



UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh
Interpretive Center
Vol 19, Issue 4, Fall 2012

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: Annual Meeting... Holiday Tours... Vandalism... Godwit Days Fall "Mini-Fest"... September Work Day... Research Grants... Burton Bird Walk/Talk... Annual Report... Volunteer Brochures... Leslie's Leaving... Rohde History Talk... News Nuggets... River Otter Reporting... Jogging Tours... Artists... Calendar... Visitor Log... Donors



2012-13 FOAM Board of Directors. Front row (from left to right): Megan McCue (seated), Janet Zich, John McNeely. Second row: Sue Leskiw, Katy Allen, Mary Burke, Betsy Elkinton. Back row: George Ziminsky, John Clagett (not a Board member), Lance Torgerson, David Couch, Elliott Dabill. Photo by Jenny Hanson.

ins Elliott Dabill and Sue Leskiw agreed to be reappointed to the Board. Officers will be selected at the October Board meeting.

City naturalist Denise Homer selected John Clagett and Katy Allen as Volunteers of the Year. John was cited for spending over 100 hours staffing the welcome desk, while Katy was recognized for her service as secretary, desk staffer, tour leader, invasive plant workday volunteer, and helper at many of FOAM's special events. Each received a certificate and \$25 credit in the bookstore (see photos, page 2).



2012 Annual Meeting & Election Results

On Sunday, September 30, FOAM held its 19th annual meeting at the Interpretive Center. Approximately 30 people attended the albacore barbecue lunch by David Couch, with FOAM Board members providing side dishes.

President Sue Leskiw reviewed highlights of the 2011/12 Annual Report (see pages 5&6). She also reported the results of the election. The proposal to amend FOAM bylaws to eliminate term limits passed. Thirty-eight ballots were returned by members in good standing, with Betsy Elkinton, John McNeely, and Janet Zich elected to 2-year terms. Write-

2011-12 Board of Directors & Officers

Officers

President: Sue Leskiw (also UPWIND Editor; Mailing; Publicity; Exhibits; Scrapbook; Website)—707-442-5444

Vice-President: Elliott Dabill (also Education; Computer)—707-445-3836

Secretary: Katy Allen (also Education; Exhibits; Membership)—707-822-2312

Treasurer: Art Barab (also Exhibits; Saturday Tours)—707-826-7017

Other Board Members

Mary Burke (Education)—707-599-1212

David Couch (Special Events)—707-839-4253

Betsy Elkinton—301-356-0571

Megan McCue (Education; Volunteers)—707-633-6226

John McNeely (Education)—860-248-0745

Lance Torgerson (Art Exhibits; Education)—707-269-0576

Janet Zich (Membership; Exhibits; Website; Facebook)—707-822-4660

George Ziminsky (Habitat Concerns)—707-826-9240

FOAM website: www.arcatamarshfriends.org



Denise Homer with Volunteer of the Year winners Katy Allen (top) and John Clagett (bottom), Photos by Sue Leskiw.

Two Holiday Sojourns

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

Veteran tour leader Art Barab will lead his 13th annual Thanksgiving morning meander on Thursday, November 22 at 10 am. Meet on the Interpretive Center porch (building will be closed for the holiday) for a 90-minute appetite builder.

Naturalist Jenny Hanson will, for the fifth time, help you celebrate the New Year with a 2-hour ramble starting at 2 pm on Saturday, January 1. Meet on the Interpretive Center porch (building will be closed for the holiday).



Marsh Target of Vandals

By Sue Leskiw & George Ziminsky

This summer, the Arcata Marsh and Sanctuary has been the target of several vandals who sprayed and burned objects both natural and man-made. The destruction led Arcata Eye editor Kevin Hoover to run a color photo spread in his September 26 issue entitled “Arcata’s War... on pleasant benches?”

The wave started on the nights of Friday and Saturday, July 27-28, when over 25 spots—extending from the first parking area on South I Street to the corner of Klopp Lake—were tagged by graffiti. These included signs (one of them, a new FOAM interpretive sign), benches, railings, bird blinds, metal fences and posts, dike riprap rock, and even metal railroad tracks. The most frequent tag patterns in this incident are those found on the Arcata Marsh map sign on Mt Trashmore.

FOAM Board member and habitat concerns chair George Ziminsky borrowed a generator and belt sander from the City and spent 4 hours sanding the interior walls of the blind, plus 5 hours painting over and removing other graffiti. The Mt Trashmore bench prepping, priming, and two full plus a touch-up coat of paint made for 6 hours of work to repair the damage.

Then, early on Friday, August 31, a City employee en route to the Interpretive Center noticed smoke coming from the west side of the Log Pond. Arcata Fire responded and found the log bench by the #3 marker at the center of the fire. The blaze was extinguished, but the bench was toast.

Finally, on the evening of Friday, September 7, a local high-profile birder was scoping around Allen Marsh and witnessed a youth spray-painting the railroad electrical box on South I Street. He called Arcata Police, who arrived promptly and arrested one teenage boy (his accomplice eluded capture). Unfortunately, the trail of white and blue graffiti stretched from the South H Street entrance to the railroad tracks on South I.



Graffiti and burned bench. Photos by George Ziminsky.

George photodocumented the vandalism and found paint on the footbridge across Jolly Giant Creek, on a concrete slab section in the creek, on concrete slabs under the willow at the northwest corner of the Log Pond loop trail, on several trunks and branches of that willow clump, on a tree by the trail along the north edge of the Log Pond, and on the “Don’t feed animals” sign at the South H Street entrance. The damage also involved sites outside the Marsh: a telephone pole on South H, the PO boxes by the apartments on the east side of South H, and the side of 4th Street Market. George spent 10 hours cleaning up this tagging within the boundaries of the Marsh, with the trees being particularly tedious to clean.

In response to acts of vandalism such as the destruction of a memorial bench in August 2011, FOAM set up a fund to reward those who report tips that lead to successful prosecution of lawbreakers at the Marsh. Up to \$250 will be paid for information given to APD that results in conviction for vandalism, destruction of public property, or similar illegal acts within the boundaries of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. Anyone having information is asked to call APD at 707-822-2428.

Godwit Days Offering Fall "Mini-Fest" October 13-14

By Sue Leskiw

The Godwit Days Spring Migration Birding Festival is expanding to offer a mini-Fall Migration Birding Festival this October. Join experienced leaders the weekend of October 13-14 on any of 10 trips selected to cover a range of the area's best birding locations.

Held at the end of the peak period for rare migrant birding, the Fall Preview is aimed at giving registrants a taste of Humboldt and Del Norte counties during this season with high potential for rare bird sightings. There will be a maximum of 10 registrants on most trips.

On Saturday, you can take a trip on the open ocean looking for seabirds (leaders Tony Kurz and Daryl Coldren), travel north between the North Spit and Elk Head in search of vagrant warblers, visit the Arcata Marsh to view shorebirds (leader Gary Bloomfield), travel to the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Loleta and points south (leader Chet Ogan), or spend the day looking for raptors and grassland species



Birders at Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Beth Deibert.

on Bear River Ridge between Rio Dell and Ferndale (leader Tom Leskiw). On Sunday, you can carpool to Lake Earl and other Del Norte bird-rich spots (leader Rob Hewitt), travel south between the North Spit and Ferndale in search of vagrant warblers, visit the Arcata Marsh to view shorebirds, do a sea-watch from bluffs between Elk Head and Table Bluff, or look for lingering migrants between Centerville and Petrolia (leader Tony Kurz).

Pre-registration is required for the Fall Preview, which is a birding "e-event," a paperless festival (online or phone registration) where participants meet leaders at convenient locations to form carpools, rather than having trips start from a central location (such as the Arcata Community Center used in April). Trips vary from \$25 to \$100 for the pelagic, depending on length and distance. To register or to get more information on trip times, leaders, geographical areas, and expected species, visit www.godwitdays.org and click on the link in the right-hand "Special Events" column. If you have questions, e-mail info@godwitdays.org or call 707-826-7050.

Day of Caring for the Marsh

By George Ziminsky

The September 15 workday at the Arcata Marsh combined two long-standing volunteer efforts: the United Way Day of Caring, which brings HSU students out to assist the City of Arcata Natural Resources Department, and the Northcoast Environmental Center's 28th annual Coastal Cleanup Day, a world-wide event with humble beginnings here on the North Coast.

The Day of Caring turnout was seven students, who split up into two groups to collect native plant material for planting in the South I Street salt marsh restoration area or continue removing invasive plants along the trail, parking area, and west side of the street by the South I Street pond.

City employee Javier Nogueira led five students upstream of the footbridge across Butcher Slough/



FOAM Board members Dave Couch and George Ziminsky remove a truck tire from Klopp Lake.

Photo by Martin Anderson.

Jolly Giant Creek to collect alkali bulrush (*Scirpus maritimus*) and Lyngbye's sedge (*Carex lyngbyei*) for planting in the southern half of the restoration area. Two sloping channels in the restoration area (to facilitate immersion) were planted at the beginning of the project. The one in the northern half has fared well, while the channel in the southern half lost most of its plant material. The other two HSU students and FOAM volunteer Betsy Elinton continued teasel removal by the South I Street pond, as well as pulling out teasel and fennel on the east side of South I Street.

The Coastal Cleanup effort primarily focused on collecting terrestrial trash that was likely to end up in the sloughs and bay. The volunteers trickled in, making logistics a bit of a juggling act. Eventually, nine volunteers picked up garbage from trails, roads, and parking areas throughout the Marsh.

One goal for the day was removing some of the old tires visibly residing in the north end of Klopp Lake. FOAM Board member Dave Couch dropped in to help, and with HSU student Martin Anderson, we headed for the southern slopes of Mt Trashmore. Three tires were removed, along with some old campsite material and plastic detritus.

By early afternoon, the Day of Caring crew was off to its barbecue and the Coastal Cleanup volunteers were congregating to tally their col-

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ected trash. Coastal Cleanup Day serves not only to clean up but also to increase awareness of marine pollution by quantifying and qualifying collected items. Cigarette butts are a chronic problem, and 446 were picked up. Although the trail on the west side of the Log Pond was cleaned up twice that day, during a short walk at 6:30 pm, I spied 18 new butts in approximately 200 m. Seven used (full) doggie bags were collected; I'm not sure what dog owners were thinking when they bagged waste and left it on the trail. Other common trash items were clothes/shoes (22 items) and food wrappers/containers (60 items).

Progress was made on many fronts this workday at the Arcata Marsh, yet there is always more to do. Join us on future workdays or contact me at geoz@humboldt1.com or 707-826-9240 to be notified of smaller work parties that deal with invasive plants or other Marsh clean-up activities.

FOAM Research Grants Available

This is the eighth year that FOAM has offered grants to support research projects that are broadly or specifically related to the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary.

Grants will be awarded based on each project's relevance to wetlands ecology, processes, and habitat concerns. At least \$1,000 is available. While there is no deadline for application, proposals will be evaluated in the order they are received. Undergraduate and graduate students at Humboldt State University are eligible. Application packets have been e-mailed to HSU professors in related disciplines and are available by e-mailing info@arcatamarsh-friends.org

Past grants have supported investigation into carbon sequestration by marsh plants, genetic variation and dispersal of northern California's coastal river otters, metal accumulation in steelhead, the effects of antibiotic concentrations on nitrogen uptake in duckweed, microbial fuel cell technology using Arcata Marsh water, the role of nu-

trient limitation in determination of eelgrass shoot density in Humboldt Bay, and winter roost site fidelity by Dunlin.

This year's funding was made possible by a donation from Richard Sanborn and Calista Sullivan.

Bird Walk/Talk Kicks off Lecture Series

By Sue Leskiw

Fifteen people rose early on a foggy Saturday to learn about some common birds of the Arcata Marsh. Former FOAM Board member Ken Burton gave a 2-hour indoor presentation covering 30 species, followed by a 2-hour guided walk.

Ken began with reviewing ducks, which bear precocial young that are born with open eyes, a downy coat, and the ability to run and feed themselves. Dabbling ducks ("puddleducks")—which include Mallard (ancestor of domestic duck), Gadwall, American Widgeon, and Green-winged Teal—feed by tipping up their rears in shallow fresh water. Conversely, ducks such as Bufflehead dive underwater to feed.

He continued with birds "that you might mistake for ducks": Pied-billed Grebe, with legs so far back on the body that it can't walk, and American Coot, which is in the rail family and more closely related to cranes. Next came Double-crested Cormorant, whose Latin name means "marine crow." Its feathers are not very waterproof, so it must dry off to avoid hypothermia.

Humboldt has high winter gull diversity, about 12 species. The word gull translates to throat, serving as the root of gullible, meaning willing to swallow anything!

The Great Egret—the symbol of the National Audubon Society—is a carnivorous, "sit-and-wait" predator that even eats mice. The Snowy Egret startles its prey by prancing around and shaking its feet underwater.

Ken continued with the shore-bird group, including Willet, Marbled Godwit, and Greater Yellowlegs, a long-distance migrant that breeds in the tundra and boreal forest.



Ken points out a bird during a walk along the South G Street dike.

Photo by Sue Leskiw.

He characterized raptors (birds of prey) as "nonrelated birds with a similar lifestyle who kill with their feet": hawks, eagles, falcons, and owls. The White-tailed Kite, our palest raptor, hovers using a figure 8 wing pattern. The Northern Harrier—once called Marsh Hawk—has an owl-like facial disc of feathers that funnels sounds of mice and other grassland-dwelling prey.

The Turkey Vulture is a scavenger that teeters to take advantage of updrafts. Its head is naked like a turkey: "If you spent a lot of time inside dead animals, you'd shave your head, too," said Ken.

He described how to tell a raven from a crow. Because Common Ravens are comfortable living around people, their populations are higher than would be natural.

The mouth of the Mattole River is the southern range limit for Black-capped Chickadee in the western US.

An individual Marsh Wren has up to 70 songs in its repertoire, which are sung in an accepted order within local populations. Males build several nests in cattails, from which females select the one to use.

The Song Sparrow sings all year to maintain its territory.

The House Finch and American Goldfinch synchronize breeding with thistle and teasel flowering.

2011/12 FOAM Annual Report (Issued 9/30/12)

Tours: Some 20,110 adults and children visited the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center between September 2011 and August 2012, up nearly 400 from the previous 12-month period. Some participated in the weekly 2 pm tours offered rain or shine by FOAM docents. FOAM provided docents for 151 special-request group tours.

Education: On July 10, for the 5th year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society partnered to offer a day-long session for children age 10-12 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. FOAM instructors were Elliott Dabill, Bob Rasmussen, Melinda Bailey, and George Ziminsky. Sue Leskiw pulled together the schedule, brought lunch, and took photos, while Emily Janzen helped clean up. FOAM also underwrote the cost of fish printing and animal track supplies for the City's Marsh Explorers summer camp sessions.

For the 7th year, FOAM funded awards at the Humboldt County Science Fair in March. A \$50 prize for the best project related to wetlands went to Mitchell Monge, an 8th-grader at St Mary's School. His project was entitled "Effects of Water Salinity on Freshwater Plants." Elliott Dabill served as judge.

FOAM awarded research grants to two HSU students, Ted Torgerson and Hilary Cosby, who are advised by Miceala Szykman Gunther. Both students are studying river otters.

FOAM's Wetlands on Wheels was revamped by Mary Burke to become Wonders of Wetlands (still WOW!) and presented to three 5th-grade classes in fall 2011: Coastal Grove Charter, Freshwater Elementary, and Union Street Charter. The new format – taught by HSU interpretation students – consists of a classroom visit followed by a field trip to the Marsh. A new group of HSU students was trained in September 2012 to continue the program.

FOAM provided funding to print a "Quest" brochure developed by students from Sunnybrae Middle School. The Marsh Madness Quest focuses on the history of the Marsh, written in poem form.

FOAM underwrote a revamped Butler Memorial kiosk near Mt Trashmore, replacing faded bird art with colorful panels featuring photographs by Leslie Anderson. FOAM paid for a large "What's Your Wingspan?" interpretive panel, installed on the porch of the Interpretive Center, where visitors can measure their arm-lengths against the wingspans of common birds (plus make hand-span comparisons for smaller birds). FOAM also helped fund four additional interpretive signs throughout the Marsh.

Rich Ridenhour, with the help of Jenny Hanson, revamped the free list of 100 common and/or conspicuous plants at the Marsh that was originally compiled in 1999. The two led 4 seasonal public walks to collect data.

FOAM obtained a grant from the Humboldt Area Foundation to produce an educational brochure about dogs in natural areas that offers alternative locations for people to take their pets offleash. Several thousand copies have been distributed through veterinarians, boarding kennels, pet stores, and local, state, and federal government agencies.

Volunteer Training & News: Docent training was offered twice: October 8-9 (11 people, 9 of them new) and March 10-11 (3 attendees). Instructors were Bob Rasmussen, David Couch, Rich Ridenhour, Jenny Hanson, and Elliott Dabill. Jenny Hanson headed a subcommittee formed to brainstorm about more effective ways to recruit and train Marsh volunteers. This led to creation of a monthly lecture series for the general public on Marsh topics. The series kicked off in August with Ken Burton presenting on birds, followed by Jerry Rohde on history (1850-1950) of the North Bay area. Megan McCue continued informal volunteer evening get-togethers at coffee shops or breweries.

Public Events: In partnership with Redwood Region Audubon, FOAM sponsored the 9th Student Bird Art Contest at Godwit Days. A record number of entries (721) were received from grades K-12 throughout Humboldt County. Thirty-five cash prizes and 29 honorable mentions were awarded at Godwit Days. The winning entries were displayed at the Interpretive Center during May and at the Humboldt Bay Symposium.

In October, FOAM continued its participation in Arcata's "Pastels on the Plaza" fundraiser, sponsoring a sidewalk square.

In November, Art Barab led his 11th consecutive Thanksgiving Day morning "leg stretcher" for 18 people, with Sharon Levy leading part of the group.

In January, Jenny Hanson for the 4th year led a New Year's Day walk that attracted 18 attendees.

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In April, FOAM continued its participation in the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival. Approximately 80-100 children and parents took part in FOAM's free family nature activities coordinated by Sue Leskiw and Darlene Marlow. The kids made water cycle bracelets, pinecone bird feeders, fish prints, bird sticker refrigerator magnets, bird callers, painted owl rocks, and hanging paper birds. A tour of the wastewater plant by David Couch and two children's bird walks by Mary Burke were offered as part of the festival schedule. FOAM volunteers also staffed an information/sales table in the vendor area, coordinated by Janet Zich, and helped hang bird art entries.

In June, FOAM staged free educational activities at the Interpretive Center in conjunction with Oceans Week. Dave Couch put together a sea creature touch tank and Sue Leskiw created the kids craft events. Craft volunteers were Darlene Marlow and Mary Romaidis. Danny Shea and Tyler Waterman staffed the microscopes to examine tiny water-dwelling creatures. Marie Kelleher-Roy and Lance Torgerson helped clean up. Approximately 30 children participated.

In July, FOAM partnered with Redwood Region Audubon to hold a successful salt marsh restoration event, with nearly 40 volunteers putting the finishing touches on the new salt marsh along South I Street.

In August, FOAM staffed a booth at the Party for the Pelicans, to help raise funds for Bird Ally X.

Megan McCue led sporadic jogging tours (early morning, sunset) of Arcata Marsh trails.

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. This past year, Mike & Leslie Anderson, Selon Holstein, Dana Utman, Andrew Daniel, Art Barab, Michelle Remy, Vaughn Hutchins, William Wood, Peter Canclini, and Susan Strobe were featured. Leslie Anderson scheduled the shows. Leslie and her husband Mike generously paid for a new art hanging system that simplifies the process.

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 exhibits, and other special events at the Marsh. FOAM continues to publish its quarterly newsletter, UPWIND.

Janet Zich launched a Facebook page for FOAM, to share news on a timely basis.

Leslie Anderson created three attractive Marsh postcard designs for sale in the bookstore.

City Relations: In December, July, and September (United Way Day of Caring), FOAM co-sponsored invasive plant workdays at the Marsh, concentrating on weeding the salt marsh restoration area on South I Street. Habitat concerns chair George Ziminsky headed up a pre-Godwit Days cleanup of Scotch broom and pampas grass, with the help of CCC members. In July, George interfaced with two cross-country volunteers to spend 5 hours removing teasel.

FOAM funded two "Volunteer of the Year" awards, presented to George Ziminsky and Jack Schubert, at the October 2 Annual Meeting.

FOAM established a reward fund of \$250 for convictions obtained for those committing vandalism at the Marsh. This was in response to the destruction of a memorial bench at Klopp Lake.

Several FOAM Board members participated in a scoping session for the City's 5-year working plan for the Marsh.

Membership: As of August 30, FOAM had 132 members in good standing, 58 of which were Life Members and 4 were Honorary Life Members.

Fiscal Accounts: As of August 30, FOAM had a checking account balance of \$44,419. As of the end of August 2011, FOAM had a checking account balance of \$14,679 plus a CD account of \$30,000 that matured during 2012. The money from that CD, due to low interest rates, has not been reinvested. Overall, FOAM expenditures during our fiscal year ending in September totaled \$12,521 and revenues totaled \$11,034. The largest expenditure incurred in the past year was \$3000 to support new interpretive signs. Other expenses, totaling between \$1000 and \$2000, were insurance coverage, FOAM grants, production of sale items, and printing UPWIND newsletters. The three major revenue sources during the recently concluded fiscal year (all between \$2000 and \$2600) were sale items, donations, and membership dues. Revenue from these three categories totaled \$7186. Overall, organization expenditures exceeded revenues by \$1487. The organization's financial situation is excellent and FOAM members can be sure of its capacity to fund its programs in the years ahead.

Board of Directors: Six current Board Members will be continuing: Katy Allen, Mary Burke, David Couch, Megan McCue, Lance Torgerson, and George Ziminsky. Janet Zich and John McNeely need to run to confirm their Board appointments. Art Barab continues as treasurer. Term limits were up for Leslie Anderson, Elliott Dabill, and Sue Leskiw.

— Sue Leskiw, President

Volunteering at the Arcata Marsh

By Sue Leskiw

FOAM has just published a brochure that showcases the many types of volunteer opportunities available at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary. The brochure includes plenty of photos showing volunteers in action, as well as quotes from volunteers expressing what they receive from giving their time to a place they love.

Opportunities range from staffing special events to greeting weekend visitors to the Interpretive Center to leading one of the nearly 200 tours that occur at the Marsh each year. Some tasks need no training (helping with kids nature crafts at Godwit Days, removing invasive plants), while others require participants to learn about Marsh birds, plants, history, ecology, and wastewater treatment (leading tours).

Training is flexible and tailored to your needs and schedule. Volunteers have the opportunity to work short- or long-term, with specific age groups, or on certain days of the week or times of the year.

To find out more, stop by the Interpretive Center for a copy of the brochure, visit the FOAM website at www.arcatamarshfriends.org, or e-mail info@arcatamarshfriends.org.



Our volunteers enjoy the time they spend sharing their love for this special place with locals and out-of-town visitors. Here are just a few quotes from them:

“Guiding is a pleasure; we all return from a tour satisfied and full of enthusiasm.”

“One favorite thing about staffing is meeting people from all over the world.”

“I enjoy imparting knowledge to Marsh visitors, as a tour leader or Interpretive Center staffer.”

“Each day at the desk and every guided tour has its moments that make the time spent worthwhile.”

“Visitors appreciate my efforts, even if I’m not an expert on every subject.”

“Volunteering at the Marsh helped integrate me into the community.”

“Staffing doesn’t require a lot of training; it’s easy to be an ambassador for a place you love.”

“Spending time at the Marsh, on your own or as a volunteer, is good for whatever ails you.”

“Enrich your life – volunteer at the Marsh.”

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



Excerpts from FOAM’s volunteer recruitment brochure.



Leslie’s Leaving

By Sue Leskiw

The Arcata Marsh would have been a much less colorful place without Leslie Anderson during the last seven years. She donated incalculable hours of her considerable design talent to create beautiful things for the Marsh. Some were ephemeral—flyers for art shows or invasive plant work days—while others are long-lasting, such as interpretive signs or the Common Birds of the Arcata Marsh book. Some creations are in the middle: brochures about off-leash dogs or FOAM membership and Greetings from the Arcata Marsh postcards.

Leslie was the moving spirit behind the monthly art shows at the Interpretive Center, seeking out new artists, scheduling them, putting together illustrated announcements for local media, hanging and taking down the artwork, and staffing occasional artist receptions. She and her husband Mike went so far as to donate the attractive and easy art hanging system in the building.

Leslie has been very generous with the professional-quality photos taken by her and Mike, for use in FOAM books, displays, and other products. Think back to the faded-to-sepia artwork on the three-panel Butler Memorial kiosk near Mt Trashmore, then look at the wonderful pictures of Marsh birds that have superseded the old exhibit.

Leslie also served as our liaison to two contracted webmasters, collecting updates to the FOAM web-

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A young Marsh visitor spreads his wings, June 2012. Photo by Lee Gelatt.

site and cajoling the programmers to get the changes made to www.arcatamarshfriends.org.

Leslie is not only super talented, she is also a wonderful human being. Her calm, positive personality has been most welcome on the FOAM Board and will be missed at monthly meetings. Although Leslie will no longer be a Board member, she will continue to help us out when needed. Thank you so much for all you have done for FOAM!

History Lecture = Full House

The second in a series of free classes on topics related to the Arcata Marsh occurred on Friday, September 21. Author/historian Jerry Rohde enlightened a near-capacity crowd at the Interpretive Center about the history of Humboldt Bay near the Arcata Marsh between 1850 and 1950. His talk was entitled "Before the Marsh: railroads, wharves, and log ponds." Rohde has coauthored four guidebooks to the local area and created several Powerpoint presentations focused on Humboldt Bay.

The topic and speaker for October was pending at press time; November's lecturer may be Dr Milt Boyd. In December, no presentation is planned. Watch for announcements in local media and flyers at the Interpretive Center.

News Nuggets

☛ On September 25, FOAM sent a letter to the California Coastal Conservancy supporting a \$230K grant to the City of Arcata for completing the McDaniel Slough Restoration Project.

☛ On August 25, FOAM staffed an informational/nature crafts table at the Party for the Pelicans, a fundraiser for Bird Ally X and the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center.

☛ On September 29-30, FOAM staffed at table at HSU's Biodiversity Conference and collected emails from students wanting to volunteer at the Marsh.

☛ On October 12, FOAM volunteers are scheduled to lead a bird tour in Spanish for 40 students from Fuente Nueva Charter School.

☛ FOAM volunteer Jane Wilson is heading up an effort to offer future "Slow-Speed" Tours of the Marsh, tailored for those unable to keep up with regular-paced walks. If you would like to help, email Sue Leskiw at sueleskiw@suddenlink.net.

☛ In the second phase of the grant received by the City to produce new signage, maps stating "You Are Here" are being designed for installation at approximately 20 locations throughout the Marsh.

Reporting River Otters

By Dr Jeff Black

You may have heard about an on-going project to monitor river otters throughout Humboldt and Del Norte counties. The study began in 2000 and is going strong due to support of its volunteer observers. Everyone is helping throughout the community, including laypersons, outdoor enthusiasts, and scientists. Please submit records when you see otters. Every single record is useful and much appreciated.

The basic information to record includes, date, time, location description, habitat description, total number of otters, and, if possible, whether pups are among them. If there are pups, please judge their size relative to an adult (0.25, 0.50, 0.75, or the same size). It is difficult to tell the difference between an adult and a pup when they are about the same size; when in doubt, just record total number. Then, if you have time, note what the otters are doing: behavior, interactions, foraging, and prey items.

Submit records via e-mail to otters@humboldt.edu or online at www.humboldt.edu/wildlife/faculty/black/research/ottersentry.html.

Marsh Jogging Tours

FOAM Board member Megan McCue continues to lead sunset jogging tours of the Arcata Marsh trails (4-5 miles). Tours begin approximately 1 hour before sunset on each Monday in October, as follows: October 8, 5:45 pm; October 15, 5:45 pm; October 22, 5:30 pm; October 29, 5:30 pm. Megan will tell participants how long each loop is and describe what will be seen along the way to the next stop. The tour will include the Marsh proper and the oxidation ponds. Participants should bring water and must sign a waiver of liability. Pace will be adjusted to accommodate participants. Meet at the Klopp Lake parking lot at the foot of South I Street. For more information, call Megan at 707-633-6226.



November Artist Susan Pence

I studied art at San Jose State College and finished with a year at the Brooklyn Museum School. This led me eventually to Vermont, where I painted many landscapes in pastel, drew from the figure, and developed in my own fashion.

My husband and I have lived in Humboldt County since 1998. I've shown with the Redwood Art Association (RAA), once winning "Best of Show," and occasionally in collaboration with my husband, also a painter.

I recently enjoyed a class named "Writing on the Bay," through OLLI, which began my deeper appreciation of this bay. This invitation to show paintings has only increased my appreciation and curiosity for this special place featuring plants, bird-life, water, sky, and caring people. There's a plethora of life and surprises here to stir the imagination.

December/January Artist Sara Starr

Sara's paintings reflect personal interests and life here in Humboldt County. For subjects, she draws upon living creatures. Birds, frogs, cats, friends, and family often appear in her work. She uses many layers of transparent watercolor in her paintings to achieve rich color and luminosity.

"I prefer to create paintings that appear realistic, but that are painterly, not photographic. Toward that end, I try to emphasize important details and eliminate those that are extraneous. I also freely take liberty with color and composition."

Her interest in watercolor started with a 2000 Ink People class with Alan Sanborn. Locally, she continues to study with Sanborn through a Critique Group that meets bi-weekly. She is also a member of the Representational Art League. Her influences include the painters Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, Eugène Delacroix, Joaquin Sorolla, and Fritz Hug.



Chickadee on cattail.
Painting by Sara Starr.

Juried shows and/or awards include the Trinidad Fine Arts Competition, the Redwood Art Association, Humboldt Arts Council/Morris Graves Museum, and Humboldt County Fair. She has participated in the annual Invitational Godwit Days Gallery of Birds.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

October—photography by Greg Smith

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

November—paintings by Susan Pence

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

November 22—Thanksgiving Meander with Art Barab, 10 am

December/January—artwork by Sara Starr

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

December 8—Marsh Work Day

January 1—New Year's Day

Ramble with Jenny Hanson, 2 pm

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

Visitor Log

The Interpretive Center had 1202 visitors in January, 1295 in February, 1369 in March, 1898 in April, 2123 in May, 2267 in June, 2105 in July, and 2293 in August.

Recognition & Thanks, August-September 2012

- ☛ Best Friend (\$100): Dan Staudenmaier
- ☛ Sponsors (\$50): Katy & Tom Allen; John Clagett
- ☛ Friends: Mark & Melinda Bailey; Richard & Chris Beresford; Betsy Elkinton; Francis & Frances Ferguson; Bill Knight; Cindy Kuttner; John McNeely; Bill & June Thompson; George Ziminsky
- ☛ Special Donors: Susan Strobe, September artist, \$250 for sale of painting to volunteers Tom Cockle & Carol Lawrence; Sue & Archie Mossman, in honor of Rich Ridenhour's 80th birthday; Ann Nugent (Bellingham, WA), in honor of Thea Gast's 80th birthday; Life Members Lee & Chris House, sponsorship of FOAM square in Pastels on the Plaza; Life Member Stuart Moskowitz, donation to repair Marsh Bingo game cards; Life Members Richard & Carol Laursen (\$199) (Carmichael, CA), who sent this note: "Hi to all—Carol and I will not be coming on the 30th. We wish all of you the best today and throughout the future. Hugs to all."