



2014-2015 Annual Report



American River Natural History Association

Our Mission

The American River Natural History Association and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center are dedicated to bringing awareness of the beauty and diversity of the natural world to children, families, and the community through education initiatives that foster appreciation, enjoyment and stewardship of the unique natural and cultural resources of the Sacramento region.



Students follow a Nature Center naturalist into the spring greenery of the preserve.



Resident raptor, Tanner, poses for a very handsome portrait.

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Steven Wolcott, *Grounds & Building Maintenance*

Naturalists:

Mary Jane Boxer Rachael Cowan Melanie DuBoce Brena Seck

Associate Naturalists:

Heather Gabel Thom Parrish Jaclyn Teofilo

Development Associates:

Barbara Lezon Jaclyn Teofilo

Weekend Reception:

Rudy Davis Janay Sawdon

From ARNHA's President

At the end of June 2015, ARNHA completed its fifth full year of running Effie Yeaw Nature Center. In 2010, following Sacramento County's budget crisis and the decision that the County would no longer be able to operate the Center, ARNHA decided it could not see such an important resource close down and took on financial and management responsibility for the Center. It was a big step for a small non-profit. Our fundraising goals nearly quadrupled overnight!

But with the help of a very generous community, a talented staff and a wonderful cadre of volunteers, who give us their skills and expertise for close to 18,000 hours a year, we have flourished. Last year we presented 467 programs for school classes, 135 of them through our Urban Nature Program, which makes programs available at no cost to schools with a high percentage of children from poor families.

Over these five years, starting with a skeleton staff and a determination to succeed, we've built Effie Yeaw to become a regional resource - educating children from schools from Stockton to Grass Valley and from Placerville to Woodland. We provide free nature programs or guided hikes every weekend for families; vacation camps for children; and Natural History courses in the evenings for adults. The income we make from our programs has nearly doubled and wait-lists for the more popular ones, like the bi-annual University of California Naturalist Certification, can be up to a year. Over 30,000 people a year visit our museum to see our live native animals and educational exhibits - not to mention the thousands of local residents who come to the preserve, including many who walk the beautiful nature trails nearly every day.

This past year has been outstanding in many ways:

- thanks to extraordinarily generous gifts from supporters, detailed elsewhere in this report, we had our most successful year ever financially;
- the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce honored ARNHA as the "Non-Profit of the Year" in March of 2015; and
- the readers of the Sacramento News and Review voted the Nature Center the "Best Recreation Center" in the Sacramento region in September of 2014.

Our story continues. Over the next three years our board envisions an upgrade to the inside of the Nature Center and the expansion of our programs to other parts of the American River Parkway and the greater Sacramento region.

ARNHA is fortunate to attract talented and hardworking people as Board and Associate Board members, staff and volunteers: people who are passionate about educating all age groups in the community about science, natural history, stewardship of the environment and the cultural history of the Native Americans of the Lower American River. We are equally fortunate to have the generous support of ARNHA members, community businesses, foundations and private donors who share our passion. Thank you to you all.

Sincerely,

Liz Williamson
ARNHA President

“ARNHA and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center work to keep us connected and committed to keeping what remains of the natural world intact.”

*~ Susan Maxwell Skinner,
photojournalist and former
Carmichael Chamber of
Commerce president*



ARNHA President Liz Williamson
with Echo, the Great-horned Owl

From the Executive Director



Naturalist Brena Seck shares Maidu customs and culture with students.

EYNC is an amazing place to visit. Almost every day brings something out of the ordinary – a small pipevine covered with black swallowtail caterpillars; huge dead Valley Oaks silhouetted against the blue winter sky; the chattering of numerous cavorting acorn woodpeckers; or the drama of two large mule deer bucks locked in antler-combat to impress a nearby doe. Then there are the more unusual – a pair of coyotes and their pups along the river, exhausted chinook salmon fighting their way upstream, or an osprey diving into the water in pursuit of its next meal. Nearly every day of every year, this beautiful place serves up a full menu of sights and sounds that inspire even the most seasoned viewer.

The staff and volunteers of ARNHA/EYNC are here to help our visitors learn about nature. Some don't need our help but most welcome our polite guidance and stimulating presentation of interesting information. It is those interactions that bring results. Like asking a group of Sacramento City school kids to guess why acorn woodpeckers might stash their acorns in old oak trees. Or showing how the Maidu used mugwort and soap plant. Or explaining to a family visiting for the first time that a rattlesnake is really more afraid of us than we are of it. We can't disguise the proud feelings we get from the excitement in their eyes or their voices when they tell us about their experiences.

With ARNHA successfully overseeing the nature center operation, our education efforts can continue to expand. When we re-started the center in 2010, we had no programs for adults; this year we averaged at least two unique adult programs per month and sometimes more. Our weekend family programs were re-started four years ago; now we average over 20 attendees each week and any that feature animals attract many more. Our primary focus remains on elementary school-aged kids so those programs were refined last year to fit the new Common Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.

What I am most proud of right now is the quality of the staff. In my 20+ years of running non-profits, I have never worked with a more dedicated and talented group. Together with our 200+ active volunteers, EYNC runs like a well-oiled machine. We all love this place and are fully committed to the mission. If you come to visit, take a class or wander through our museum on a sunny weekend, you will be treated like family.

We believe the future of nature education is bright and ARNHA/EYNC is in a strong position to help build coalitions with other similar organizations and expand our programs to appropriate places within the Parkway. Your support made us strong and together we will provide the nature education foundation which will help keep the region, the Parkway, and the Nature Center well-served for many years to come.

Paul Tebbel
Executive Director



Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Executive Director Paul Tebbel

Educational and Weekend Programs

During 2014-2015, we presented 9% more programs than in the prior year and served over 21,000 students, families and visitors. The Nature Center continues to be a source of stimulating and memorable education on the natural world, and a resource to our community.

Program Type	Number of Programs in 2014-15	Number of Programs in 2013-14
Nature Area Tours	159	148
Scout Tours	12	5
Weekend Programs	97	97
Aquatic Ecosystems Programs	52	53
Maidu Cultural Programs held at Effie Yeaw	60	64
Outreach (In class—Maidu, history and life sciences)	196	179
Special Programs	52	30
TOTALS	628	576



Students who visit the Nature Center discover new ways of exploring their world.

In 2014-15 the Nature Center served more than 400 kids through its *Under the Oaks Nature Camps*.

“Thank you for teaching me about aquatic invertebrates. My favorite parts were when me and Cayden caught a fish and the spot where it looks like rocks but is 3 inches of mud (which I got stuck in). I enjoyed learning about how water starts in the mountains and then comes to the river and not to put trash in the storm drain (because it goes to the river).

Thank you, Aaron”



Children get up-close and personal with some of the smallest creatures in the American River—the aquatic invertebrates.

Media and Publications

The Acorn

The Acorn, our quarterly newsletter edited by Peggy Kennedy and Peter Hayes, continues to inform ARNHA members and other Parkway stakeholders about the natural and cultural features of the Parkway, both electronically and in print. In addition, it reflects ARNHA's new mission of the last five years—funding and management of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Articles about the art gala fundraiser, the annual meeting, Bird and Breakfast Weekend, American River Parkway Clean-Up, ARNHA as recipient of the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit of the Year, and the passing of long-time ARNHA supporter Peter Cross shared pages with articles and illustrations about parkway flora and fauna, volunteer activities, EYNC exhibits and educational programs, docent training, NatureFest, the annual wildlife count, nature camps, the Nature Bowl, and ARNHA's participation in the UC Naturalist Certification program. New members and donors were honored in each issue, and each issue featured an excerpt from *An American River Journal*.



The Acorn, ARNHA's quarterly newsletter

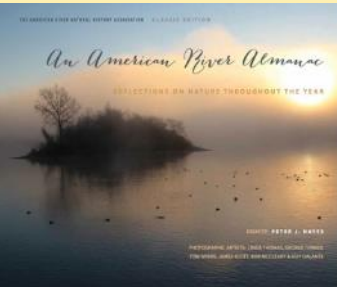
ARNHA Books

A new and expanded edition of *An American River Almanac* arrived in early November and became a best seller for the holiday season. The new 160-page edition features full-color photographs by local photographic artists and nature essays by Peter J. Hayes, celebrating the American River and its parkway, plants, and animals. The new edition of *The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region*, with color illustrations, and the new 4th edition of *Biking and Hiking the American River Parkway*, along with *American River Journal*, *Ooti – Child of the Nisenan*, *Wild Neighbors*, *History of the Lower American River*, continue to sell well in prominent local bike shops and bookstores, in the EYNC Discovery Shop, at nature and birding festivals, and online at arnha.org. ARNHA books account for almost 20% of Discovery Shop sales.

Peter Hayes is marketing chair. Molly Keller keeps inventory records.

Web Pages and Social Media

Liz Williamson maintained the website for ARNHA.org and sacnaturecenter.net. Pete the Parkway Coyote continues his FaceBook page as written by Kari Bauer. Barbara Lezon manages the EYNC Facebook page, creates and sends the Center's email communications, and assists with the SacNatureCenter.net website.



Cover of *An American River Almanac*

Favorite Photos of 2014-2015

There are many talented photographers who serve as Board members, staff and volunteers. Many generous community members also share with us the pictures they have taken in and around the Nature Center and Preserve. Some of our favorite shots of the year are shown on this page and throughout the report.



(Above) Nature Center day campers spy a coyote on the banks of the river.



(Left) A black-tailed doe and her fawn graze on the drying grass in late spring.



(Above) Naturalist Melanie DuBoce queries a group of students about Sophia, the Northern Saw-whet Owl.



The bid numbers fly up during the art auction at the Spring Gala.



Students learn about animals' diets, based on the size and shape of their teeth.

Our Volunteers July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015



Jackie DeLu enjoys taking kids on nature hikes through the Nature Preserve.

This last fiscal year, over 300 volunteers kept the Nature Center open by greeting visitors; leading tours; caring for our resident wildlife through daily maintenance; special projects, landscaping and habitat restoration; clerical work and data entry; leading school tours and helping with Nature Camps; assisting with fundraising; planning and hosting special events, including our annual Gala and NatureFest; writing, publishing and distributing books and our quarterly newsletter; and other activities to support our nature programs.

Total volunteer hours topped 17,955! The monetary value of these hours adds up to \$482,450 according to the Independent Sector (hrs x \$26.87).

Some of our volunteers have just started this year and have already contributed *significantly* to the well-being and success of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. *One hundred* other volunteers have been here longer and given anywhere from *100 to over 4,900* hours for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and ARNHA; their names are listed below.

Jamie Washington
Volunteer Coordinator

We have 24 active volunteers with over 1,000 hours of service:

James Basham
Jackie Delu
Walter Dong
Marilyn Escobar
Peter Hayes
Elaine Hujambojoie
Claudia Hulbe
Gregg Hutchison
Joey Johnson
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Betsy Weiland
Liz Williamson

24 active volunteers served between 500 and 999 hours:

Susie Abbott
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Kari Bauer
Noah Baygell
Sue Bristow
Kelly Cohen
Lindsley Cross
Sue Davis
Colleen Draffin
Cindy Dunning
Cathy George
Kevin Hardy
Linda Hoganson
Hollyn Johnson
Margaret Leavitt
Deborah Moskovitz
David Peterson
Gail Philippart
Carol Thomas
Sigrid Trevino
Connie Wade
David Wade
Nancy Westlund
Trudy Ziebell

16 active volunteers served between 250 and 499 hours:

Jan Ahders
Katie Baygell
Marsha Bedwell
Jackie DeWeese
Marilee Flannery
Rachel Freund
JoLynn Jarrett
Bruce Kennedy
Hunter Merritt
Jean Marcy
Phyllis McGrath
Linda Melching
Jim LaNier
Lestelle Nichols
Ilana Weisberg
Lynn White



Stephanie Cyr carries art to the stage as part of her volunteer duties at the Spring Gala and Art Auction.



Volunteer receptionist Bev Lewis holds resident owl, Sophia, in what we like to call a "self-ia."

“I volunteer at Effie Yeaw Nature Center because I consider it to be a treasured jewel along the American River Parkway. It always has a calming presence on me when I enter its trails. When I retired from 37 years of teaching, I asked the Nature Center if I could bring my class there for my last day. It was a very special way to end my career. The next fall I began training to be a docent so I could continue to learn about the ecology of the place and connect children with nature.” ~ Susan Davis, volunteer



Volunteer Nancy Oprsal can often be found helping at ARNHA and Nature Center events, camps, and programs.

20 active volunteers served between 160 and 249 hours:

- Michele Beckwith
- Anna Britzman
- Kendall Burke
- Stephanie Cyr
- Krystin Dozier
- Rich Draffin
- Roz Eliaser
- Ethan Hall
- Mary Howard
- Chris Hulbe
- Michael Kwong
- Bob McCleary
- Beryl Michaels
- Smokey Murphy
- Susie Niemann
- Karin Richardson
- Melissa Shumate
- Susan Solarz
- Dorothy Wagner
- Ruth Younger

16 active volunteers served between 100 and 159 hours:

- Julia Anderson
- Dick Barbar
- Katy Blakely
- Bob Brown
- Susan Brown
- Mike Cardwell
- Nancy Cieza
- DJ Deleon Jr.
- Denise Garland
- Jim Jackson
- Jaclyn Krantz
- Jay Kumar
- Brennan McCulloch
- Joe Raver
- Rhys Rhygg
- Chris Wren



Students are surprised, yet curious as volunteer Jennifer Kerr handles a gopher snake with ease and care.

“I have a passion for nature and wildlife. I love sharing and teaching children and adults about nature. Children are the stewards of the future. If I can have each child go away and remember one thing I showed them or taught them, I have done a good job.” ~ Bob McCleary volunteer

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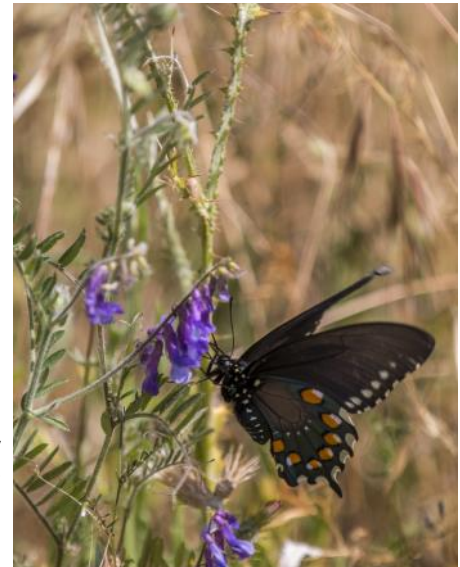
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(Right) A pipevine swallowtail butterfly enjoys a moments rest on purple vetch.

(Below) The black phoebes who were born in a nest just outside the Assembly building.



More Favorite Photos of 2014-2015



(Left) A young Bird & Breakfast attendee enjoys a close-up look at the treetops.



(Above) A male rattlesnake emerges from the brush on the grounds of the Nature Preserve.



(Left) Artist Pat Mahony gives the camera a wide smile at the 2015 Spring Gala and Art Auction.



(Above) A student is fascinated by the aquatic invertebrates living in this specimen jar.



(Left) Bees surrounding their hive create an interesting photo op.

Financials: Preliminary Report 2014 - 2015

ARNHA's core operating revenues were \$814,789.71 while our core operating expenses were \$602,393.16 for a net operating gain of \$212,396.56. Included in our revenue was a \$251,003 major unrestricted gift.

This year was a solid performance year for ARNHA and the Nature Center, highlighted by a significant increase in adult programming and the most Urban Nature Programs* ever given. The sales of the reprinted American River Almanac also helped increase revenues. Membership and contributions both increased.

The significant gift facilitated employee raises, and will allow program expansion and upgrades to our facilities at a faster rate. The number of staff increased slightly with the addition of a second part-time naturalist to help on weekends. Based on a comparative salary review and the solid revenue performance, the board voted to increase most staff salaries to bring them in line with similar positions in Northern California. These raises went into effect in July 2015.

A complete detailed financial report, produced by our accountant, will be available later in the year and will be published on the ARNHA website and in an updated version of this Annual Report.

* Urban Nature Programs are nature tours and classroom visits which are provided at no cost to schools with 50% or more of their students in families with low incomes that qualify them for meal programs.



(Above) Each March, ARNHA and the Sacramento Audubon Society partner to present Bird & Breakfast, an exciting weekend of birding.

(Below) Biologist and Nature Center volunteer, Mike Cardwell, handles a live rattlesnake during a *Nature of Things* seminar.



More Favorite Photos of 2014-2015



(Left) One of the 2015 fawns born within the Nature Preserve.



Naturalist Rachael Cowan lets a youngster have an up-close look at one of the Nature Center's resident reptiles.



(Left) ARNHA President Liz Williamson and Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Washington at the 2015 Spring Gala.



(Left) A fox squirrel that seems to be taking a break from its busy life.



An Acorn Woodpecker, a common sight in the Nature Reserve.



Our thanks to contributing photographers:

Kari Bauer, Betty Cooper, Mike Cardwell, Bob McCleary,
Thom Parrish, Susan Maxwell Skinner and Linda Thomas

