UPWIND

from the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center

Vol 18, Iss 1, Winter 2010/11

Photo by Elliott Dabill.

Spring Volunteer Training

On March 12 and 13, FOAM will sponsor training to prepare docents to lead Arcata Marsh tours and volunteers to staff the Interpretive Center. The classes run 9 am-4 pm on Saturday and 9 am-3:30 pm on Sunday. Call the Interpretive Center at 707-826-2359 and leave your name, phone number, and e-mail if you are interested.

Topics will include inside lectures and outside walks, so dress accordingly. Bring rubber boots for collecting in Bay mud. FOAM will provide morning bagels and drinks; lunch is on your own. Trainers will cover tour tips and interpretation, Marsh history, plants, wastewater treatment, wetlands and invertebrates, and birds.

Help Needed with FOAM's Godwit Days Activities

The 16th 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 12:30 to 3:30 pm on Sat., April 16.

The activities span all ages and interests and will include making water cycle bracelets, peanut butter pinecone birdfeeders, rock painting, and fish prints. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. This is a fun event for both kids and volunteers. If you can spend a couple of hours helping kids discover the many wonders of our marsh, call Sue at 707-442-5444.

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 707-822-4660.

As part of the Godwit Days program, FOAM Board member David Couch will be leading a tour of the wastewater treatment plant on Saturday from 3-4:30 pm. The tour is offered at no charge, but preregistration is required. Call Godwit Days at 707-826-7050 to sign up.

March 25 Deadline for Student Bird Art Contest Entries

For the eighth year, FOAM and Redwood Region Audubon are co-sponsoring a Student Bird Art Contest. $550 in prizes will be awarded to students from kindergarten through high school who submit a drawing of one of 40 suggested species or other common local bird. Special prize(s) will be awarded to the best depiction of birds in their natural habitat.

Winners will be announced at the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival at 11:30 am on Saturday, April 16. Entries will be displayed at the Arcata Community Center during the Festival. 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). One entry per person. Flyers with complete rules are available at the Marsh Interpre-

Photos by Sue Leskiw.

tive Center, Strictly for the Birds in Old Town Eureka, or by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Louise Bacon-Ogden, 2337 B Street, Eureka 95501. 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 Sue Leskiw at 5440 Cummings Road, Eureka 95503. Entries must be received by Friday, March 25 to be considered.

Bakers & Dancers Sought

By George Ziminsky

FOAM is cosponsoring a Barn Dance on March 26 in Arcata as a fundraiser. We invite everyone to come to the Veterans Hall at 14th and J Streets starting at 7:30 pm to have fun dancing to foot-stomping live music. Besides beer and juice, FOAM will be selling home-made refreshments, so if you'd like to bake something sweet or savory, please contact me at geoz@humboldt1.com or 707-826-9240 to make arrangements.

Here's more information on the dance itself: A Barn Dance is a fun community get-together that mixes several dance styles. Even those without much dance experience can join in, since the caller explains each sequence of moves and will give folks a chance for a "walk-through" to help understand how the dance will work before the music starts. (First-timers can get there a little early for a mini-workshop on the moves and vocabulary used.) A Barn Dance is a "social dance," meaning that dancers usually choose a new partner for each dance. This gives couples a chance to socialize independently, single folks a chance to participate, and beginners to pair up with more-experienced dancers. Group dances like "squares" (4 couples facing each other across a square), "contras" (couples in a line, with partners facing each other across the set or next to each other in line), or "circle/line" dances (everyone holding hands to form a line) will make up most of the evening, but there will also be individual couple dances like waltzes or a two-step.

These dances, sponsored by the Humboldt Folklife Society (HFS), have developed a strong following over the past few years, with Tara Stetz calling and fiddle/banjo/guitar/bass music provided by the Striped Pig String Band. Admission is $6 for students, seniors, and HFS members, $7 general, free for age 12 & under. Contact me for more info or if you want to help FOAM with refreshments or serving. See you there!

FOAM Cosponsors Successful *Spartina* Meeting

By Mary Burke

Humboldt Bay is poised to experience an epic eradication of *Spartina densiflora,* otherwise known as dense-flowered cordgrass. On 1/19, FOAM cosponsored a public meeting with the City of Arcata and California Coastal Conservancy about efforts to eradicate *Spartina densiflora* and restore native salt marsh in Humboldt Bay. Approximately 45 people attended the session held at the D Street Neighborhood Center in Arcata. This was a follow-up public meeting to one held in 10/09, also cosponsored by FOAM.

Andrea Pickart from Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge (HBNWR); Donna Ball and Adam Wagschal from HT Harvey & Associates and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District, respectively; and Joel Gerwein from the Conservancy presented on current efforts to continue with a full Bay eradication of this invasive species. Since 2006, the HBNWR has conducted restoration on 35 acres of *Spartina densiflora*-infested salt marsh. Through mowing, chopping, and burning fresh seedlings, the Refuge conducted a successful restoration.

The rapid response of endangered owl's clover in the restored area is testament to the benefits of *Spartina* removal. The lessons learned through testing methods for eradication will prove helpful in the effort to restore the Bay as a whole. HT Harvey & Associates ---- in association with HBNWR, Friends of the Dunes, and Washington State University ---- is in the process of writing a comprehensive invasive species management plan that will offer a broad to narrow scope of existing conditions, invasive species, and eradication strategies.

Gerwein concluded the presentations by reminding us that planned eradication is part of a restoration project for the salt marsh of Humboldt Bay. He went on to describe how the Bay is just one location along the Washington, Oregon, and California coastlines, but has a huge responsibility in the complete action plan.

Any area with tidal influence is a potential source for the rest of the coastline. In partnership with HBNWR, the Harbor District, and the City of Arcata, the Coastal Conservancy is drafting an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on the eradication and restoration project. The document will examine four primary methods for eradication: mechanical, handheld brush-cutters; mechanical tracked machinery; manual removal with shovels and pulaskis; and herbicide application.

The Conservancy will conduct a pilot study of approximately one acre to test the methods and observe the effects eradication and restoration. The use of pesticides is being explored because many *Spartina* eradication efforts have found herbicides to be the most-effective technique. Research has found low wildlife toxicity, low potential to bio-accumulate, a quick half-life, and low monitored levels in recently treated areas. In the meantime, FOAM and other local organizations will be sponsoring volunteer-driven removal efforts, so keep your eyes and ears open in the near future for ways you can get involved in the restoration of Humboldt Bay salt marsh.

FOAM Board members Mary Burke, Katy Allen, and George Ziminsky helped with setup, refreshments, and timekeeping on questions. More info on *Spartina* ecology and control is at www.fws.gov/humboldtbay/spartina.html.

Photo of Katy Allen by Mary Burke.

FOAM at Enviro Ed Fair

By Katy Allen

On February 16, FOAM participated in an Environmental Education Teacher Fair sponsored by California Regional Environmental Education Community Network. Held at the Humboldt County Office of Education in Eureka, the fair offered teachers the chance to discover, in one spot, many environmental opportunities available for their students, including field trips and in-class presentations. Many organizations participated, including Friends of the Dunes, California Conservation Corps, HSU, Redwood National & State Parks, Sequoia Park Zoo, and Natural History Museum. Approximately 30 teachers and school administrators visited the FOAM table, peering into our microscope at the pond water creatures and taking home the flyer created by Mary Burke that described field trip opportunities at the Marsh.

Feb 19 Baykeeper Tour. (From left): Captain Chuck Herbelin, Ken Burton, Jack Schubert, David Couch, Jenny Hanson. Photo by Mary Burke.

Burton, Baykeeper & Birds on the Bay

By Jenny Hanson

Forewarned by Humboldt Baykeeper's introductory information sheet, I dressed in many layers, with gloves, hat, and raingear for a tour of Humboldt Bay, with Ken Burton as our excellent birding guide.

At 8 am on February 19, it was indeed cold, but the rain kept away, and five FOAM volunteers enjoyed a bird-focused trip around the bay in a Boston Whaler, Captain Chuck Herbelin. We were fortunate to have Ken as our guide, as he identified a most-unusual find, a flock of Black-legged Kittiwakes, pretty gull-like birds that are very rarely seen in the Bay. In addition to these rarities, we were treated to several Ospreys, some of which were already on nests, mostly at the top of tall light poles in the former industrial area of the peninsula. We got wonderful looks at Brandt's Cormorants atop a piling so close to the boat that we could see their blue eye, blue throat patch, and white "whiskers."

But this was more than a bird-identification exercise. Ken gave us lots of interesting information to expand our enjoyment of birds. One example was that because diving birds have small wings to help them swim under water, they have difficulty getting airborne. So they run along the water before they can take off. As we looked at Indian Island, we learned that although Great Blue Herons arrive at rookeries first, they are shared by several species including Great Egrets. Other tidbits included that Kingfishers k[illegible] with their beaks, while raptors kill w[illegible] their feet, and that Buffleheads are tree cavity nesters.

We were all very appreciative of Chuck's bay and boating expertise. He provided us with a kit of information about Baykeeper and its mission and services, which include these excellent free bay trips open to everyone and led by a number of different docents. Our trip was put together by FOAM Board member Megan McCue. But anyone can put one together by calling Humboldt Baykeeper at 707-268-0664.

Another Bay Trip Report

By Jane Wilson

I took the Humboldt North Bay boat tour on February 12. I was very happy to have one of my favorite docents, Bob Rasmussen. It couldn't have been more beautiful: clear and cool. The local Baykeeper group was first a local group of fishermen who didn't want their fishing messed up by a polluted bay. It feels really good to be part of local organizations that are trying to keep our environment nice and clean for everyone. I was happy to hear that Baykeeper is one of the organizations fighting the pollution that could be caused by developing the Balloon Tract in a non-responsible way. I was lucky to be among excellent birders who recognized the varieties we saw. It was high tide, so there were not many. A common loon was spotted; I had never seen one in the Marsh. There were many gulls. I so enjoyed the lull of the water, sun, and a beautiful place to be.

NEEDED: One member to serve a 3-year term on the FOAM Board of Directors. Join a great group of people who care about the Marsh. Call President Sue Leskiw at 707-442-5444 to find out more!

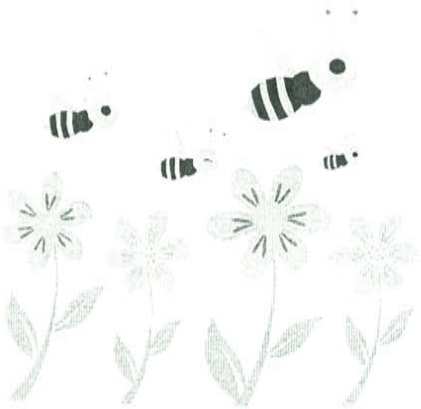
First Volunteer Get-Together

By Megan McCue

On February 19, several FOAM volunteers and Board members met at the quaint Old Town Café in Eureka, a few blocks from Humboldt Bay. Jenny Hanson, Jack Schubert, Art Barab, Tom Allen, Mary Burke, and I downed warm drinks and talked about the Marsh. Art, the history buff, told us about Josiah Gregg and what it was like by the bay during the mid-1800s. Mary answered our curiosity about what happens in the treatment marshes and ponds and contributed stimulating, quickly written trivia questions about the Marsh. We sat back, laughed, and learned a little.

My favorite trivia question was "How many miles of collection pipes does Arcata have running to the wastewater treatment plant?" Over 60 (answer courtesy of the City of Arcata website). Another was "What bird found at the Arcata Marsh eats it feathers to protect its intestinal tract from fish bones during digestion?" Grebes (answer courtesy of the *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior).*

Old Town Café was a classy place to meet --- nice atmosphere, nice conversation. Stay tuned for details on the next volunteer get-together date and location, about 3 months from now.



April 2 Bloomer Tour

Jenny Hanson and Rich Ridenhour will lead a plant focus walk entitled "What's blooming now at the Arcata Marsh?" on Saturday, April 2, from 2-4 pm. The tour is intended for Marsh volunteers and members of the general public who enjoy looking at flowering plants and want to learn more about them. Co-sponsored by FOAM and the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Meet at Interpretive Center.

Holiday Tours

Thanksgiving 2010 by Art Barab

Twenty-two adults and 8 children attended the annual FOAM Thanksgiving pre-gluttony walk. The weather, cold but sunny much of the tour, threatened rain by its end at 11:45 am. Birds galore to be seen, with lots of ducks and shorebirds. All the usual suspects: great and snowy egrets, a great blue heron or two, green-winged and cinnamon teal, a wigeon mob in the log pond, a few ruddy ducks and bufflehead in Klopp Lake where, around its edges and the outer part of the slough, many peeps, dunlins, marbled godwits, avocets, and willets fed, along with a few curlews. On Klopp Lake's middle island, we spied several pelicans and a line of cormorants on a log, two of them drying wings. Saw two eared grebes in Butchers Slough and a solitary tern treated us to its dive-bombing routine at the lake. I made stops at the log pond, along the slough, at the entrance to the treatment plant, several around Klopp Lake, and more along South I Street and the enhancement marshes route. I talked about the marsh's functions, its incorporation into the wastewater treatment system, and added a few comments about marsh and local history.

New Year's Day 2011 by Jenny Hanson

In the midst of a wet cold snap, the afternoon of New Year's Day brought a cold but dry and windless respite. About 20 adults gathered on the porch of the Interpretive Center; by the time we started out towards the Wastewater Treatment plant, the group had grown to 28. Almost all of us were locals and had frequently enjoyed birdwatching or walking along Marsh trails.

We took a walk around the Oxydation Ponds, since the tide was low, and the birds had all deserted Klopp Lake for the delicacies of the mudflats. As this area was unfamiliar to several people, it made a pleasant change. In addition, this trail was full of the promise of spring, because there were a surprising number of early-blooming flowers, including mauve and white Wild Radish, yellow Mustard, and several members of the Carrot Family like white Queen Anne's Lace, Poison Hemlock, and Water Parsnip and yellow Fennel. Perhaps the most-unexpected flower was Bee Plant, its tiny maroon blooms looking like the back-view of a bee, according to one of the group.

We spent some time comparing two look-alikes, the familiar Queen Anne's Lace and its close relative Poison Hemlock. One of them has green feathery bracts underneath the flower-head. But how to remember which one? One suggestion from the group was that not only does Queen Ann wear a lace gown, but she also has very elegant "lower garments."

As we reached the first Oxydation Pond, we were treated to a delightful patch of sun, so we tarried there, admiring the flowers and enjoying flocks of ducks that swam away from us as we approached. It didn't seem to matter that the sun was in our eyes and made it hard to identify the birds. But the spring-like weather was too good to last. As we came around the second pond, the wind got up and the clouds covered the sun, producing a sudden drop in temperature. I took this as a signal to change pace, and our walk turned into a warming leg-stretcher, which made a pleasant ending to the New Year's Day ramble.

Coastweek Lectures 2010

By Mary Burke

On 10/12, I gave a talk to a small but interactive audience on the potential for carbon sequestration in Arcata Wastewater Treatment wetlands. As a graduate student in the Environmental Systems program at Humboldt State University, I am currently writing up the results of my study, which indicate that while there is a great amount of biomass being produced every year in the wetlands, the real winner for carbon sequestration are the gains from operating a low-energy, low-operations treatment facility.

On 10/26, Dr Matt Hurst of the HSU Chemistry Dept delivered another piece to the picture of understanding metals in marshes. His talk built on previous lectures that described an annual pattern of metals in Arcata's oxidation ponds and Arcata Marsh wetlands. The latest talk detailed his work focused on understanding how metals move between soluble, colloidal, and particulate fractions. By spiking samples of oxy pond water with low-abundance isotope metals, Dr Hurst observed the exchange of metals as the sample re-established equilibrium. The observation of a new equilibrium aids in understanding the dynamic cycling of metals in the treatment wetland.

Plants of the Marsh
A series by
Melinda Bailey

Douglas-Fir *(Pseudotsuga menzeisii)*

The Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary isn't famous for conifers, which is the name given to cone-bearing trees, but like neighboring forest ecosystems, conifers are important to the overall ecology of the sanctuary. Their large size offers shade and cover for animals. Passerines (perching birds) including woodpeckers, kinglets, and brown creeper, along with birds of prey, seem to like them over more open vegetation. Many species of conifer have a symbiotic relationship with mycorrhizal fungi that live in forest soil. In recent years, many cedars and pines have been planted along trails and near the interpretive center in an effort to create a more natural vegetative community. In the intervening time, mature conifers can be viewed along the fringes of Mt Trashmore. Within these edges one can find Douglas-fir, a very important tree to the economy of the Pacific Northwest.

Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menzeisii*) is not a true fir. It was named after David Douglas, a Scottish botanist who studied the tree in the late 1700s. Its genus, Pseudotsuga, means "false hemlock" because it shares some characteristics of hemlock. Two species are native to North America: a coastal variety and one that lives in the Rocky Mountains commonly called the blue Douglas-fir. Coastal Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menzeisii var. menzeisii*) prefers the western slopes of the Cascade Range, the Sierra Nevada, and the Coast Ranges and is the one found in California. These forests extend from central California to British Columbia. Factors that limit its range are dense, wet snow pack and dry compacted

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soils. This tree species grows best in well-lined, moist, loamy soils; exactly what weathered shale and sandstone of the Coast Range offer. It is widespread from sea level to 5500 feet in elevation.

The most-impressive remnant forests of this species are just that --- remnants. This species is the most-important timber tree in the world. Ever since the late 19th century, it was highly sought after for its many desirable properties as timber; especially wood volume. This species grows quickly, especially after fire. It is commonly used in construction as plywood, studs, and posts. Millions of houses have been made from this wood. Native Americans used the wood for tools such as spear handles and harpoon shafts. The pitch has been used medicinally as a salve. Checkerboard patterns of second-growth forest and clearcuts are a common sight these days throughout its range. The more premium specimens left standing, measuring close to 300 feet tall and 12 feet in diameter, and can be found in and around northern Washington.

Douglas-fir trees are the second tallest in the world, the first being the coast redwood. The most-easily identifying feature of this species is the seed cones. True fir cones stand upright on branches, whereas Douglas-fir cones hang from branches. Three-lobed bracts project out of scaly brown cones that are usually 2-3 inches long. Some say the bracts resemble the rear end of mice sticking out. The needles are dark green to yellowish-green, relatively flat, and circle the branches. Overall, the tree stands straight with a conical shape and the green foliage droops gracefully from long branches. Perhaps, if you are is lucky, you will see a Cooper's hawk perched in the branches of this species at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.

Seasons Around the Marsh – Winter

By Denise Homer

First thing in the morning, I walk into my office and set my backpack down. Scanning out the window, I see a form on a piling. What's that? It's shaped like a Green Heron, but it is a secretive bird not given to standing on a piling. I pull my binoculars out of my backpack, focus, and sure enough, it is a Green Heron! It's the first time I've seen one out in the open. The Green Heron is listed as casual in winter at the Marsh. Casual means that there are several records and possibly may occur more regularly. This means it's more than uncommon, rarer than rare to see them.

When I left for lunch, I saw the Green Heron again in Butcher's Slough, standing still at the slough's edge, perfectly camouflaged, waiting to ambush prey, which includes small fish, frogs, and aquatic insects. It has a couple of advantages: first, its eyes can face forward to help judge distance and second, it uses bait. It throws earthworms, insects, feathers, or twigs onto the waters surface to lure the fish close.

It seemed unusual to see this secretive bird twice in one day. It is the smallest heron at the Marsh, smaller even than a bittern or a Cattle Egret. David Fix describes it in *Birds of Northern California* as a small, stocky heron; green-black crown; chestnut face and neck; white streaks on the throat and underparts; blue-gray of the back and wings is mixed with iridescent green; comparatively short, orange legs; dark bill; short tail.

At the end of the day, I walked quietly, slowly towards the slough crossing, even though seeing it again seemed improbable. Yet there it was, standing in the mud of low tide, fairly close. We just looked at each other for a short while, then it flew off down the slough towards the bay. I'm left wondering what my Celtic ancestors would divine out of seeing a Green Heron three times in one day. It certainly seems like this secretive, solitary heron is trying to tell me something. Once again, I am reminded of Albert Einstein, who said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

Soaring on the Wings of Life

by Lance Torgerson

So often at the Marsh, we are able to observe our feathered friends in a wonderful place --- the Wildlife Sanctuary. What a marvel it is to see the birds and other creatures of the Marsh. When I see a flock of geese fly overhead, it makes me feel so alive. I like to see them form the ever-so-famous V and fly in formation. I wonder what it would be like to have a strong pair of winged appendages. Arms that would thrust me though the air like a rocket ship. As the geese vie for position and a chance to lead the formation, it gives me a sense that I'm moving in the right direction. Making headway, looking forward, toward a new horizon.

For centuries, humans have fantasized about sprouting wings and taking off like a bird. For example, Cupid: fluttering around in the sky, looking down from a billowing cloud, to find those waiting to fall in love. Or Icarus, the legend that formed wings only to find that flying up to the sun would be a fatal mistake. Angels have wings. Fire-breathing dragons have them, too. In some ways, you would think a little fairy dust and imagination would be all that it would take to get you airborne.

Leonardo Da Vinci studied birds in flight and dreamed of making wings to soar like a bird. There is something magical about flying. Having the ability to defy gravity. Unless you're Superman, the closest you can get to actually flying

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like a bird would be to jump out of a plane or go hang-gliding. Humans may have landed on the moon, but we couldn't just flap our wings until we made it there. In comparison, an Arctic Tern can fly over 40,000 miles in one year and can live for 20 years (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arctic_Tern). That is over 800,000 air-miles in a lifetime. A trip to the moon and back is only 477,000 miles round trip (http://answers.yahoo.com/question). That's almost two trips to the moon and back to Earth by flapping wings!

Feathers have an amazing design that allows for warmth and protection. They can also attract mates and be used to form nests, warm eggs, and newly hatched baby birds. Feathers form in the outer skin layer and are made up of keratins that are hydrogen bonded into beta-pleated sheets (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feather). It is a mystery what causes feathers to start to grow. Once feathers form, there are several distinct types with specific functions.

Contour feathers cover the body. Down feathers (that are soft and fluffy) are found underneath contour feathers. Remiges are flight feathers found on the wing. Rectrices [ck] are flight feathers on the tail. The rachis is the long stem of the feather, which has small branches known as barbules jetting out. The small barbules contain tiny hooks known as barbicels that latch the feathers together for maximum flight performance. Often, when birds are preening (a regular form of maintenance), they are reattaching the barbicels along their flight feathers. The quill is a hollow tube that forms along the base of the rachis that then works itself into a skin follicle (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feather).

Feather structure has evolved through time. Long ago, some dinosaurs had feathers. The research on the early feathered dinosaurs contends that reptilian scales somehow formed ancient feathers that were used to help keep the creatures warm. Later, they were used to glide though the air.

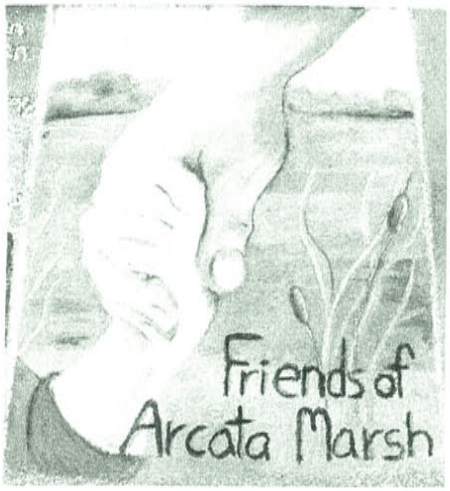
How wonderful it is to think of all the magnificent features that are common to all birds! Elegant plumage and the spectacle of a bird in the clouds --- something that forms inspiration. What we see in nature can become our earnest hope or wish. The creative aspect of nature can serve as our spiritual motivation. It is encouraging to see the deeper significance of an ordinary occurrence.

Photo by Julie Neander.

December Marsh Workday

On Saturday, December 11, FOAM joined with the City of Arcata and the Northcoast Environmental Center to sponsor a work day at the Arcata Marsh. Nearly 20 volunteers spent the morning transplanting salt grass and other native plants at the newly created salt marsh area on South I Street.

FOAM would like to thank the following people for their labor of love: Francisco Aguirre, Katy and Tom Allen, Cate Be, Clara Bolster, Christian Dye, Kent Falkenstine, David Garza, Brian Gregg, Dan Hadley, Tara Hohoff, Paisley Kilimann, Heather Millet, Pete O'Connor, Kalia Scarla, Erik Wright, and Lisa and Jared Zystro. The next FOAM-sponsored work day is slated for Saturday, July 16.



FOAM Square on Arcata Plaza

FOAM again participated in Pastels on the Plaza on October 2. The event functioned as both a fundraiser for North Coast Children's Services and publicity for FOAM.

Science Fair Award

For the sixth year, FOAM is sponsoring an award at the Humboldt County Science Fair for the best project related to wetlands. The event will be held the week of March 14 at Humboldt State University. FOAM volunteer judges will evaluate exhibits created by elementary, middle, and high school students to choose a winner of $50.

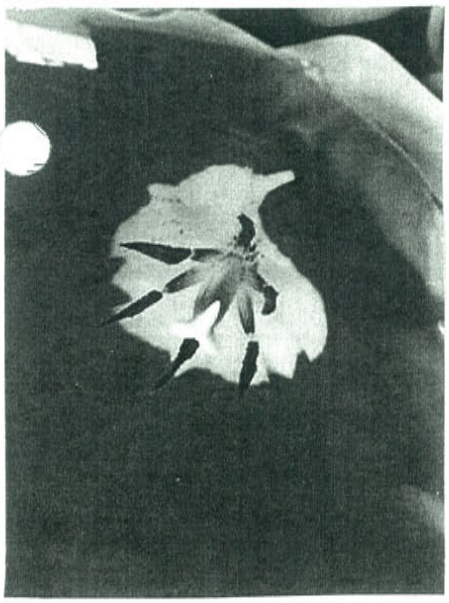
White-crowned Sparrow by Ron LeValley.

MARCH ARTIST RON LEVALLEY

Photographer Ron LeValley is a biologist who has been enamored with photography and seabirds for the past 40 years. He specializes in photographs of wildlife of all kinds, from whales and birds to insects and natural scenes.

As a professional photographer, Ron has compiled an impressive collection (over 70,000 images) of wildlife and nature 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 with three digital cameras, depending on the situation.

Ron is a founding member of the Mendocino Coast Photographer Guild and Gallery in Fort Bragg, where his work can be seen. He also shows at the G2 Gallery in Venice, CA and at various shows around northern California. Ron e-mails a picture every day under the heading "Outside My Window" that highlights his photography and love of the natural world. To join this free list, go to www.levalleyphoto.com.



Red Flower Close-up
by Darlene Marlow.

April Artist Darlene Marlow

I will be showing new close-up photographs of flowers and expressionist multi-media pieces inspired by them.

What I've been working on is something I call Duos" because each piece (framed together) pairs a photo and something I'm creating. The second part is Expressionistic, showing what emotion the photo (of a flower or plant) arouses in me. I'm doing some canvases of color blocks, some with objects like feathers or beads added to them. Others may include painting on silk.

On Sunday, April 3, there will be a reception at AMIC from 2-4 pm, including refreshments and music by the Fabulous Blue Jayz.

Sustainability Indicators Symposium

By Mary Burke

On Feb 23, I presented a poster at the Sacramento River Watershed Project California Sustainability Indicators Symposium in Sacramento. The poster, titled "Sustainability Status of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS)," covered the five subheadings of water quality management, natural resource conservation management, environmental education, healthy community, and advocating public policy. Three reportable sections were utilization, effectiveness, and impact, under which FOAM was one of three areas detailed with bullets and photos.

Approximately 120 people were in attendance, from public and private organizations, including the State Water Quality Control Board. I made connections with many people, reminding them that the Arcata Marsh is a sustainable, functioning piece of our watershed. Another message delivered was that innovative and sustainable systems such as AMWS have to strive to keep policies and guidelines from working at cross-purposes with the project. In other words, regulatory measures have the potential to put an innovative system out of business.

Take-home messages were 1) AMWS should make it a priority to have a presence within the scientific and public policy community (e.g. attending and presenting at conferences, publishing in peer-reviewed journals) and 2) AMWS is a key player in the Humboldt Bay watershed and can provide support in quantifying the health of the Bay.

The Marsh On-line

Visit these URLs to see videos and recent articles about the Marsh:

- Outdoors Cool Spot: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsBgN71AJcl
- Trails at the Marsh: www.thejackonline.org/sports/hike-of-the-week-getting-you-off-the-pavement-1.2455377

Visitor Log

The Interpretive Center had 1573 walk-in visitors during September, 1413 in October, 1299 in November, 1053 in December, and 1294 in January.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

March --- Photos by Ron LeValley

March 10 --- FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm

March 12-13 --- FOAM Spring Volunteer Training (see page 1)

March 25 --- Student Bird Art Contest deadline (see page 1)

March 26 --- Barn Dance benefitting FOAM (see page 2)

April --- Art by Darlene Marlow

April 2 --- Blooming plant walk with Jenny Hanson and Rich Ridenhour, 2-4 pm (see page 3)

April 3 --- Artist reception, 2-4 pm

April 14 --- FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm

April 15-17 --- 16th Annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival (visit www.godwitdays.com)

May --- Winning artwork from Student Bird Art Contest (see page 1)

May 12 --- FOAM Board Meeting, 6:30-8:30 pm

Recognition & Thanks, October 2010-February 2011

- **Best Friends** ($100): Barbara Barratt; Chris Frolking & Margaret Nulsen; Ron & Melanie Johnson (new Life Members); Steve & Carol Pearson (Portland, OR)
- **Sponsors** ($50): Fred Ferguson (Granada Hills); Fred Hummel; Suzan Logwood; Frances Madrone & Patric Nagle; Sheila Marks; David Weber (Oakland)
- **Friends:** Lee & Claude Albright; George & Beverly Allen; Karen Angel; Nathan Copple & Ellen Weiss; Francis & Frances Ferguson; Lilyan Haigh; Marie Kelleher-Roy; Megan McCue; Audrey Miller; Keith Mobbs (Brisbane); Chet Ogan; Jean Santi & Whitney Buck; Jack Schubert; Judy Shaffer; Charles Swanson; Will Troxler; Richard Vincent; Lucille Vinyard; Jane Wilson; Connie Word (Redding)
- **Special Donors:** Calista Sullivan & Richard Sanborn, $1000; Rosalind Novick & Lan Sing Wu (new Life Members, courtesy of Catherine Cheshire of Palm Springs); Milton Boyd, $200 (in gratitude for the "knowledgeable and enthusiastic" Marsh docents Tom Allen, Leslie Anderson, Elliott Dabill, Guy Kuttner, Megan McCue, Jack Schubert, and Richard Vincent, who led tours for HSU Biology 105 classes on 12/4); Chris & Lee House, $100; Richard & Carol Laursen, $100 (Carmichael, CA, who wrote that they enjoy receiving UPWIND and tell us to "keep up the good work at the Marsh"); Jonathan & Janet Kempff, $40 (Bozeman, MT, who recently visited Arcata on vacation, enjoyed an afternoon watching birds at the Marsh, and thanked "the folks who worked so hard to bring the Marsh into being")