



# The Sandpiper

April 2021



Redwood Region Audubon Society

www.rras.org

In This Issue:

• Humboldt Bay Wins Special Site Award! • Women Birders on Assault & Harassment • Birds in the Wiyot Language

## The History of a Red Alder (*Alnus rubra*)

By Pete & Judy Haggard

There are two Red Alders in our front yard that had a dbh (diameter at breast height) of 1" when we moved to Fieldbrook in 1977. By 2019, the alders, had matured to a dbh of approximately 14". The trees are covered with many species of lichen, and the fruiting bodies of fungi sprout from the trunks during the winter. These trees and the organisms that live on them continue to provide home and food for both adult and immature wildlife. Consequently, the trees remain a generous and extremely important food supplier for overwintering insectivorous birds. Chestnut-backed Chickadees in particular seem to search the trunks and branches for insects and spiders during much of the winter. Also, in winter and spring, sapsuckers ring the trunks with holes searching for sap, which provides them and other smaller birds with nutrition when times are tough. We have consistently seen all the local native species of woodpeckers on these two trees and have hoped that someday at least one of the alders would provide a home for cavity-nesting birds or mammals. Well, this year we have finally been rewarded – a pair of Downy Woodpeckers are "digging" out a nest hole in one of the alders!

*Pete and Judy Haggard are co-authors of the field guide, "Insects of the Pacific Northwest," and Pete is currently Garden Chair for the California Native Plant Society-North Coast Chapter.*



Above: Adult Downy Woodpecker inside the nest. It is hard to see but s/he is spitting out wood chips from the bottom of the nest they are working on. Top right: Working the Red Alder tree. Photos by Pete Haggard.



## In Honor of... Jene McCovey

Submitted by Amber Jamieson,  
Environmental Protection Information Center.

Yurok Tribal member from the Klamath River, Jene McCovey, who grew up in Hupa, and was Chetco from the Chetco River; Tolowa from the Smith River; and Chilula from Redwood Creek, passed on in February this year.

Jene McCovey was a lifelong activist for indigenous rights, environmental protection, and social justice issues. She was a mentor and ally to many. She traveled near and far to share her prayers and wisdom on behalf of the four-legged ones, two-legged ones, winged ones, finned ones, and the one-legged ones (plants).

We are grateful for the time Jene shared, and we know her legacy will live on.

Photo of Jene McCovey, courtesy of International Rivers.

## RRAS FIELD TRIPS THIS MONTH

See our website for details.

## RRAS Virtual Program Presentation

Please join us on Friday, April 9 at 7 pm, for

### The Local Wildlands Conservancy Preserves

Speaker Alex Blessing, North Coast Preserves Manager for The Wildlands Conservancy, will discuss how the Conservancy recently expanded their network of preserves to the North Coast of Humboldt County. First, in 2008, they acquired the Eel River Estuary Preserve, a 1200-acre property on the south spit of the Eel River. This preserve includes coastal marsh, pasture lands, eight miles of trails, and three miles of dunes for visitors to explore, as well as excellent birding prospects for grassland, waterfowl, raptors, and a myriad of seabirds. Wildlands expanded their local holdings again in 2018 with the addition of the Seawood Cape Preserve, two miles north of Trinidad. Here, visitors can hike the coastal bluffs on a trail down to Scotty's Point to enjoy vast views of the coast, bird and marine mammal watching, tide-pooling, or fishing.

Alex Blessing grew up in the mountains above Santa Cruz California, where he fostered a love for everything outdoors. His youth was spent exploring and learning everything he could about the natural world in his backyard. After attending Humboldt State University, where he completed his undergraduate studies in Natural Resource Planning and Interpretation, he volunteered for the Americorps' Watershed Stewards Project. There he found a love for freshwater fisheries, especially salmon, while surveying creeks on the Eel River and Coastal Mendocino. This led to work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a Fisheries Technician, monitoring salmonids and assisting with restoration projects, such as the Salt River Restoration project where he learned about Wildlands. Joining the Wildlands team in 2014 as a ranger on the Eel River Estuary Preserve, he continues to restore habitat and share the wonder of the place with all who come visit.

Photo below of Seawood Cape Preserve by Alex Blessing.



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### Thinking of Joining the Audubon Society?

By sending in your membership, either directly or on the form below, to National Audubon, (rather than replying to solicitations from National Audubon), **the fee is sent directly to our chapter – if you use the Code RRAS C24.** However, when you renew with National, the share of membership dues that RRAS receives is only a couple of dollars.

If you join the local Chapter, RRAS, directly, we receive the total dues both initially and on renewal.

To do so, write a check out to RRAS for \$15 and be sure to include “local membership” on your check, then mail to:

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### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the National Audubon Society or its local chapters. As Editor, my goal is to print a variety of viewpoints, explore new avenues, and initiate healthy discussion.



## President's Column

By Gail Kenny

A disturbing topic came up recently in the national news and on the national birding scene, involving the alleged rape of a female, beginning birder, by Jason Ward, a prominent member of the national birding community. He was the diversity and inclusion officer for the American Bird Conservancy and has been relieved of this job. The birder, Aisha White, is taking him to court. More sexual assault and harassment allegations against other prominent male birders have surfaced as a result. Of course, sexual harassment is not just in the birding community but reflects our broader society.

I am following discussions in the birding community on this topic to gather information for how to make change locally so that women feel safer and more welcomed. I have discussed this with a small group and at some point, will bring the topic forward to our larger birding community with the goal to call out disrespectful behavior, educate each other on how to be more inclusive, and to communicate more kindly and respectfully. The RRAS Field Trip Committee has been discussing ideas on how to help women feel more comfortable in the birding community. We are exploring how to create on-going safe spaces for women birders.

I am aware that some women birders in our community have dealt with harassment, as well as being made to feel less-than, discounted, or dismissed by men. This type of behavior will not be tolerated at RRAS events and activities.

There can be a male-dominated approach to birding by competing to be right, the best, the most experienced, and the most serious, that can detract from the birding experience. People have been made to feel ignored or belittled because they were wrong about bird identification. Men as well as women can be treated this way in the birding community.

Listing has a place in birding, but discussions of bird identification can be done in a way that does not alienate people. Bird identification can be done by consensus after careful observation and sharing of data, as a collaboration instead of a competition. These two approaches often divide along gendered and occasionally generational lines. Many of us would rather prioritize the social aspect of

being together outside and doing something we all enjoy. We strive to encourage younger birders who may be less defined by the “rules” to join in and maybe operate a little differently.

We can make birding a more inclusive community by fostering the spirit of cooperation while birding together and comparing notes on birds. We are exploring how to make spaces, perhaps on social media or an app where people can discuss bird sightings without feeling intimidated by expert birders. We want to see more local active chat rooms or other spaces that foster confidence in novice birders. The hardest part of birding is getting familiar with the bird families at first and figuring out how to use your field guide, and when more experienced birders make you feel stupid, that turns novices away.

I recently heard a woman birder on a podcast talking about the “rare bird alert” app where members are discouraged from any discussion other than rare bird sightings. She said her community has another group app that is all about discussing anything to do with birding which she finds much more active and enjoyable than the rare bird group. I would like to see one of those locally.

If you are interested in joining in on discussions exploring solutions to divisiveness in our local birding community, please email me at gailkenny@gmail.com.

If you experience sexual assault or any type of harassment during a RRAS activity, please know you can reach out to me, or our Field Trip Chair, Janelle Chojnacki. Our contact information is always listed in *The Sandpiper* and on our website.

Below are some resources you may find helpful. (Please feel free to share more resources with me and others.)

- [www.rainn.org/](http://www.rainn.org/);
- [leanin.org/sexual-harassment](http://leanin.org/sexual-harassment)
- Aisha White's *gofundme* page for her legal fees; [www.gofundme.com/f/legal-fees-for-aisha-white](http://www.gofundme.com/f/legal-fees-for-aisha-white)
- Facebook's World Girl Birders Group; [www.facebook.com/groups/worldgirlbirders/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/worldgirlbirders/)
- North Coast Rape Crisis Team; [www.ncrct.org](http://www.ncrct.org) (*si una persona bilingüe no está disponible deje su nombre e número de teléfono y le regresaremos la llamada lo más pronto posible*).
- Domestic Violence Services Crisis: (707) 443-6042 or Toll-Free: (866) 668-6543

## GODWIT DAYS FESTIVAL GOES VIRTUAL

April 16-18, 2021

Live-streamed and pre-recorded sessions highlighting some favorite species and the spots where they occur.

Planned topics include: shorebird surveying and fly-off, bird song ID, bird banding, field sketching, HSU Wildlife Museum tour, amphibians, Spotted Owls, and Snowy Plovers.

Special sessions on the past, present, and future of Humboldt birding and a memorial to Stanley “Doc” Harris.

The Language of Birds: Keynote Lecture by Nathan Pieplow, blogger on recording, identifying, and interpreting bird sounds ([www.earbirding.com](http://www.earbirding.com)).

There is no cost to participate but donations are encouraged and greatly appreciated!

Also, to be posted on line during the festival: –

Winners in the 18<sup>th</sup> annual student bird art contest, co-sponsored by Friends of the Arcata Marsh and Redwood Region Audubon Society, and the 16<sup>th</sup> annual student nature writing contest, sponsored by RRAS.

Visit [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org) for updated information, and how to access the sessions.



## Humboldt Bay Wins Special Site Award!

In 1998, RRAS Conservation Committee member, Chet Ogan, filed the paperwork to form Humboldt Bay Complex as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) site. Humboldt Bay, or Wigi, to the Wiyot, is the second largest estuary in California; it remains comparatively “pristine” in terms of availability, extent, and diversity of shorebird habitats. Over the past 60 years, 52 species of shorebird have been recorded in the vicinity of the bay, with an estimated 850,000 individuals using local habitats, especially during migration (Colwell et al. 2020).

As a result, Humboldt Bay is a key site for shorebirds along the Pacific Americas Flyway. Within the 19,500 ha of WHSRN site boundaries lie extensive intertidal flats, limited rocky shores, long stretches of sandy, ocean-fronting beach, seasonal freshwater wetlands, riverine estuaries, and agricultural lands. Significantly, WHSRN later recognized the site as one of international importance, and in 2018, WHSRN upgraded the site to hemispheric.

Last December, WHSRN proposed a Site Award for outstanding work in shorebird conservation and management of a shorebird site, based on active management and preservation of shorebird habitat, education and outreach, and a monitoring program. In consultation with partners (see below), Dr. Mark Colwell prepared the supporting evidence and submitted the nomination. Mark has now been notified that out of the whole country, Humboldt Bay Complex was awarded the 2021 Site Award!

Many thanks to all the partners; the Wiyot Tribe, Bureau of Land Management, CA Audubon, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, City of Arcata, City of Eureka, Friends of the Dunes, Humboldt Bay Harbor Recreation and Conservation District, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Oiled Wildlife Care Network, Redwood Community Action Agency, Sequoia Zoo, and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**We are Seeking Silent Auction Items** for an online auction in partnership with *Godwit Days*. If you have items to donate to RRAS, please contact, Gary Friedrichsen at [gary@jacobyecreek.net](mailto:gary@jacobyecreek.net) or (707) 496-6581 before May 1st! If you want to donate to Godwit Days only, contact Alex Stillman at [alexnacv@gmail.com](mailto:alexnacv@gmail.com).



## What Else Can You Do with It?

By Jim Clark

In response to testimony presented at the recent hearing for approval of the Rolling Meadows large cannabis grow operation on a 7,110-acre property adjacent to the Eel River near McCann, two planning commissioners made comments summarized by the title. Apparently, grazing and timber production are no longer economically viable on this property. The implication is that the property has little or no economic value other than for commercial cannabis. Like much of the oak savannah/prairie habitat of the north coast counties, grazing and logging have altered the landscape by introducing non-native grasses, and Douglas fir has encroached into oak woodlands and prairies.

As a bird-centric conservation organization, our chapter typically takes positions on proposals based on their potential effects on birds, either directly or through habitat loss. Others object or advocate based on their own interests. What is often missing from the discussion is a thorough economic analysis of environmental services actually or potentially provided by the land involved in the proposal. The economic value of environmental services has been considered as non-quantifiable or at

least very difficult to quantify. Satellite imagery and computer aided analysis has allowed us to use science to more easily analyze and quantify the economic value of many environmental services.

One environmental service provided by upland oak savannah/prairie, such as the Rolling Meadows property, is watershed conservation. We know that replacement of deep-rooted native grasses by annual non-native grasses and replacement of oak by Douglas fir reduces the watershed benefits of these lands. This in turn reduces the value of all water dependent downstream resources, including fish, birds and late season flow. Modern technology and science now allow us to evaluate these effects and calculate their economic value.

California's land use planning is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This 52-year-old law has had many updates. There remain, however, many exclusions and conditions that seem to be in conflict with the overall purpose of CEQA. It appears that CEQA has not kept pace with the current state of environmental science. Change is hard. When the conservation committee considers a position on a proposal or project, we often do so while considering CEQA. If an exclusion or condition seems to prevent our opposition, we consider working around it, unless the condition cited is valid. Sometimes it is valid and there is no workaround. If in doubt we may confront the exclusion or condition. Sometimes we prevail, sometimes not.

Audubon's three criteria for action are science, education and law. These are also the tools used by advocates of projects that we don't like. It is therefore important that we educate our elected representatives about current science so that we have better environmental laws.

## Lessons on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Now Available for Free Download

More educators than ever are recognizing the need for education that centers and affirms multiple cultures and perspectives. Students are typically taught science exclusively from a Western perspective, to the point that science and "Western science" are synonymous to the majority of the American public. The scientific knowledge and values of Indigenous cultures are generally not taught in non-tribally based classrooms. To address this and to bring Indigenous perspectives to the classroom, we are providing a series of lessons on Traditional Ecological Knowledge, sometimes known as Indigenous science, free for all teachers and aimed at 4th – 7th grade. Lessons align with 5th grade NGSS science standards and can be used for upper elementary or middle school.

TEK lessons were developed through a collaboration between Dr. Seafha Ramos (<http://seafharamos.com/>), an Indigenous (Yurok/Karuk) wildlife ecologist and NSF Postdoctoral Fellow in Biology, Dr. Olivia Mullins ([omullins@science-delivered.org](mailto:omullins@science-delivered.org)), a science educator and founder of *Science Delivered*, Cherie Paul, a 5th grade elementary teacher (Pacific Union Elementary), and Maximiliano Quezada, a Wildlife graduate of Humboldt State University. A focus of the collaboration was ensuring the lessons looked at TEK through an Indigenous lens. Because Dr. Ramos and many students of Paul's are members of the Yurok tribe, the lessons have a focus on Yurok TEK as well as TEK generally. TEK lessons can be found at [STEMTradingCards.org/teklessons](http://STEMTradingCards.org/teklessons).

## Soulatluk (language of the Wiyot), and the Winged Ones

Edited and summarized by Lynnika Butler, Linguist for the Wiyot Tribe;  
Reprinted courtesy of the Wiyot Tribe's Cultural Department

In **Soulatluk** (the language of the Wiyot people), many animals have more than one name. Often, an animal may have one short name that is its "basic" name (it doesn't have any other meaning besides naming a specific animal), and one or more complex descriptive names. These longer descriptive names may capture some physical characteristic of the animal (such as its appearance or behavior), or they may make reference to traditional Wiyot **lhatsik**—stories and traditions.

**Guroush/Quroush**, from the Wiyot story of Curlew in the February issue of *The Sandpiper*, is an example of a short/basic bird name. This month, we introduce examples of several birds with both short and longer descriptive **Soulatluk** names, as well as some bird-related vocabulary. Some Soulatluk words were pronounced slightly differently by different families, and/or can be expressed with slight differences in grammatical structure.

**Tsoutsgish** is the general word for 'bird'. As far as we know, it is a basic name, with no descriptive meaning. The sentence **Tsoutsgish du rarushilh** means 'the bird is flying'; **Da gutswurarushilh** means 'many are flying' (**guts** is a verb stem that means 'be many').

**Di'l** is the short name for the bald eagle, but it can also be referred to as **shawedoushilh**, which literally means 'white-skulled one'.

Crows can be referred to as **gatsirr** (short name) or **siswupdi'lu** ('black-feathered one'). The rather poetic name **gatsirr sharuvushach** ('crow's little niece') is one of two descriptive words for a blackbird (the short/basic name is unknown). Presumably this name has to do with the fact that blackbirds resemble small crows, though it may also relate to a specific story.

The Steller's jay's short name is **hechurra'** or **churra'**, but the more frequently used name is the descriptive **lhimayousu'lu**, which means 'the crested one,' referring to the crest of feathers on its head.

**Tsiqatsharuwilh** (kingfisher) means 'one who makes little dives down' (into the water to catch fish).

**Tyaqh** is the short name for the Northern flicker, but it also has at least two descriptive names: **vus ya rretgu'lu** (literally 'firelike-chested one') refers to the reddish color of the feathers on its neck and wingtips; and **hi'durr wiwu'l** (lit. 'North Wind's wife') probably refers to a traditional story.

Lastly, a few words relating to birds generally:

**walupt** ('feather') contains the **-upt** 'fuzzy' classifier

**dutk** and **dutgi'** ('egg') are two ways of describing a round object with no openings

**wuchwurrach** is the word for 'wing'

**munughulh** ('bird's nest') literally means 'what is used to keep warm'

English	Basic Name	Descriptive Name
Bald Eagle	di'l	shawedoushilh
Crow	gatsirr	siswupdi'l
Blackbird	—	gatsirr sharuvushach
Northern Flicker	tyaqh	vus ya rretgu'lu' / hi'durr wiwu'l
Bird	tsoutsgish	—
Night Heron	qaqsh	—
Quail	—	wuda' dishgiqagilh
Seagull	tsu'rik	jougi' chuchk
Feather	walupt	—
Owl	pitsou'laksh	—
Meadowlark	doubitk	—



Photos of a shawedoushilh nest in Southern Humboldt by wildlife photographer, Ann Constantino: "I have been following this nest for ten years now and at least one bird has fledged every year, except 2013."



To hear Soulatluk spoken natively, hover over the audio files above with your phone camera.

## Open to Interpretation:

### An Interview with Erika Granadino, Humboldt Redwoods State Park Interpreter/Intérprete Bilingüe, by Gisèle Albertine

Humboldt Redwoods State Park (HRSP) is classified as both a World Heritage Site and an International Biosphere Reserve. But before all that came about, it was the territory of the Lolankok Sinkyone. On a sunny day in February, I drove down to Southern Humboldt, and met up with Park Interpreter Erika Granadino, to explore her experiences as a woman of color working on what used to be Lolankok land.



*Editor:* Can you tell me about where you were born and raised?

*Erika:* I was born in Santa Ana, the second biggest city in El Salvador. It's a tropical climate and there are lots of trees everywhere in the City. But the regard for nature is totally different than here, and you see a lot of litter. There isn't the public funding like here, to help clean up the streets; it's a completely different system. But there's still a lot of beauty there and I always lived close to the coast, so when I came to Humboldt County, it reminded me of El Salvador.

Some of my fondest memories were how the air smelled from the coffee plantations and going to the beach. In a way, Humboldt County was like a little piece of El Salvador – it's by the coast and you have so much greenery around. My Mom always nurtured things. In El Salvador, she always had a beautiful garden so even if we were in a concrete jungle, she'd make sure there was a little piece of green. I think she tried to bring that with us. She would always paint the house in bright colors, anything that reminded her of El Salvador.

I was seven years old when we arrived in San Francisco. We didn't speak English and it was crazy-expensive there, so we moved around a lot. I went to high school in San Jose. My mom always wanted me to go to college and I got accepted into HSU which at the time was the cheapest CSU around. I was always interested in the sciences and growing up my Mom put me in a program called *Expanding Your Horizons*, a program taught by women for girls, to encourage them to enter the sciences. Even though I would get called, *immigrant* and other labels, I come from a hard-working family and I believed that I could make it – having the support of my Mom was always very important.

I got my degree at HSU in Environmental Management and Protection. When I was a kid, there was a war going on in El Salvador and my Mom never fully graduated so she always pushed me to finish school. It was really tough for her – she was a single mom and it was super expensive here so she was always working, but she always made me feel loved. Anyway, now it feels really good to finally stay in one place and put my own roots down.

There wasn't that much Hispanic culture up here when I first got to Humboldt in 2012, but I've seen it slowly but surely growing. I see a lot more Hispanic families now when I go out shopping, probably more in Fortuna than other places. I always felt that even though there was a piece of me here, I was still an outcast because there was so much missing from my culture. Even just getting to speak Spanish is not something I get to do here regularly because not that many people speak Spanish here. Even if they are Hispanic, they are often second generation so it's not the same. It was hard finding work here so I was thrilled to get this position at HRSP.

*Editor:* What do your current duties at the park entail?

*Erika:* Currently, I do a PORTS program which is like a virtual field trip for school children. I do mine on the Herstory (history that includes women) of redwood conservation. In a non-Covid year they would include leading guided walks, tabling, and the junior ranger program. I'm also responsible for certain outreach activities and development of interpretative and educational programming. When I did tabling for the park last summer, I saw a lot of Latino families, so I thought, I'll do the program in Spanish too – it seems like there's a need for it. I would love to do more in Spanish and I feel like eventually I will be able to, but this is a government organization so they have to figure out where the money is going to come from, and you have to go through all these steps and people and it just becomes complicated.

Since COVID, people want to connect more with parks and like having interpreters, and they want the messages and the stories

that we share to be more diverse. It's important that our district is doing a really good job of that. Of course, there's still so much room to grow. The origins of state parks are tied in with eugenics and the founders of Save the Redwoods League, so there's a lot of dark history in most state parks.

*Editor:* Can you tell me about the history of the land here?

*Erika:* We are in native Lolankok Sinkyone territory. The Lolankok (their name for Bull Creek), were here since time immemorial. At least 15 villages have been found in what is now called HRSP. Today more than ten percent of the population of Humboldt County are Native American, including many people of Sinkyone descent who live along the North Coast.

As a park and as a district in general, we are looking at revamping the signage here. Some staff are tasked with going through the parks and seeing which ones need re-evaluating in terms of respect and inaccuracies and which ones need to be taken down. We are celebrating our 100th anniversary this year and people are coming to this park and seeing Founder's Grove and Bolling Grove Memorial, which all commemorate White people. But this park was Native territory. Then logging and mining came here and just exacerbated the ongoing genocide and displacement of the Tribes. Obviously, Native people always cared about this place and wanted to protect it but if you're undergoing terrorism, and your voices aren't even heard – how can you? There was so much devastation from the logging happening here, that eventually certain White people actually took notice and decided to protect this land. Of course, there were probably many voices, but it was the people that were rich or had prestige who got heard.

In the 1920's, Madison Grant and two other men founded Save the Redwoods League (SRL) so it was basically an organization of rich, powerful White men. It appears as if it was just them and their field trip to the woods that saved this land, and they get all the credit. However, at least one of the men behind this organization at the time, was into eugenics and his book was idolized by Adolf Hitler who called it his bible. Grant's book was based on eugenics, and how certain plants or species are superior to others.



But before SRL got involved, there were women's clubs and federations here in Humboldt County that were trying to save the last of the old growth trees. One of the leaders was a woman named, Laura Mahan, and there's a trail that commemorates her. I tell the children about her, the Herstory of the park and the preservation of the redwoods. I want to shed light on the women that actually were the first to pave the way for the early conservation movement, and saved a lot of historical lands in state and national parks. She actually put her body in front of the machinery to prevent the trees being cut, so she was an early activist!

Laura Mahan grew up in Loleta, Ca. She was White and went to college so her family had money as with most of the women in federations back then. Philanthropy came about around that time too because there were so many colonizers or descendants of colonizers who made their money from ranching or mining – literally stealing the land from Native people, extracting natural resources often with enslavement. Mahan didn't get married till she was 40, went to school, and studied landscape art; which already tells you that she loved nature and wasn't traditional. In 1900, when the California Federation of Women's Clubs was founded, women's clubs were on the forefront of forest policy reform. I tell the kids that at the time, these women couldn't even vote which tells you how much more of a struggle it was for them; it wasn't easy as women to get their voices across. They still took whatever privilege they had, being White and rich, but they used it in this case to help save the redwoods.

Women worked really hard, and they got petitions signed to create a national park but it didn't work out for them. One of the places Mahan tried to save was Carson Redwoods, which ended up being logged so they must have felt somewhat defeated at that point. And then in 1919 here come these three men who start Save the Redwoods League after taking a trip up here and deciding they needed to save the forest. But Mahan was smart; instead of being

mad, and feeling like she had done all the work and then here they come, hanging on her coat tails and getting all the success and credit, she decided, well I'm going to utilize this. The very next day, after the formation of the Save the Redwoods League, she held a conference with her Eureka Women's Club and formed the very first Women's Save the Redwoods League. Because, of course, the men wouldn't allow women to be part of their group.

So, it was really Laura Mahan and all these women's clubs through their grassroots efforts who got the word out to the public – more to the everyday person as opposed to SRL who were only talking to the politicians and people with power. I believe it was the women who got permission from the Postmaster General at the time, to get every piece of mail that came from Humboldt County to have a stamp that said, Save the Redwoods.

Some visitors to our park are bothered by the naming of Founder's Grove, or Rockefeller Forest. Last summer a visiting couple who had seen some of the signage, asked me where they could make a formal complaint. The man was crying because they couldn't see anything that really commemorated the Native American heritage here. There's no point pretending bad things didn't happen so we need to acknowledge it. I think the state park system is looking more introspectively into its history now, at how we can do better. I know our district is doing a lot and leading by example, which I think is one of the main reasons it's really exciting to be working here.

I believe it is really important for us humans to maintain a relationship with nature. Unfortunately, many of us have become detached from nature. I recognize that it is a privilege to have access to it, which not all of us have, and for that I feel very lucky. I love that I can explore the outdoors and also have my experiences be a teaching moment for others. There is so much that happens throughout the seasons, and much that I still have to discover!

I went to university to study science, but nothing compares to the guidance and teaching of nature. It can be beautiful and gentle like watching the trilliums bloom, or dangerous, like when a branch or "widow maker" comes crashing down.

I love how nature manages to pique my curiosity as it did when I was a child, because not many things do anymore. I have always had a sense of respect towards wildlife, but coming to work at the park has made me more aware of how damaging certain human behaviors can be. I have been guilty of undertaking some of these activities myself in the past such as, feeding wildlife, or leaving behind, "compostable waste." I think this park is probably more theirs (the wildlife) than it is ours.

I treasure being able to spot wildlife, or any signs or tracks of them. It's a reminder of how alive the park really is. One night I spotted this funny, little fox who kept pooping around my porch when I lived there this summer. Was s/he marking his/her territory? Sometimes I get to see the dark side of how damaging human behaviors can really be. Last summer my coworker found some fox scat. Upon further inspection she discovered the contents were made up almost entirely of plastic. Depending on how much plastic was consumed by this poor little fox, it could ensure the animal will endure a slow and painful death, blocking her intestines and starving her to death. It's really heartbreaking to know how much these animals have to endure as a result of human behavior. The least we can do is be respectful of these spaces and conscious of our behavior. This is their home, unlike us, they do not have other places to go because there aren't many large and contiguous open green spaces left. Habitat loss, fragmentation, urban sprawl, invasive species, climate change, diseases, you name it, put a terrible strain on all wildlife – humans included!

Honestly, the best part of my job is getting to share information with others, because the lack of it can be harmful to wildlife and humans. Sharing information has the potential to prevent more little foxes from consuming human waste. If there is one thing I would like to tell visitors, it is that nature is a shared space and it is as much our individual responsibility, as it is the governing authority/organization's, to help protect and maintain it.



Photos: Above – Members of the Women's Save the Redwoods League in 1919. From left, Mrs. A. J. Monroe, Mrs. Kate Harpst, driver Frank Silence, Mrs. T. Atkinson and Mrs. Fred Georges pause during a tour of Humboldt County. (Freeman Art Company from Humboldt County Historical Society Collection.) Above far left – HRSP signage in Weott. Above center – Erika Granadino in HRSP.