



The Sandpiper

13th Annual Children's Issue



JUNE/JULY 2016 REDWOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY www.rras.org

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 I Street (Klopp Lake) in Arcata at **8:30 a.m.** Trips end around 11 a.m. June 4: Ken Burton; June 11: Gary Friedrichsen; June 18: Cindy Moyer; June 25: Jude Power.

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.

Saturday, June 4: Horse Mountain. We will be birding high elevation Humboldt County from Horse to Grouse Mtn. on Forest Service Route 1 during this annual field trip. Target species will include Mountain Quail, Sooty Grouse, Northern Pygmy-Owl, White-headed Woodpecker, Dusky and Hammond's Flycatcher, Townsend's Solitaire, Green-tailed Towhee, Thick-billed Fox Sparrow, and more. Maybe we'll even luck into a Northern Goshawk! Meet at **7:00 a.m.** near Espresso 101 off Giuntoli. Rob Fowler will lead ([707] 616-9841; migratoriusfwlr@gmail.com). Bring a lunch. We will finish around early afternoon.

Sunday, June 12: 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 **9:00 a.m.** Call Jude Power or David Fix ([707] 822-3613) for more information.

Saturday, June 18: Southern Humboldt Community Park. Jay Sooter ([707] 444-8001) and/or John Gaffin lead this monthly walk. All ages and experience levels are encouraged to participate and revel in the beauty of the park and its avian inhabitants on this easy 2- to 3-hour walk. Binoculars are not provided, and dogs are not allowed; field guides are usually available, but please bring your own if possible. Steady rain cancels. Meet at **8:00 a.m.**, parking at the Tooby Park parking lot which is about 100 yards past the entrance to the park.

Saturday, July 2: Red Cap Hole. This seldom-visited site in the Trinity Alps Wilderness above Hoopa has burned and unburned forest, montane meadows, and a lake. We should see a good variety of high-elevation birds (Northern Goshawk, Hammond's Flycatcher, and Lincoln's Sparrow are among the possibilities), butterflies, and flowers. Take a bathing suit (or don't) if you want to take a dip in Mill Creek Lake, where we'll probably have lunch. Plan on walking 4-5 miles at elevations around 6,000 feet. There likely will be fallen trees to negotiate. Meet the leader, Ken Burton ([707] 499-1146), on Valley West Boulevard near Village Pantry in Arcata at **7:00 a.m.** to carpool for the nearly 2-hour drive; high-clearance vehicles will be necessary.

Eureka Waterfront. This trip is taking the summer off. Look for it and Ralph the leader to return in September!

Sunday, July 10: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. See June 12.

Saturday, July 16: Southern Humboldt Community Park. See June 18.

August. Malheur National Wildlife Refuge/ Steens Mountain, Oregon. DETAILS COMING SOON. Start planning ahead for a 5-day trip to Malheur NWR/Steens Mt. the first week of August led by Rob Fowler and another. Black Rosy-Finch is the main target, but expect to see Black Terns, Franklin's Gulls, Eastern Kingbirds, Bobolinks, etc. There will be a minimal fee (\$50) to compensate leader costs.



Gray Jay, © Gary Bloomfield

WFO 2016 CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

Western Field Ornithologists is pleased to announce the WFO 2016 Conference will be held in Humboldt County September 28 through October 2, 2016. The annual WFO conference is a 4-day event that includes scientific presentations, workshops, field trips, experts' sound and visual identification panels, and social activities. The conference offers the opportunity for motivated youths to meet those who earn their living and/or volunteer in field ornithology, bird conservation, biology, and other distinguished fields. For further details and conference registration (opening June 12) visit www.westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php.



KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH RRAS.ORG

If you haven't yet, check out the RRAS website www.rras.org. It has been thoroughly revamped and is now actively up-to-date, including a calendar of upcoming events and field trips.

PROGRAMS ON HIATUS JUNE-AUGUST

The RRAS Friday evening meetings and programs have been suspended for the summer and will resume in September. Look for the notice of the September program in the next issue of *The Sandpiper*. See you in the fall!

CHAPTER LEADERS

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 RRAS Web Page..... www.rras.org
 Arcata Bird Alert707-822-LOON (707-822-5666)

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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 RRAS. This is how NAS rewards local chapters for recruiting national members. (Otherwise, the RRAS dues share per new member is only a couple of dollars.) Thank you.

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed. (Introductory offer)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

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Local Chapter Code: C24

Please make checks to the National Audubon Society.

Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society

P.O. Box 422250

Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

-----LOCAL CHAPTER-----
 WOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY
 P.O. BOX 1054, EUREKA, CA 95502

RED-

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Hal Genger

Welcome to the yearly Children's Issue of *The Sandpiper*! This year we had an incredible amount (980 pieces) of quality artwork submitted to the Student Bird Art contest sponsored by RRAS and Friends of the Arcata Marsh. In this issue are a few examples, but I hope many of you got to see the vast array of student art displayed at the Arcata Community Center during Godwit Days. It took me 2 visits to see them all. Sue Leskiw has been organizing this art contest for over a decade now, which involves announcing it, soliciting volunteer judges to evaluate it, and then with the help of many volunteers, hanging all 980 pieces for display. Thank you, Sue, and thanks to all who were involved organizing, posting, and presenting this event! Sue has also organized volunteer judges for the Science Fair awards, announced elsewhere on this page.

In addition, for the past several years, as part of the Children's Issue, Tom Leskiw has been presenting the Nature Writing Contest. These contests connect our chapter with the young people of our region as well as spur them to think about the beauty of birds and the value of nature in their lives. Thank you, Tom, for all your fine work.

RRAS is always in need of more volunteers. Ken Burton has agreed to take over the secretarial duties

at the monthly board meetings and chair the Program Committee. Thank you, Ken. We also need someone to help Harriet Hill with publicity. Harriet is doing a wonderful job but is occasionally out of the area, and we need someone to fill in for her.

As previously mentioned, we are still looking for someone to take over as the editor of *The Sandpiper*. Please let me (or any board member) know if you are interested in volunteering. Your service would be greatly appreciated.



Sage Balassa, (Snowy Plover)



NEW MEMBERS

RRAS welcomes the following new members and subscribers:

Arcata — Cheryl Adam, Diane Brown, Stephen Murphy, Ralph Reiner

Bayside — Nancy Cook, Chip Sharpe, Catherine Valentine

Blue Lake — Michelle Elaine

Crescent City — Kathleen Boivin, Jim Davidson, Steve Farrell, Carol McKim, Robert & Diane Mutchie, Shirley Niles

Cutten — Jane Barrett

Eureka — Roxanne Bennett, John Clagett, Marsha Clearwalker, Robert Goodrich, Donna Jordan, Ann Knight, Lubke Family, John Porter, Grace Ramirez, Richard and Susan Whaley, Lyda Wiesmore, L. Wright

Ferndale — Lois Keller

Fortuna — Lowell James, Gary Meunier

Garberville — Cata Herndon

Klamath — Diane Brown

Mad River — Victor Conte

McKinleyville — Nancy Jioras, James Ravano

Miranda — Valerie Monschke

Redway — Wes Edwards, Juliet Hegdal, Lauris Phillips

Rio Dell — Aleta Hale

Scotia — Cecil Page

Smith River — Linda Elmore

Trinidad — Paul Soderburg

Zenia — Cathy Ordway

We look forward to seeing you on field trips and at our monthly programs.



RRAS SPONSORS 12TH ANNUAL SCIENCE FAIR AWARD

"Tool Using Jays" by Calvin Zhang Sway, a 6th grader at Jacoby Creek School, received a \$50 prize as the best project related to birds or their habitat at the annual Humboldt County Science Fair held in mid-March. Calvin tested the intelligence and problem-solving abilities of Steller's Jays. He hypothesized that the jays would be able to use a readily available tool to bring food within reach. He created 2 different tool scenarios: a horizontal rake to pull peanuts out of a Plexiglas box and a tube feeder that had a vertical lever in the form of a knotted rope to release food. Calvin found that some birds were able to master the horizontal rake within 2 days, with techniques varying from pulling, to pushing side to side, to pecking the rake to make it bounce. (Some birds waited for another to pull the rake, then swooped in and stole some peanuts!) The jays had a much harder time, and only a few birds succeeded with the vertical lever, with the first to master it needing 9 days to make the lever work.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Action + Activity = Effectiveness

By Jim Clark

Other chapters and Audubon California are impressed, as they should be, by the number of field trips, presentations, and other activities that Redwood Region Audubon Society (RRAS) offers and participates in every year. We rival chapters in major population centers in the number, quality, and participation rates for our events.

Activity, however, is only part of what makes a chapter effective. The other part is action. From a conservation perspective, action is what is needed to have a positive and measurable effect on bird habitat. Action that RRAS has taken includes litigation and settlement with Humboldt County that enabled purchase of tidal lands that were subsequently purchased by Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The proceeds from this land sale enabled a contribution to the North Coast Regional Land Trust development of their Freshwater Farms project, resulting in restoration of tidal wetlands that benefit salmon and birds. We also contributed to the purchase of property that made possible the completion of a trail through the Arcata Community Forest. Once we had the money, these actions were simply a matter of the RRAS Board of Directors deciding to spend money on worthy projects.

More involved forms of action were the 2 Toyota Green grants for organizing people to remove invasive non-native plants from the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Refuge and the ivy bash at Luffenholtz County Park. Lots of volunteers were brought together for a day of work after other volunteers did the preliminary work of grant application and planning.

We may choose to spend down our Sanctuary and Wetland funds, but your board of directors wants to keep that total of over \$100,000 as whole as possible to use as leverage for acquiring important bird habitat when opportunities arise. One such opportunity being looked into will require work to get the current owner on our side. This work will involve establishing relationships with an informal group of conservation-minded individuals over some brews. Tough work, but it has to be done. If you are interested in knowing more, come to our Conservation Committee meetings.

At our last board retreat, we decided to embark on a program of bird-friendly yards and communities. To be effective, this will need to be an ongoing endeavor with a group of involved volunteers. The Conservation Committee has agreed to start this program, which will spin off its own committee. Community outreach, business sponsorship, local government inclusion, and sister organization coordination are some of the skills that will be needed for this program. Here we come to a point where activity and action can harmonize. The difficult criteria of measurable results will need to be verified by baseline and ongoing birding (citizen science). So we also need volunteers to help us set up this program so we can measure its effectiveness.

Please help RRAS maintain a good balance of activity and action and be effective. The Conservation Committee meets at noon of the second Thursday of the month at Rita's Margaritas and Mexican Grill, 5th & L Streets, Eureka.

11th Annual Student Nature Writing Contest

By Tom Leskiw, Contest Organizer

I guess the 11th year's the charm. Last year, we were thrilled with a record 44 works of prose and poetry received. This year, the judges were astounded to receive 141 entries! Our abundance of submissions prompted the judges to divide the awards into 3 categories: Division 1: 4th and 5th grades; Division 2: 6th and 7th grades; and Division 3: 8th-12 grades.

The work of all three 1st-place winners follows. For the work of all the writing contest winners, please see the online version at www.rras.org

Division 1: 1st Place Elizabeth Schroer 5th Grade, Six Rivers Montessori

What Is Nature?

Nature is the grassy field
of which we play in.

Nature is the estuary
in which we fish.

Nature is everything having a place in the world,
like
an arachnid or a crawfish.

But that's not all, there's
a lot more places and things
to name. Nature is the
extravagant colors, of the
birds in South-East Asia
or hikers in the wood.

To me, nature means the
people, animals, and plants
thriving without conflict. Of
course, predators will hunt,
and prey will hide.
This is all natural.

Nature is one of those
precious items that you don't
know how special it is until
it's gone. Nature is like a gem:
beautiful and dependent
on us to help it survive.

We should respect the Mother
Earth, we use her resources
every day. Hopefully in the
future, those who are destroying
the forest will know that!

Respect Nature!

Division 2: 1st Place Jessica Rutter 6th Grade, Redwood Christian School

That Little Seed

The time I planted that puny seed,
grew that amazing tree.
Being young –
my mother sung.

“You there, you there,
take this seed that's not a pear,
with care, of water, sun and air,
take good care my little bear.”

Over and over I sang in my head,
falling asleep to the song in my bed.
Next day with care, I took that seed,
running, and running to find the spot it needed.

On my knees I dug a hole,
with that seed in a bowl.
Then easily I set the seed down with care,
hoping the seed would survive there.

Running back home with much excitement,
thinking how slow time went.
One year gone by,
the tree one inch high

Waiting and waiting.
Winter had passed,
which was so fast.

Summer is gone,
but not for long.
Spring's here,
and fall near.

Twelve years old,
that tree looking bold.
Running out with a swing,
my father who I bring

Six feet off the ground grew that willow tree,
that grew through the years from a tiny seed.

Twenty years old, my mother passed.
Grieving by the tree that grew so fast,
swinging on the swing
that kept life going.

Sadly doing a thing that is life-harming,
like smoking with friends
and drinking a lot of alcohol.

But soon it came to a stop
when Christ saved me,
right by that little tree
that grew with me.

continued next page

STUDENT BIRD ART CONTEST RESULTS

Some 980 Humboldt County K-12 students—a new record by more than 200!—entered the 13th Annual Student Bird Art Contest held in association with Godwit Days in mid-April. RRAS cosponsored the competition with Friends of the Arcata Marsh. To see more art go to <http://rras.org/ChildrensBirdArtContest.pdf>

The winners were:

Kindergarten

1st Place: Ricardo Freitas, Mattole Valley Charter School, Mallard
2nd Place: Caroline Taylor, Jacoby Creek School, Snowy Plovers
3rd Place: Natalie Williams, Mattole Valley Charter School, Great Egret

Grade 1

1st Place: Steve Adkins Hart, Dow's Prairie School, Varied Thrush
1st Place: Kaylani Keley, Dow's Prairie School, Pileated Woodpecker
2nd Place: Kendal Kingstrom, Dow's Prairie School, Steller's Jay
2nd Place: Gaelen Creighton, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Hummingbird
3rd Place: Rory Harling, Forks of Salmon Elementary, Bald Eagle
3rd Place: Violet Cook, Freshwater School, Chestnut-backed Chickadee

Grade 2

1st Place: Calvin Gans, Redwood Prep Charter School, Common Loon
1st Place: Windstan Stratton, Coastal Grove Charter School, American Crow
2nd Place: Lorenzo Amaro, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Snowy Plover
2nd Place: Aleta LeGrand Stubblefield, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Bald Eagle
3rd Place: October Mintey, Ridgewood Elementary, California Quail family
3rd Place: Jonah Morgan, Coastal Grove Charter School, Common Raven

Grade 3

1st Place: Charlotte Brands, Pacific Union School, Great Horned Owl
1st Place: Alisha Paige Borglund, Jacoby Creek School, Wood Duck
2nd Place: Layla Marshall, Pacific Union School, American Crow
2nd Place: Solana Mendle, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Cedar Waxwing
3rd Place: Saanvi Virnave, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Common Yellowthroat
3rd Place: Ashlyn Bowen, Pacific Union School, Violet-green Swallow

Grade 4

1st Place: Bella Valentine, Orleans Elementary, Spotted Owl
2nd Place: Frida King, Fuente Nueva Charter School, American Avocet
3rd Place: Caden Lewis, Redwood Coast Montessori, Great Blue Heron

Grade 5

1st Place: Keani Young, Redwood Coast Montessori, American Avocet
2nd Place: Rogue Russell, Union Street Charter School, Peregrine Falcon
3rd Place: Ciara Miller, Kneeland School, Peregrine Falcon

Grades 6-9

1st Place: Niniane Holland, Greensleeves Center for Education, Red-breasted Nuthatches
2nd Place: Deja Coleman, Orleans Elementary, Pileated Woodpecker
3rd Place: Finn Murphy, Sunny Brae Middle School, Great Horned Owl

Grades 10-12

1st Place: Tori McConnell, Academy of the Redwoods, "Guardian Godwit" (Marbled Godwit family)
2nd Place: Martina Shannon, Eureka High, Wood Duck
3rd Place: Sage Balassa, Eureka High, Snowy Plover chick

Best Depiction of a Bird in Its Habitat

Myah Visser, Kindergarten, Dow's Prairie School, Spotted Owl; Ellie-May Martin, Grade 1, Dow's Prairie School, Pileated Woodpecker; Daniel Hernandez, Grade 3, Pacific Union School, Marbled Godwit; Meguire Bartosz, Grade 4, Fuente Nueva Charter School, California Quail; Cheyanna Deaton, Grade 5, Kneeland School, Snowy Owl on the South Spit

Honorable Mentions

Kindergarten: Abby Omaha, Dow's Prairie School, Anna's Hummingbird; Taya Moore, Dow's Prairie School, Tufted Puffin; Cecilia Aultman, Dow's Prairie School, Purple Finches; Everett Gruetzmacher, Dow's Prairie School, Tufted Puffin; Breana Sloyer, Dow's Prairie School, Anna's Hummingbird; Talon Turner, Dow's Prairie School, Spotted Owl; Simon Zagone, Jacoby Creek School, Owl.

Grade 1: Braden O'Brien, Jacoby Creek School, Marbled Godwit; Scarlett Wood, Fuente Nueva Charter School, Hummingbird; Emily Mather, Dow's Prairie School, Pileated Woodpecker; Ella Grosjean, Dow's Prairie School, Pileated Woodpecker; Brody Perkins, Dow's Prairie School, Bald Eagle; Riley Harmon, Dow's Prairie School, Varied Thrush.

Grade 2: Patrick Wilson, Dow's Prairie School, Dancing American Avocets; Sheena Beeman, Dow's Prairie School, California Quail; Savannah Cringle, Dow's Prairie School, Great Blue Heron; David Kleinz, Dow's Prairie School, California Quail; Richie Alvarez, Fuente Nueva Charter School, American Avocet; Catarina Freitas, Mattole Valley Charter School, Wood Duck.

Grade 3: Tanayah Keisling-Limberg, Coastal Grove Charter School, Marbled Godwits; Ruby Williams, Mistwood Education Center, Great Blue Heron; Siena Krause, Pacific Union School, Great Blue Heron; Addison Wingate, Pacific Union School, Anna's Hummingbirds; Olivia Ralph, Cutton School, Owls.

Grade 4: Lenin Jacobsen, Redwood Coast Montessori, Tufted Puffin; Sequoia Ashby, Redwood Coast Montessori, Black-crowned Night-Heron.

Grade 5: Sadie Breen, Union Street Charter School, Red-shouldered Hawk; Autumn Landando, Six Rivers Montessori, Western Grebes.

Grade 7: Symon McDonald, Mattole Valley Charter School, White-tailed Kite.

Grade 8: Alora Trammell, Mattole Valley Charter School, Golden Eagle; Brett Welch, Mattole Valley Charter School, Great Horned Owl.

High School: Anthony Kaftal, Alder Grove Charter School, Red-shouldered Hawk; Brandi May, Zoe Barnum High School, Lazuli Bunting; Ariane Cox-Lovel, Zoe Barnum High, Black-capped Chickadee; Lydia Osborn, Zoe Barnum High, Yellow-rumped Warbler.



Tori McConnell,
(Marbled Godwits)



Meguire Bartosz,
(California Quail)



Niniane Holland,
(Red-breasted Nuthatches)

11th Annual Student Nature Writing Contest (continued)

Division 3: 1st Place

Elizabeth Sloan-Rouse

8th Grade, Blue Lake Elementary School

The Ocean Speaks to Me

The ocean speaks to me. I feel its energy seeping through the crashing waves. We have another way of communication between not our physical beings, it's something else, but we're in constant communication.

I sit on the sand with my shoes off, occasionally lying on my back. The sand seeps between my toes, warm and soft. Deep breaths, I take in the excitement of the swirling sea. It smells fresh, yet dirty, like a child just out from under the rain. I see the horizon, and the colors blasting from the sky to the water, and back again. I feel comforted by the warmth of nature.

To some people, the ocean is just water, boring water. To some, it's exciting, the water. People who live near it take it for granted. People who don't, long to see it. But I live near it and away from it. I feel close to it, even when I am too far away. I am close to it with my heart, not my body.

I feel so close to it because it resembles my own life. The tide is high: I'm drowning in stress or overwhelmed by love. The tide is low: I long for something more, and it feels as though all I can do is wait for it to come. It is cold: the sadness of one thing or another build up, and I begin to spiral and be pulled under. It is warm: I feel exhausted, overwhelmed by life. It is bright: I can do nothing but expect to need the water. It is dark: my emotions feel what they need to. I let in the fear and the hurt, I let it consume me for the time that it needs. Then, when I've heard what it has to say, I can let it go. I can accept it and set it free.

The birds glide along the skyline and await the storm that is to come. The sun begins to evaporate into earth and sea. The clouds roll in, darker and darker they become. You feel the air. It has something to scream. It needs to be heard. It needs to be felt. I stand on the edge of the water, though it feels like the edge of the earth. I await whatever is about to come. Because it deserves to be heard. To be listened to with love and compassion, not turned away from and made to need to burst through and through with darkness. But at this point, it is too late. There's nothing to do but await, and stand in peace. To stand in harmony, with the sky and sea.