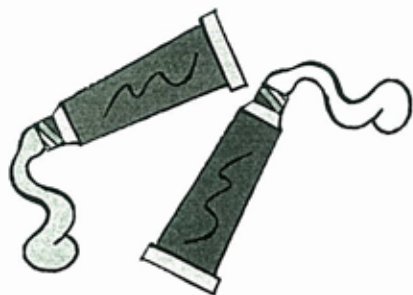




UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh
Interpretive Center
Vol 14, Issue 1, Winter 2007

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April 2 Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest Entries

For the fourth consecutive year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon Society are co-sponsoring a Student Bird Art Contest. Some \$400 in prizes will be awarded to students from kindergarten through high school who submit a drawing of one of 40 selected bird species.

Entries will be judged by local wildlife artists and educators. Winners will be announced at the opening reception of the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival on Friday, April 20. Entries will be displayed at the Arcata Community Center during the Festival. In 2006, over 300 pieces of art were received. Copies of winning artwork will be shown at the Interpretive Center during May.

Artwork may be in color or black and white. Any media may be used (e.g., crayons, pastels, paint, pencil, collage). Subject must be a rendering of bird(s) from a list of 40 species. One entry per person.

Flyers with complete rules are available at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center and Strictly for the Birds in Old Town Eureka, or by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Sue Leskiw, 5440 Cummings Road, Eureka 95503. Artwork may be dropped off at Strictly for the Birds, 123 F Street, Eureka, or the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center, South G Street, Arcata, or mailed to Ms. Leskiw. Entries must be received by Monday, April 2 to be considered.

Spring Docent Training Scheduled for March 3&4

A weekend training for FOAM docents has been set for Saturday and Sunday, March 3-4. Get tips on how to lead an interpretive tour for various age groups, as well as go on tours focusing on Arcata Marsh history, wastewater treatment, birds, plants, and wetlands.

Contact Elliott at 445-3836 for details.



Help Needed for Godwit Days Activities April 20-22

The 12th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is just around the corner and, once again, FOAM will be sponsoring free family activities. The activities will be held in the Arts & Crafts room at the Arcata Community Center from 11 am to 2 pm on Saturday, April 21.

The activities span all ages and interests and will include making water cycle bracelets, 3-D paper birds and insects, peanut butter pinecone birdfeeders, and fish prints. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

This is a fun event for both the kids and the volunteers who staff the activity stations. If you can spend a couple of hours helping kids discover the many wonders of our marsh that so often go unnoticed, call Darlene Marlow at 677-9242.

FOAM also needs volunteers to staff its table at the Bird Fair. Hours of operation are Friday 5-7 pm, Saturday, 10 am-5 pm, and Sunday 10 am-3 pm. If you can help hand out literature and sell items, call Janet at 822-4660.

As part of the Godwit Days program, former FOAM president David Couch will be leading a tour of the wastewater treatment plant on Saturday from 3-4:30 pm and treasurer Art Barab will head up a walk focusing on the history and ecology of the Marsh on Sunday from 1-3 pm. Both tours are offered at no charge, but preregistration is required. Call Godwit Days at 444-2938 to sign up.

2006-07 Board of Directors

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Lumei Hui (Education) — 677-3164

Gwen Thoele (Education; Exhibits) — 826-1556

Lance Torgerson — 826-1525

Jeffrey White (Education/WOW; Webpage) — 825-8567

FOAM Says Goodbye & Hello

Board member Caitlin Collings is moving on from FOAM. She has been the moving spirit behind organizing recent docent training sessions, has helped with FOAM family nature activities at Godwit Days, and has drawn the FOAM square the last two years for the Pastels on the Plaza fundraiser. An art student at HSU, she is busy with school, an internship at a gallery, and volunteer coordinator with Food for People. Her youthful energy and creative nature will be greatly missed.

At the December Board meeting, volunteers who have led AMWS field trips and staffed the Interpretive Center stepped up to fill the two vacancies.

Ken Burton moved to Humboldt County two years ago and immediately became a marsh docent. He is a professional wildlife biologist currently employed by LBJ Enterprises and Mad River Biologists. Ken is an active birder and also serves on the Redwood Region Audubon Society Board. He's the principal percussionist in the Eureka Symphony. As a FOAM Board member, Ken hopes to influence vegetation management at the marsh.

Lance Torgerson is currently working in the agriculture business and has enjoyed volunteering at AMIC for over a year. An HSU graduate, he is mainly interested in cultural geography, physical geography, conservation, local history, ornithology, waste management, and photography. Lance has lived on the North Coast for about 10 years. His love for the outdoors has led him backpacking and on day hikes to favorite North Coast areas, and he also likes to boogie board or body surf.

Upgrades at the AMIC

You may have noticed that the AMIC got a new roof recently. But then wondered what happened to the solar panels? Marsh naturalist Denise Homer tells us that the City has traded in its old photovoltaic panels for new ones that should be installed within eight weeks. The panels will continue to be connected to the power grid. It is anticipated that the new, more-efficient system will generate more power to sell back to the utility.

Also, all the roof vents were moved to the north side. Their former location on the south allowed wind and water to enter the heating system during storms, causing pilot lights to need frequent re-lighting.

Wetlands on Wheels 2007

FOAM is pleased to announce that Wetlands on Wheels (WOW) will be available to local schools this spring. WOW is an educational outreach program designed to expose local school children to some of the fascinating aspects of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. Program content is best suited for 3rd and 4th grades and is available to local elementary classrooms. The presentations will begin in March.

The program is designed to be 60-70 minutes and is presented by two WOW instructors with assistance of the classroom teacher. Instruction begins with a short slide show to introduce the Arcata Marsh, followed by visits to three different hands-on activity stations focusing on plants of the marsh, microscopic water creatures, and birds and bird beak adaptation. The kids are divided into three groups and rotate through the stations. The program closes with a short skit that illustrates how community-generated wastewater is cleaned by the various stages of Arcata's integrated wastewater treatment system, including the adjoining marshes. As a follow-up to the program, classroom teachers are highly encouraged to bring their students to the Arcata Marsh for a tour.

For more information, contact Julie Van Sickle at 826-5552.

Science Fair Award

For the second year, FOAM is sponsoring an award at the Humboldt County Science Fair for the best project dealing with wetlands. The event will be held in the week of March 12 at Humboldt State University. FOAM volunteer judges will evaluate exhibits created by elementary, middle, and high school students to choose a winner of \$50.

**Register Now for the
12th Annual
Godwit Days Spring
Migration Bird Festival
April 20-22
Arcata Community Center
www.godwitdays.com
707-444-2938**



McDaniel Slough Final Report Issued

In December, the City of Arcata and the California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG) released the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the McDaniel Slough Wetland Enhancement Project (WEP). This document incorporates public comment received on the Draft EIR released last March.

The WEP involves the development, design, and implementation of a comprehensive wetlands enhancement plan for the lower end of Janes Creek. The project includes restoration of tidal estuary function, creation of brackish marsh and freshwater pond habitat, and public access.

The project includes the following features:

- Wetland habitat restoration on 200 acres of CDFG and City lands surrounding McDaniel Slough
- Creation of 35 acres of ponds (one brackish, two freshwater) at the AMWS
- Construction of trails and interpretive features, including wildlife viewing structures, benches, and information kiosks
- Providing access for anadromous fish to McDaniel Slough and Janes Creek

A central component of the WEP is to restore the slough's tidal functions by removing four tidegates that currently constrict Bay water from entering Janes Creek.

A copy of the EIR and DEIR are posted at www.arcatacityhall.org.



Native Oyster Study Grant Obtained

The City of Arcata has been awarded a grant from NOAA, in partnership with the Nature Conservancy, to look at colonization, survival, and growth of native oysters (*Ostrea conchaphila*) at four sites within the City's tidelands jurisdiction. This pilot project - a collaboration between the City, FOAM, HSU, and California Sea Grant - will examine the feasibility of enhancing and restoring native oyster populations by researching the factors that are limiting their establishment and growth in Humboldt Bay.

Oyster beds may enhance habitat for small fishes and many invertebrate species. The increased habitat complexity resulting from introducing native oysters is likely to benefit many species of juvenile fish and invertebrates and may also facilitate growth of eel grass.

The City proposes to utilize six different substrates at each site within the intertidal and subtidal mudflats adjacent to channels: 1) bare rock, 2) oyster shells on rock, 3) artificial oyster collectors on rock, 4) bare concrete, 5) oyster shells on concrete, and 6) artificial oyster collectors on concrete, to determine the optimal substrate for native oyster colonization/survival.

Monthly monitoring, under the direction of FOAM Board member and HSU professor Sean Craig, will include measuring oyster settlement rate and growth, biofouling on shells, and predation by various species. Water quality data obtained by HSU's CI-CORE project - which currently measures salinity, turbidity, temperature, chlorophyll, and other parameters and posts them in real-time at <http://cicore.humboldt.edu/?content=home> - will be used to look for water quality correlations with oyster settlement and growth.

At some point, FOAM, with the aid of former Board member David Couch, will lead monthly educational walks that will include a stop to view of one of the native oyster sites, where the study will be discussed. FOAM will also lead one canoe excursion to the other three study sites and sponsor one public lecture on the findings. The results will also be presented in an educational poster displayed at the AMIC.



Seasonal Changes Around the Marsh - Winter

By Denise Homer

The dense fog this morning restricts my view. I cannot see the highway. I cannot see Mt Trashmore. My view is limited to that which is immediately in front of me. All I can do is walk one step at a time through the fog and see what I find with each step. With my focus narrowed down, I notice the rough-skinned newt on the path and step around it. With so little to see, my ears easily hear the Green-winged Teals call in Butcher's Slough. As they swim into view, their colorful bodies stand out vividly against the gray sky.

Today, I am walking in the clouds. Fog differs from other clouds only in that fog touches the surface of the earth. Fog is defined as a cloud that reduces visibility to less than 1 km, whereas mist reduces visibility to less than 2 km. The foggiest land areas in the world are Point Reyes, CA and Argentia, Newfoundland, both with over 200 foggy days a year.

The best I can do right now is to be here, in this fog, step by step, and see what emerges. At the edge of Allen Marsh, I get my reward, a Sora. More commonly heard than seen, here is a Sora walking around on top of the Marsh Pennywort, gleaning seeds, aquatic insects, and mollusks and completely oblivious to me. I watch it habitually flick its short, stubby tail - an action meant to make its predators think the tail is the head. The Sora is an uncommon migrant and winter resident; casual to rare in summer.

"Normally, we do not so much look at things as overlook them," says Alan Watts. The best I can do right now is to be here, in this fog, step by step, and look, really look at what I can see.



Research Grant Applications Due February 28

This is the third year that FOAM has offered grants to support research projects that are broadly or specifically related to the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary. Because of the lack of applications during the fall semester, FOAM has extended the deadline for research grant applications to 2/28 and broadened the candidate pool to include HSU and College of the Redwood students.

Grants will be awarded based on each project's relevance to wetlands ecology, processes, and habitat concerns. Up to \$1,000 may be awarded, to support up to three proposals. Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible.

Past grants have supported investigation into the effects of antibiotic concentrations on nitrogen uptake in duckweed, microbial fuel cell technology using Arcata Marsh water, the role of nutrient limitation in determination of eelgrass shoot density in Humboldt Bay, and winter roost site fidelity by Dunlin.

The application deadline is Wednesday, February 28. To obtain application materials, contact Patty Siering at 826-3120, e-mail pls13@humboldt.edu. Funding was made possible through a bequest from the estate of Sylvia Fisher, in the name of her late son, Marcus.

Observe Predators in Your Backyard

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has launched Project Predator-Watch, a new citizen-science project throughout the US and Canada to determine the extent of predation on birds at feeders and in backyards. Your help is critical for determining how many and what types of birds are killed by cats, dogs, and other predators at feeders.

You can provide data that could help 1) identify species that are most affected by interactions with predators; 2) determine how interactions are affected by season or climate; and 3) ascertain which species and what age or sex are most vulnerable to predation.

If you observe or find evidence of a predation event in your yard, visit ABC's Cats Indoors! Campaign Website (www.abcbirds.org/cats) to access the online survey. Complete a new survey every time you witness a predator-wildlife interaction in your yard. Compiled results may be reported in scientific journals and other publications.



FEBRUARY ARTIST MIKE ANDERSON

COMMON BEAUTY: A photo exhibit of common birds of NW California

I've been photographing birds as a serious amateur for about two years. One benefit of starting so late in life is that I can afford the toys. Except for sitting in on a 4-day digital landscape workshop my wife attended last year, I have not had any formal training in art or photography.

Professionally, I am an engineer and an educator. I am emeritus professor of Environmental Resources Engineering at HSU, where I have taught for more than 30 years. During summers of the mid 1990s, I was also a professional raft guide for Whitewater Voyages on the Kern River. I am a lifelong outdoor adventurer, and I have always had a fascination with wild places and a love and respect for wild creatures.

Although there is a certain amount of technical and artistic skill involved in my photography, I do not think of myself so much as an artist, but rather more as an opportunist. Thus, I try to be ready to take advantage of any photo opportunity. Specifically, I try to put myself in the right place at the right time with the right equipment and the right frame of mind to capture beautiful images of whatever nature is willing to allow. While I occasionally search out and photograph unusual and even exotic birds, I especially enjoy capturing beautiful images of common birds that we see every day, birds that are all too easy to take for granted. Through my photographs, I hope to remind viewers to take another, longer look the next time they see a common bird, and observe the special beauty therein.

Most of the photos in the show were shot in compressed raw mode using a Nikon D200 w/ VR 80-400mm zoom lens. I cropped and finished all photos in Nikon Capture NX, and printed all 8.5 x 11 photos on a Canon Pixma MP800R printer-copier. The eight larger photos were printed by J Bradley Design.

I warmly acknowledge the support of my wife, Leslie, who provided invaluable artistic critique, mounted the photos, and helped hang the display.



BIRD DOGGERELS

The near-frenzied
Scholastic Crows
live on coffee and scads of No-Doz:
"Our migration's absurd,
to Starbucks, in herds,
and the caffeine is curling
our toes!"

The very shy Ibis, I've noticed,
will emerge for an ice cream flotus.
He'll sit by your side,
ply his straw (well-applied!)
then creep off to a nest
quite remotus.

MIGRATORY MARVELS

- Body lengths traveled by a Rufous Hummingbird between Alaska and its winter range in Mexico: **49 million**
- Miles to the gallon used by a Blackpoll Warbler on migration if it burned gasoline instead of body fat: **72,000**
- Estimated number of birds detected by radar passing over Cape Cod on a single autumn night: **12 million**

[Sources: Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center; *Living on the Wind* by Scott Weidensaul]

LEAF MAGIC

AMIC staffer Darlene Marlow provided this wonderful photo and story of environmental education by tour leader Jenny Hanson.

Jenny shows the magic of latex in a dogwood leaf. When the leaf is gently broken and carefully teased apart, the two pieces appear to be magically staying together an inch apart. However, they are held together by strands of latex in the leaf.

Ecofacts:



5 gallons of water, on average, go down the drain if you leave the tap running while you brush your teeth.

30 gallons of water, on average, go down the drain if you leave the tap running while you wash dishes.

50 gallons of water per day can be wasted by a small faucet leak.

325 gallons of water are consumed per person per day in Las Vegas, possibly more than in any other city in the world.

150 gallons of water, on average are used to wash a car with a hose.

[Courtesy of Josh Sevin & Adam I Lowe, *Grist* magazine]

MARCH ARTIST RON LEVALLEY

Ron is founder and senior biologist of Mad River Biologists, a consulting firm in Arcata. Best known for the identification and distribution of birds along the Pacific Coast, he also has an extensive understanding of a broad range of natural history subjects. A lifelong interest in marine birds and mammals was enhanced by his involvement with Point Reyes Bird Observatory beginning in 1966, including serving as a biologist at the Farallon Island research station. Ron gathered a world-wide perspective on ecological issues when he founded and for 15 years directed Biological Journeys, a pioneering ecotourism company. One of Ron's outstanding attributes is sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm with others.

As a professional photographer, Ron has compiled an impressive collection (over 70,000 images) of wildlife photographs that he uses for presentations and publications. Ron's photography started back in the 1960s and has evolved with the technology of the time. Presently, he shoots three different digital cameras, depending on the situation.

Ron can be reached at www.LeValleyphoto.com. To receive a free daily sample of his work, send an e-mail to ron@LeValleyphoto.com and request to be added to the "Outside My Window" list.

Bird Poem

Some birds kiss flowers or
wind-borne grasses

Some birds stand bowing
at the shore

Some birds dance with the
waves of the sea.

Some birds fly for years without
ever landing — sleeping with
one eye opening.

Ah, bird of the mountains,
you are as all these birds.

Oh beloved, your voice is
sadness and joy.

I, unfolding the wings of my soul,
sing to you my song.

I sing to you of all birds singing
and of your beauty
touching the world.

Dionysos Maskaleris, Spring 2003

APRIL ARTIST JOHN PELAFIGUE

John's entry into avian photography developed in Baja California, where he spent much time photographing desert landscapes, particularly during periods of gorgeous sunsets and sunrises. While using a kayak to photograph from an offshore position, it soon became obvious that birds allowed a closer approach than if by land, and a few "grab shots" soon developed into a purposeful pursuit of avian wildlife. Naturally, an entirely new set of challenges was involved, along with acquisition of specialized equipment.

Happily, what did not change was the opportunity to be outside, experiencing the joys of nature. Since moving to Humboldt County from southern California, John has made good use of his time along a major bird migratory route, fortunate to be living in a county that boasts more species than all but two of the 50 states.

John's website, www.myfotos.ws, contains over 70 images of birds photographed in Baja California and Humboldt County, as well as California landscapes and California Missions. He can be reached at 707-839-0993 or john@myfotos.ws.

FOAM T-Shirts

Show your support for FOAM by purchasing one of our T-shirts! These short-sleeved shirts come in two colors, light green and light blue. The back features a large, 3-color rendition of the FOAM marsh wren on cattail logo. The logo repeats in a smaller, black version on the front.

Available at the AMIC Gift Shop.
Only \$12 (plus tax).

Comments from Visitors

Well worth the trip... You are always on my list of places to bring my out-of-town visitors... Will return someday... Love it up here... Really enjoyed the nature aspect of my journey... Why I come to Arcata... Lookin' good... A joy and a hope... Glorious... We are so lucky we live so close, to be able to enjoy this every day... Loved the night-herons... We love the ducks!

Visitor Log

The AMIC had 1637 walk-in visitors during October, 1333 in November, 1283 in December, and 1052 in January.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

February — photographs by Mike Anderson

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

March — photographs by Ron LeValley

March 3&4 — FOAM Docent Training (see page 1)

March 9 — FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm

April — photographs by John Pelafigue

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

April 20-22 — 12th Annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival, www.godwitdays.com or 444-2938

May — Winning artwork from Student Bird Art Competition (see page 1)

Recognition & Thanks, October 2006-January 2007

- **Best Friends:** Margaret Nulsen, Calista Sullivan & Richard Sanborn
- **Sponsors:** Terry Fountain (Santa Barbara), Marie Kelleher-Roy, Audrey Miller, Steven & Carl Pearson (Portland, OR); Marian Perry, Anne & Roger Weiss
- **Friends:** Lee Albright, George & Beverly Allen, Caryn Bender, Kenneth Boe; Nina Haedrich; Lilyan Haigh, Fred Hummel, Alan Laurent, Keith Mobbs (Brisbane, CA), Chet Ogan, Renay Radnicki (Crescent City), Ronald Simpson (Pacifica), Stephen Stamnes, Connie Word (Redding)
- **Donations:** Ryan Sexton (Muncie, IN), \$300 (Sexton Family donation for their "great experience at the Arcata Marsh back in August"); Lee & Chris House, Vintage BMW House, \$250
- FOAM sends its condolences to the family of long-time member **Kenneth Boe**, who passed away December 26.