FIELD TRIPS

Every Saturday: Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. These are our famous, rain-or-shine, docent-led field trips at the Marsh. Bring your binocular(s) and have a great morning birding! Meet in the parking lot at the end of South 1 Street (Klopp Lake) in Arcata at 8:30 a.m. Trips end around 11 a.m. Walks led by: Gary Friedrichsen (Dec 7); Larry Karsteadt (Dec 14); Michael Morris (Dec 21); Bob Battagin (Dec 28). If you are interested in leading a Marsh walk, please contact Ken Burton at shrikethree@gmail.com.

For some of our more far-reaching trips, we would like to suggest donating gas money to drivers on field trips. A good rule of thumb is $5 per ½ hour drive time to field trip destination.

Please note that the Willow Creek and Southern Humboldt Bird Walks have been discontinued at this time. Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported the walks!

Don’t forget about the 120th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Counts coming up in December. These are fun, all-day events where we chase down birds with other nutty birders, all in the name of science! Dates vary by location, so participate in one, two, or all of the local counts! Visit https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count for more information on trip leaders, times, and dates. New counters are more than welcome!

Saturday, December 7: Blue Lake Cottonwoods and Fish Hatchery. Meet at 9 a.m. at the bridge over the Mad River in Blue Lake on Hatchery Rd; park along the road nearby. After about an hour we’ll move to the hatchery. Walk ends around 11 a.m. Contact Amaya (email amayabechler@gmail.com) for more information.

Sunday, December 8: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. This is a wonderful 2-to 3-hour trip for people wanting to learn the birds of the Humboldt Bay area. It takes a leisurely pace with emphasis on enjoying the birds! Beginners are more than welcome. Meet at the Refuge Visitor Center at 9 a.m. Contact leader Ralph Bucher (707-499-1247 or thebook@reninet.com) for more information.

Saturday, December 14: Arcata Christmas Bird Count. This count circle includes Mad River mouth, McKinleyville, part of Arcata Community Forest, Arcata, Bayside, Indianola, Eureka, and the North Spit. Contact Tony Kurz, tonyk_71220@hotmail.com.

Sunday, Dec 15: Eureka Waterfront. Meet at 9 a.m. by the concrete fishing pier at the foot of W. Del Norte St., where we will scope for birds, then walk the Hikshari’ Trail towards the Elk River. Contact leader Ralph Bucher (707-499-1247 or thebook@reninet.com) for more information.

(continued on next page)

Potluck: December 13

Potluck Show & Tell

Join us for our End-of-Year Potluck Dinner and Show & Tell. Bring a dish to share; we will provide drinks and utensils if you need them. Share your best pictures and stories! We’ll limit photos to ten, so there’s time for everyone to get in their best yarns. So, brush up on your tall tales! Email photos for the Show & Tell to board@rras.org by December 11.

Doors open at 6 p.m., program starts at 7 p.m.
Six Rivers Masonic Lodge, 251 Bayside Road, Arcata.
Bring a mug to enjoy shade-grown coffee and come fragrance-free.

Program: January 10

On the Threshold of Change: Rising Tides and Humboldt Bay

Aldaron Laird, Co-Chair of HSU’s Sea Level Rise Initiative, will share the results of his sea-level rise vulnerability assessments of Humboldt Bay and his mapping of the bay’s shoreline. His talk will begin with how the bay was changed historically, then explore its current vulnerabilities and how it is likely to respond to rising sea levels. The landscape-scale changes posed by sea-level rise will have a profound effect on Humboldt Bay’s natural habitats and land use. We will discuss how these changes might affect Humboldt Bay bird populations in particular.

City of Arcata, potential tidal inundation areas with 4.6 feet (1.5 meters) of sea level rise. Aerial image provided by Aldaron Laird.
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Bird Alert (Bird Box)…………………..discontinued
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Thinking of Joining
the National Audubon Society?
If so, please use the coupon below. By sending in your
membership on this form, rather than replying to
solicitations from National Audubon, $20 is sent
directly to our chapter. This is how National rewards
local chapters for recruiting. (Otherwise, the share of
membership dues that RRAS receives is only a couple
of dollars.) Thanks!
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21st Annual Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway
January 22-26, 2020
Chico, California

This action-packed 5-day event celebrates the millions of waterfowl and thousands of raptors that
migrate along the Pacific Flyway and call the
Northern Sacramento Valley their home during
the winter months. This is one of the least
explored and most amazingly diverse areas of
California, with habitats that include rivers and
wetlands, sweeping plains and grasslands,
rolling foothills, sheltered canyons, and
mountain peaks.
Find out more at www.snowgoosefestival.org/

Snow geese at Gray Lodge Wildlife Area,
Butte, CA. January, 2019. Photo by Carol
Comeau.

FIELD TRIPS (continued)

Sunday, December 15: Del Norte Christmas Bird Count. This circle includes Crescent City,
Tolowa Dunes State Park, Smith River mouth, and Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. Contact Lucas
Brug at (707) 954-1189 or lucas.hendrik@hotmail.com.

Saturday, December 21: Willow Creek Christmas Bird Count. This circle is centered near
Willow Creek, and includes part of Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation and Six Rivers National
Forest. Contact Birgitte Elbek at 707-267-4140 or willowcreekbirdwalks@gmail.com.

by removing large swaths of Scotch broom and lots of other invasive plant species, as well as
trash, from a stretch of the bay trail right behind the Bayshore Mall. Meet us at 9 a.m. at the back
of parking lot between Kohl’s and Sportsman’s Warehouse (intersection of Christie and Howell
Street). Tools and gloves will be provided, or you are welcome to bring your own. Light refreshments,
water, and coffee will be available, please bring your own containers. Work ends at 11 a.m.
For more information, contact Jeremy Cashen at 214-605-7368 or jeremy.cashen@yahoo.com

Sunday, December 29: Centerville Christmas Bird Count. This circle includes South Spit, King
Salmon, Fields Landing, lower Elk River, Fortuna, Ferndale, Centerville Beach, Eel River
mouth, and Loleta. Contact Sean McAllister at judeclarepower@gmail.com.

Saturday, Jan 4: Blue Lake Cottonwoods and Fish Hatchery. See Dec 7.

Saturday, January 4: Tall Trees Christmas Bird Count. This circle includes Orrick, Humboldt Lagoons State Park, a large part of Redwood National Park, Redwood Creek mouth, and part of
Bald Hills Rd. Contact Kenneth Burton at shrikethree@gmail.com

Sunday, Jan 12: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. See Dec 8.

Sunday, Jan 19: Eureka Waterfront. See Dec 15.

Keep Up to Date
Through Our RRAS Listserv!
Be reminded of RRAS events
and other public meetings, field trips, etc. of
interest. Subscribe in
one of two ways: navigate to
the web page at
https://groups.io/g/rras;
or by email to
subscribe@groups.io/rras.
Our Financial Year

By Alexa DeJoannis

We ended our fiscal year on June 30, and prepared the following summary. We spent $25,213 and took in $21,192. We spent more than we made mainly because we published a third edition of Ken Burton’s book, *Common Birds of Northwest California*. We also spent grant money on two projects: we supported a student who put together monthly restoration work days along the bayshore in Eureka (Wigi Wetlands) and we hung hummingbird feeders, native plants, and a bird ID poster at the Arcata Library. Both of these projects are ongoing and volunteers are welcome to join in. These projects were made possible by the Humboldt Bay Habitat Enhancement Fund, the Humboldt Bay Recreation Enhancement & Water Quality Fund, and the Robert M. Loichtie Memorial Fund, funds of the Humboldt Area Foundation.

Our income this year was affected by several factors. We sold a lot of used books, given to us by old friends. We earned $3,186 in the bird-a-thon. And our annual banquet was catered by our own Gary Friedrichsen, which meant that more of our took went directly into our piggy bank. We have decided to stop organizing the food concession at Godwit Days in favor of outreach work there that aligns more with our mission.

Several sources of income sustain our organization through the years. Donations and membership dues are very important to us, as they show community support for our work. We invest capital on a rolling basis, which pays small, predictable dividends from year to year. Like membership and donations, fundraising events depend on community support, but their success comes from active participation. The volunteers who plan, set up, run, and clean up at the banquet and ask for pledges in the bird-a-thon are crucial to the success of these efforts. Thank you for your continued support!

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Income Sources By Percentage
July 2018 - June 2019

- fundraising (51%)
- membership (11%)
- book and goods sales (12%)
- donations (11%)
- grants (8%)
- investment income (6%)

Expenditures By Percentage
July 2018 - June 2019

- book publishing (24%)
- administration (24%)
- banquet expenses (16%)
- evening programs (4%)
- bayshore restoration (6%)
- field trips (<1%)
- scientific research (<1%)
- community programs (1%)
- student awards (3%)
- bird box (4%)
- volunteer support (1%)

Join the Jacoby Creek School Garden Project FeederWatch

By Denise Seeger

What is Project FeederWatch? The following was excerpted from https://feederwatch.org/about/project-overview/:

"FeederWatch is a cooperative research project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada (formerly the Long Point Bird Observatory). It’s a winter-long (November-April) citizen science survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. Participants periodically count the birds they see at their feeders and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs.

FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. FeederWatch results are regularly published in scientific journals and are shared with ornithologists and bird lovers nationwide. Project FeederWatch began in Ontario in the mid-1970s. Through Canada’s Long Point Bird Observatory, Erica Dunn established the Ontario Bird Feeder Survey in 1976. After a successful 10-year run with more than 500 participants, its organizers realized that only a continental survey could accurately monitor the largescale movements of birds. Therefore, Long Point Bird Observatory decided to expand the survey to cover all of North America. Realizing they would need a strong partner in this venture, Long Point approached the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and a perfect match was soon made. The Cornell Lab’s connection to thousands of bird enthusiasts across the United States, its sophisticated computer systems, and Long Point’s experience at managing feeder surveys made Project FeederWatch a hit from the start."

At the Jacoby Creek School Garden, Redwood Region Audubon Society is teaming up with Garden Coordinator, Sue Moore, to help with their FeederWatch, enjoying and identifying visiting birds. Basically, we are looking for folks who are willing to spend a couple of hours each week or month on a Friday or Saturday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the garden with Sue. On Fridays, groups of students from the school may also be visiting the garden. Teachers incorporate many aspects of the garden project in their lesson plans.

As stated in the FeederWatch Program Overview, everyone can participate. You do not need to be an expert birder, but your expertise and willingness to learn is welcome!

Where is the Jacoby Creek School Garden? It’s on the west side of Old Arcata Road, just north of the school at 1617 Old Arcata Road in Bayside. For more information or to sign up, contact Denise Seeger at daseeger@gmail.com.
**Living With Dogs and Cats**

and cats killed their young. The international treaty parties revised their agreement and actively began removing the non-native species which had flourished in these isolated and vulnerable islands. We carried our faithful dogs home for good to support that mission (giving me the chance to work with some of the finest mushing dogs on the planet). Today, the international community has pledged to preserve these unique polar regions as best we can, and the Antarctic is a crucial area for scientific study of global trends.

Compared to our clearly defined forays to the Antarctic, it is far more difficult to examine and reduce our impact at home, where we have lived for centuries. Our current environment is a complex mix of native and new, in a landscape physically altered and continually changing under our own hands. Non-native species have wide-ranging and deep impacts on our natural environments, a reality we are only gradually beginning to realize. Ecosystems that developed over millions of years are facing new challenges under human civilization, and they will struggle for a long time to re-establish productive balance. We recognize the non-native nature of domesticated dogs in our communities, and we try to reduce their potential for harm by limiting their reproduction, controlling stray dogs, and vaccinating our pets against disease. In many states, dogs seen “running” deer are shot to protect wild game from exhausting pursuits by our domestic animals that have access to far more nutrients, and therefore energy to run, than wildlife. Any wild animal chased by a predator can die later, out of our sight, once we call our pets away from the chase. We are also learning that our domestic animals that move around the outdoors, either with us or on their own, are capable of transmitting diseases to native animals. Rabies was a famous example during the twentieth century, which was largely controlled in dogs by education campaigns and preventative vaccination.

House cats have long been treated differently, perhaps because they have less potential to hurt people by direct attack, but we are finding that these more secretive animals can have devastating effects on our environments. Cats let outside regularly can range for miles, and instinctively stalk whether hungry or not. House cats kill and terrorize wildlife (often unknown to owners), transmit disease, and breed prolifically if unchecked. They are one of our most powerful non-native biological agents, and have accompanied us across continents and to remote habitats. As they stray unsupervised, they can be scratched or bitten, or eat other animals, and spread and carry home an array of parasites and diseases. Recent focused study has also yielded some difficult news: cats are responsible for the loss of billions of birds every year, contributing to overall losses we are witnessing on a global scale (see New York Times, Sep. 19, 2019, or other news sources for this story).

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**A dogsled team races past a group of seals on the sea ice near Ross Island in this undated photo, likely from the 1970s. Photo Credit: U.S. Navy/Antarctic Photo Library**

The last continent to be visited or explored by humans, Antarctica belongs to no nation. During the flourishing of scientific research on Antarctica around the International Geophysical Year in 1957 and the following decades, parties of researchers and expeditioners traveled the southern continent via dogsled. As Amundsen discovered more than a century ago on his Antarctic explorations, mushing is the best way to get around on icesheets. Explorers made sorties to the Antarctic regions in the summer, skipping the brutal winters, but they left their dogs there the year round. Sled dog breeds are adapted to polar conditions, and fed on seals and penguins. After many seasons of exploration along the continent’s vast coastlines and numerous islands, visitors realized they were making an unwanted impact in various ways. For example, visiting ships had introduced invasive plants and mice, rats (where can we go without bringing rats?), cats, rabbits, cattle, goats, pigs, sheep, foxes, reindeer, and guanacos to the sub-Antarctic islands. These were wreaking severe changes on the fragile native ecosystems, which had evolved in a world of their own. Tender tundra grasses and herbs suffered overgrazing and trampling, rats stole the eggs of ground-nesting birds

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**A cat indoors enjoys a scratching post for exercise and stimulation. Photo by Alexa DeJoannis.**

While climate change and habitat loss offer political challenges for our larger society, the lives of our domestic animals are, thankfully, an area where we can effect positive change starting on a smaller scale. We have already improved the lives of dogs by spaying and neutering, giving unwanted animals new homes, keeping them healthy (and ourselves, by extension), and passing legislation that defines best practices for caring for the dog population. We have protected our environment by making sure they don’t transmit disease to wildlife, picking up their waste so it won’t wash into local waterways, and controlling them while outdoors to protect wildlife from attack or exhaustion. It’s time to do cats a similar service through many of the same means.

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**Snow Bunting, King Salmon, Humboldt, CA, February 7, 2019. Photo by Michele Swartout**

**What Will You See This Winter?**

**Rock Sandpiper, North Spit Jetty, Humboldt Bay, CA, January 27, 2019. Photo by Jonah Benningfield**