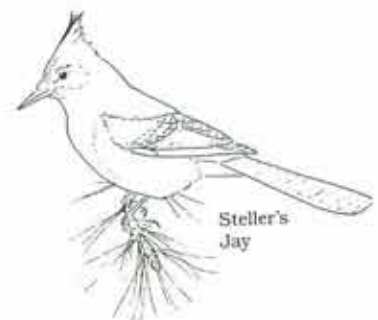
By Denise Homer

I spent the first few days of fall camping with friends on the wild and scenic Smith River. The water is blue and so clear you can see the bottom of the river. One morning, I saw a Great Blue Heron at the edge of the river.

It's a tradition to listen for the first bird you hear in the morning. I wondered what that might be, knowing I'd be up before the stars left the sky. I hadn't been awake very long when I heard the rattling call of a Belted Kingfisher. We watched the starry sky shift into dawn in silence. The sun rose over the mountains at 9 am and it was then that the Steller's Jays began calling back and forth. Each day, the jays were silent until the sun appeared.

Collecting downed wood in the forest, I could hear the river rushing over the rocks and the wind in the trees. Picking up a stick, I heard a soft thud next to me. I looked over to see an acorn. I picked it up and put it in my pocket. I wanted that reminder once I got home to my busy life that sometimes the most important thing is to listen for the first bird call of the morning, to listen to the river, to listen to acorns falling.

Returning to the marsh after being away, I noticed that fall had arrived there, too. Suddenly, lots more leaves were off the trees, opening up new vistas. As I walked the path around Allen Marsh, I found a Woolly Bear Caterpillar, a sure sign of fall. The ducks had started to arrive in my absence and the ponds were now full of Gadwall, American Widgeon, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, and Coot. Even the weather had shifted into the brisk nights and mornings of fall, while days are sunny and warm. Walking around reacquainting myself with the marsh and the changes of fall reminded me of Edwin Teale, who said, "Change is a measure of time and, in autumn, time seems speeded up. What was is not and never again will be; what is is change."



Steller's Jay

2008/09 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 10/4/09)

Tours: Some 20,469 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2008 and August 2009, down nearly 400 from the previous 12-month period. Some participated in the weekly 2 pm tours offered rain or shine by FOAM docents. Tours of the wastewater treatment plant were given the last Saturday of each month by Alan Laurent. FOAM provided docents for about 125 special-request group tours, ranging from classrooms – preschool through college — to community groups.

Education: On July 29, for the second year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society partnered to offer a day-long session for nine children age 9-12 at the Arcata Marsh. The module was part of the Wildlife Biology week of the Arcata Recreation Department's Natural Resources Science Camp. The curriculum consisted of a bird walk, a "Mud Walk," and viewing of invertebrates collected from the Bay and Log Pond through microscopes. Instructors were Sean Craig, Bob Rasmussen, Elliott Dabill, Kerry Ross, and Lauren Tompkins. Sue Leskiw pulled together the schedule. FOAM also sponsored two children to attend the camp.

For the fourth year, FOAM funded an award at the Humboldt County Science Fair in March. The \$50 prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Tanner Doan, a 6th-grader at Blue Lake Elementary School. His project, entitled "Oil Spill," examined what material will work best to clean motor oil off the surface of water. Sue Leskiw and Elliott Dabill served as judges.

After many years of discussion and several false starts, the FOAM website launched. Leslie Anderson and Sue Leskiw worked closely with site designer Bob Tucker. The URL is www.arcatamarshfriends.org. FOAM also contributed information and funding to update the Arcata Marsh website created years ago by HSU students.

FOAM awarded a \$1275 research grant to HSU student Mary Burke, to support her project to assess the Arcata Marsh for carbon sequestration. Her advisor is Robert Gearheart, emeritus professor of environmental engineering.

City Naturalist Denise Homer and Sue Leskiw have been participating in quarterly meetings of the California Regional Environmental Education Community (CREEC). Denise is collaborating with an eighth-grade class from Sunny Brae Middle School to create a "Quest" at the Marsh.

Although Wetlands on Wheels (WOW) was slated to operate in spring 2008, not enough instructors were recruited through the Redwood Science Project at HSU to make the program viable.

Training Opportunities: Docent training was offered twice: 14 people completed a 2-day training on March 28-29 and five attended a session on September 12, both organized by Elliott Dabill. Instructors were Bob Rasmussen, David Couch, Ken Burton, Melinda Bailey, Elliott Dabill, and Sean Craig. A docent training collaboration with Friends of the Dunes began with a 4-hour "mini-session" on May 9, where Bob Rasmussen and Jenny Hanson offered pointers on interpretation.

Public Events: In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon Society, FOAM sponsored the sixth Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. Nearly 550 entries were received from grades K-12 throughout Humboldt County! Thirty-five cash prizes and 17 honorable mentions were awarded at the Godwit Days opening reception. The winning entries were displayed at the Interpretive Center during May. FOAM continued funding the award category of "Best Depiction of a Bird in its Habitat," with five winners selected. Judges were Leslie Anderson, Louise Bacon-Ogden, Art Barab, Gary Bloomfield, Denise Homer, Sue Leskiw, Marsha Mello, and Sara Starr.

For the seventh and eighth consecutive years, FOAM was the beneficiary of the California AAA Great Battery Roundup. Some 589 expired car, boat, and motorcycle batteries were turned in at Humboldt County locations during the April 2008 collection period (representing \$1178 for FOAM) and 226 (\$452) in April 2009, when the collection sites were limited to AAA-participating shops.

In October, FOAM continued its participation in Arcata's "Pastels on the Plaza" fundraiser, sponsoring a sidewalk square design by Leslie Anderson and carried out by Marliese Tollner featuring a Great Blue Heron. In November, Art Barab led his ninth consecutive Thanksgiving Day morning "leg stretcher" for 31 people, while Jenny Hanson started what we hope to be a new tradition of a New Year's Day walk that attracted 14. Art Barab and Bob Rasmussen led a slow-speed tour for 12 people with limited mobility on September 3.

[continued on page 4]

In April, FOAM continued its participation in the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival. Many children and their parents took part in FOAM's free family nature activities coordinated by Sue Leskiw and Darlene Marlow, ably assisted by volunteers Erin Casper and Hannah Schwent. The kids made Arcata Marsh water cycle bracelets, peanut butter pinecone bird feeders, 3-D paper birds and butterflies, and fish prints. A 90-minute tour of the wastewater plant by David Couch was offered as part of the festival schedule. FOAM volunteers staffed an information and sales table in the Bird Fair vendor area, coordinated by Janet Zich.

Marsh and Wildlife Through the Eyes of Local Artists: Since December 1998, FOAM has sponsored monthly art shows representative of the scenery, plants, birds, and animals that inhabit the Marsh and Humboldt Bay. Our goal has been to provide interpretive works that reflect the beauty, ecology, and history of the Marsh as well as serve as a sales venue for our many talented local artists. This past year, etchings by Marsha Mello, fiber art by Yael Bentovim, photographs by Dana Utman, watercolors and monotype prints by Patricia Sennott, artwork by Jay Brown, photographs by Leslie and Mike Anderson, poems and artwork by Lance Torgerson, paintings by She'ifa Punla-Green and Benjamin Green (a father-daughter combo), and pastels by Libby George were featured. Leslie Anderson organized receptions for many of the artists. Winners of the Godwit Days student bird art contest were displayed in May.

Publicity & Communication: We would like to thank newspapers, radio, and TV stations for helping us get the message out about our weekly tours, docent training, art receptions and exhibits, and other special events at the Marsh. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND, which is mailed to an average of 250 addresses throughout the US. Anyone can receive a free issue by signing the guest book with a full address.

City Relations: FOAM continued its partnership with the City of Arcata on Marsh work days to remove invasive plants. On October 11, Sue Leskiw, Ken Burton, David Couch, and Elliott Dabill joined the president of the local native plant society and 10 students from the HSU Natural Resources Club to remove Himalayaberry bushes, grub out coyote brush roots, and extract teasel on Mt Trashmore. Sue arranged for Channel 3 News to feature the effort on its Friday "Green Segment." Ken Burton continued a partnership with the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society to collect native seeds for reseeding sites after invasives are removed.

FOAM funded two "Volunteer of the Year" awards, presented to Alan Laurent and Wayne Butterfield at the September 28 Annual Meeting.

Several board members were on hand in September when the City of Arcata celebrated the dedication of a recognition plaque at the Interpretive Center.

FOAM contributed \$2000 toward construction of a "floating dock" at the I Street boat launch. Installation has been delayed until reconstruction of the Klopp Lake levee and armoring of the roosting islands is completed this fall.

A series of break-ins at the Interpretive Center led to discontinuation of the FOAM donation box.

Membership: As of September 11, FOAM had 122 members in good standing, down one from a year ago. Fifty-four are Life Members, of which five are known to be deceased and eight for which we have no current address.

Fiscal Accounts: As of the end of August 2009, FOAM had a checking account balance of \$11,191, plus a certificate of deposit for \$34,651. The largest expenditures this year was a \$2000 donation to the City of Arcata for construction of a floating dock at the end of I Street. Other significant expenses have been scholarships, prizes/expenses for the Student Bird Art Contest, printing and mailing UPWIND, and purchase of a flex cam. FOAM's largest revenue source is membership dues, which has provided \$4825 during the last fiscal year. Over the last eight years, FOAM has received a total of \$13,613 from the state AAA as the beneficiary of its Battery Roundup program. However, it is likely that this annual contribution will end with this year's donation. A series of break-ins and thefts at the Interpretive Center has caused FOAM to remove its donation box from the counter. This loss, plus the termination of CSAA revenues, puts FOAM in the position of being a deficit spender in the immediate future. However, the organization's financial position will allow continued operation for many years.

Board of Directors: Five current Board Members will be continuing: Ken Burton, David Couch, Robert Rasmussen, Lance Torgerson, and Janet Zich. Running for second terms are Leslie Anderson, Elliott Dabill, and Sue Leskiw; running for a first term is Katy Allen. Lumei Hui resigned before completing her term. Art Barab is retiring from the Board, but will continue as treasurer. One opening remains on the Board.

-- Sue Leskiw, President

Fall Docent Training Held

FOAM docent training was held on September 12. Attendees were instructed about Marsh history, plants, wastewater treatment, ecology, and interpretation techniques by Bob Rasmussen, Elliott Dabill, Melinda Bailey, and Sean Craig. Elliott Dabill organized the session. Docents will complete their training by attending at least two applicable sessions (lectures or walks) offered through Friends of the Dunes.

Congratulations to trainees Josh DeWare, David Fluston, Leonard Ilgunas, Lianna Winkler-Prins, and Jane Wilson.

Campers Send Appreciation

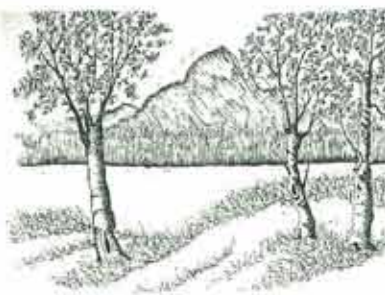
The last issue of UPWIND (Summer) reported on the Wildlife Biology camp session co-sponsored by FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society. FOAM underwrote the cost of two children to attend a week-long camp by the Arcata Recreation Department.

One of them sent a multi-page thank-you note that will be excerpted here: "My experience was great, from walking in the mud at the Marsh to mooing at the cows.... After lunch, we searched for clams in the stinky mud - it was SO fun." The other camper liked the bird watching and the spotting scope. "I feel real lucky that I got to take the wildlife camp. Your camp had just enough fun and wildlife for a kid. If Friends of the Arcata Marsh didn't give me a scholarship, I could not have gone."



FOAM Square on Arcata Plaza

FOAM again participated in Pastels on the Plaza on October 3. Board member Leslie Anderson, with help from Judy Sears, created a wonderful Wood Duck image. FOAM Life Members Lee and Chris House underwrote the cost of the square. The event functioned as both a fundraiser for North Coast Children's Services and publicity for FOAM.



NOVEMBER ARTIST LOUISE BACON-OGDEN

As a lifelong nature and bird lover, Louise has embraced her creative nature on paper. Since retiring from owning and operating Strictly for the Birds in Old Town Eureka, she has turned her attention to art. For about five years, Louise has engaged in numerous art classes.

Her favorite medium is graphite pencil, yet she has dabbled in pen and ink, Sumi-e (Japanese ink painting), watercolor pencils, colored pencils, scratchboard, and mosaics. Louise loves any animal or nature theme for most of her work.

To see more artwork or discuss a commissioned piece, call Louise at 445-8304.

More Battery Money to FOAM

For the eighth year in a row, the state American Automobile Association selected FOAM as the local nonprofit to receive the proceeds of its 2009 Great Battery Roundup. During mid-April, 226 dead car, motorcycle, and boat batteries were collected at three locations in Humboldt County: Pacific Towing (Eureka), Clyde's Towing (Fortuna), and Buddy's Auto Repair (Willow Creek). FOAM received a check for \$452 from AAA. Since the program began, the Battery Roundup has donated a total of \$13,613 to FOAM.

Visitor Log

The AMIC had 2203 visitors in August.

Recognition & Thanks, August-September 2009

- **New Life Member:** RC & Nancy Dedekam
- **Best Friend:** David Weber (Oakland)
- **Sponsors:** John Claggett; Bill & June Thompson
- **Friends:** Katy & Tom Allen; Mark & Melinda Bailey; Karen Cunningham (Coos Bay); Francis Ferguson; Jim Lennon; Sheila Marks; Keith Mobbs (Brisbane); Judy Shaffer; Selma Sonntag; Richard Vincent
- **Donors:** \$100 each from Chris & Lee House; Carol & Dick Laursen (Carmichael); Michael & Evelyn Williams

Calendar of Upcoming Events

[Docent tours leave the Interpretive Center each Saturday at 2 pm; wastewater tour last Saturday of each month]

October — driftwood photos by Rich Ridenhour

October 8 — FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8 pm; lecture by Matt Hurst, 5:30-6:30 pm (see page 1)

October 15 — Spartina Forum, Arcata Community Center, 7:30-9:30 pm (see page 1)

October 22 — lectures by Mary Burke and Teresa Persons, 7-8 pm (see page 1)

October 24 — Invasive Plant Workday at the Marsh, 9 am-1 pm (see page 1)

October 29 — lecture by Robert and Julie Koeppel and Dave Couch, 7-8 pm (see page 1)

November — drawings by Louise Bacon-Ogden

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

November 26 — Thanksgiving Meander with Art Barab, 10 am (see page 2)

December/January — oil paintings by Yvonne Kern

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

January 1 — New Year's Day Walk with Jenny Hanson, 1:30 pm (see page 2)

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

Segways (continued from page 1)

Randy Mendoza sent an e-mail to City Councilperson Alex Stillman stating that "this is still in the concept stage of a potential pilot project. Before site-specific trails would be selected, the issue will go to the FOAM board and the City's Wetlands & Creeks and Forest Advisory Committees for review."

Arcata Recreation Director Heather Stevens has requested time at our October 8 Board meeting to speak on this issue. Rest assured that FOAM will call for a thorough study of potential impacts to our beloved Marsh and a means for the public to comment on any proposal.