



## Emergent Animal Minds

*article and illustrations by William E. Avery, Ph.D.*

It is evening, a time of mystery and change on the American River. You see something weird coming up river—a strange flailing apparition. You feel a thrill of apprehension and a little fear as you watch odd appendages swing splashing from its sides, four moving heads with eyes ogling from side to side. It smells spectacularly strange! What will it do next, you wonder, sniffing the air for any more clues. Seems dangerous, you decide, as you dive below the surface of the river and swim downstream to get a safer distance, and then you pop up for another view.

You are an otter! But can an otter ever truly understand a canoe with a couple of people and dogs? Can the people in the canoe ever truly know what goes on in the head of an otter? One thing we can see is that each is curious about the other, each tries to observe, make predictions, and choose a position of advantage in the encounter. This we have in common.

So what goes on in the mind of an animal? Does an animal even have a mind? How can we ever know when we barely know our own minds? These are some of the questions being explored by modern neurobiologists, neurophysiologists, and psychologists.



In biology, we observe what are called emergent phenomena: unexpected or unpredictable new levels of complexity

and organization that emerge out of the component parts from the levels below. From component atoms emerge complex molecules with properties that could never have been predicted even with a complete understanding of the component atoms. From molecules arise sub-cellular structures called membranes and organelles, which couldn't have been predicted from the properties of the molecules. From organelles and other macromolecules arise cells. Cells give rise to tissues and organ systems, which, in turn, give rise to organisms. Organisms give rise to populations. Populations interact to form communities. We see this phenomenon throughout nature.

Part of what makes an animal an animal is the emergence of nervous tissue composed of neurons. All animals, including humans, share a genetic code that defines the makeup of the components of neurons. Most of the DNA sequences that code for a jellyfish's neurons, a lab rat's neurons, a golden retriever's neurons, an otter's or a human's neurons are identical. A neuron is a cell that is especially adapted for controlling electric potentials across its cell membrane from inside to outside of the cell. A neuron has short dendrites and longer axons to pick up electrochemical information and convey information to other neurons. It relies on membrane receptors and channel molecules to pick up, integrate, convey internally, and then relay information to other neurons or other organs. It can also remember. Exactly what and how it remembers remains an

*see Animal Minds, page 4*

## An Extra-Special Annual Meeting

*By Peter Hayes*

A gentle breeze cooled high-90s temperatures and a young deer watched from the nearby meadow as 150 American River Natural History Association members and friends gathered at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's replica Nisenan Maidu Village September 9 for a historic annual meeting.

The high-spirited assemblage was there to celebrate ARNHA's successful completion of its first year as manager of the formerly county-run Nature Center and to honor the board member who played a key role in making the transition happen. That member was ARNHA co-founder Carol Doersch, for whom the area connecting the two Nature Center buildings was dedicated as the "Carol Doersch Courtyard."

Credited with 9,000 hours of ARNHA service, including two terms as president and unstinting support of EYNC, Carol stepped up last year when the financially struggling Sacramento County invited bids from ARNHA and other private, nonprofit groups to take over operation of the 34-year-old Nature Center. Carol, working with past president Greg Voelm and others, assembled a 35-page document packed with telling financial and program details to support ARNHA's bid. Her meeting with interim county executive Steve Szalay along with Greg and former County Supervisor Sandy Smoley was seen as pivotal to ARNHA's success.

*see Annual Meeting, page 7*

# President's Message

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Betsy Weiland

American River Parkway Coalition

Katie Baygell & Peggy Kennedy

## ARNHA

American River Natural History Association

P.O. Box 241 • Carmichael, CA 95609

916-489-4918 • [www.arnha.org](http://www.arnha.org)

*The Acorn* is published quarterly on partly-recycled paper by ARNHA, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Letters to the editor should be sent to the address above.

ARNHA has just completed a very remarkable year. The Effie Yeaw Nature Center transitioned from a Sacramento County Parks facility to an independent service fully supported by ARNHA. This transition was made possible by the vision and efforts of key ARNHA Board members, by the dedication of the talented EYNC staff, by the leadership of past President Larry Washington, and by the hard work and the continuing support of many ARNHA members and volunteers. Keys to the success of the past year were the very generous donations by long-standing members of the ARNHA family. The transition was a bit wobbly at times, but everyone pulled together to sustain existing programs and, even, to grow some new special events.

The coming year will continue to be a transition period. ARNHA will continue to develop the organizational tools needed to independently operate the Nature Center and to expand the ARNHA services. New programs will be developed at the Nature Center. Old programs may get a bit of re-tooling to sustain the interest of today's youngsters. ARNHA and the EYNC staff will reach out to the education community to address how to retain their participation in this era of continuing budget constraints.

ARNHA's essential mission to provide environmental education and access to natural areas for families and children remains the same. ARNHA will be exploring new communication technologies to reach out to communities that have not had the benefit of experiencing nature close to home. We also will be seeking opportunities to collaborate with other nonprofit groups in order to enhance our services.

As always, at the heart of any service organization are the wonderful individuals who volunteer their time and expertise. ARNHA will be establishing new opportunities for people to participate, to learn new skills, and to share their appreciation of the natural world.

I am looking forward to a very exciting year. ARNHA will not only reinforce the already-strong foundation for operating the EYNC and other ARNHA programs, but also will discover new ways to reach out to the community with environmental awareness and education.

Sincerely,

*David Wade*

President

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**Ask a Naturalist . . .** Frequently asked question in the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Preserve:

**Q.** Are there any mountain lions here?

**A.** EYNC Naturalist Sabreena Kasbati: "We haven't had any mountain lion sightings in at least 25-30 years, although the black-tailed deer are a food source for them. If you do encounter one, you want to make yourself appear larger, make lots of noise, and do not run. But it would be extremely rare to see a mountain lion here."

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Bottom-of-the-page notices on pages 5-8 are abbreviated excerpts from the newly updated, full color **Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region**, with an expected publication date of Spring 2012.

Visit the **Effie Yeaw Nature Center** located at 2850 San Lorenzo Way in Carmichael

## Nurture the Naturalist in Every Child: Enroll in a School Program Today!

Bring your classroom outdoors! Scientific research shows that exposure to nature helps to provide positive, healthy childhood development. Not only that, but nature is fun, too! With the Effie Yeaw Nature Center thriving, and its school programs more robust than ever, now is the time to sign up your class for an educational adventure.

Students can visit the beautiful Nature Area, or naturalists and their animal friends can visit the classroom to make the natural world come alive for kids.

Through activities centered on the natural history, cultural history, and environment of the Sacramento region, school program topics correspond to each grade level's specific California Science Content Standards

and History-Social Science Content Standards. Children hardly realize they are learning "curriculum" because hands-on activities and new discoveries engage their sense of wonder.

Offerings currently include Nature Area Tours, Maidu Cultural Programs (classroom-based or at the Nature Center), Aquatic Ecosystem Programs (classroom-based or along the American River Parkway), Life Science Programs (classroom-based), and California History Programs (classroom-based). The focus of each program varies depending on grade level.

For more detailed information and to make reservations, please refer to our website at [www.SacNatureCenter.net](http://www.SacNatureCenter.net) and click on the "Tours and Programs" tab, or contact us by phone at 916-489-4918, x229. ■



The new 4th edition from ARNHA Press is available at the Discovery Shop inside the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, and selected local bookstores, for \$14.95.

American River Natural History Association  
P.O. Box 241 Carmichael, CA. 95609-0241  
[www.arnha.org](http://www.arnha.org)

## Grocery shopping? Support ARNHA at no cost to you!

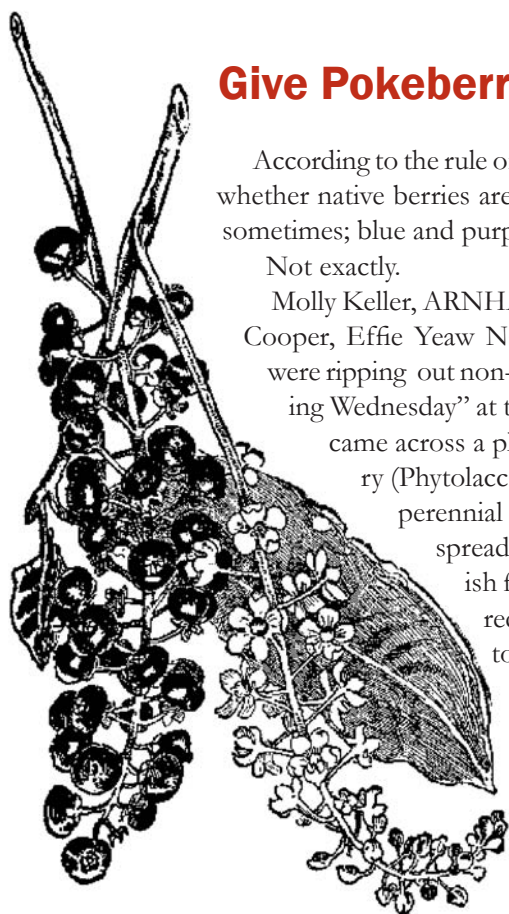
You grocery shop and The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) makes money? Yes, that's how the Raley's Quality of Life and Save Mart programs have worked since 2009 when ARNHA entered the programs. So far, \$7,000 has been transferred to ARNHA.

Anyone can take part in either program at no cost to the participant. Simply submit your card each time you shop at Raley's, Bel Air, Nob Hill, or Food Source stores, and a portion of your purchases will be donated back to ARHNA.

Save Mart Supermarkets has a similar program, so please make sure to request that card also if you shop there.

Quality of Life Cards and Save Mart Cards are available at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, or you can call 916-489-4918, x237 or email Betty Cooper at [bettyc@SacNatureCenter.net](mailto:bettyc@SacNatureCenter.net) to request a card.

*So you have a card but keep forgetting to use it?* Try putting it in your checkbook or wallet right next to your cash or credit card, whichever you use to pay for your groceries. Once it becomes a habit, it's easy! ■



## Give Pokeberries a Pass

According to the rule of thumb when it comes to determining whether native berries are safe to eat: "If it's white: never; red: sometimes; blue and purple: usually; and black, almost always." Not exactly.

Molly Keller, ARNHA Associate Board member, and Betty Cooper, Effie Yeaw Nature Center Development Director, were ripping out non-native vegetation on a recent "Weeding Wednesday" at the EYNC nature preserve when they came across a plant that disproves the rule—Pokeberry (*Phytolacca Americana*). It is a handsome, native perennial of Northeast North America that has spread south and west. The white or greenish flowers become green berries that turn red, then purple-black and are poisonous to mammals.

Pokeberry grows up to 14 feet high, and has a hardy, thick taproot that is "really tough to dig out," Molly said. Interestingly, the berries are a favorite with birds, which digest the hard-shelled seeds whole without releasing their toxins. ■



ongoing question for neuroscientists. Are memories chemical changes? Are they electromagnetic waves that are stored in electrostatic fields within the cytoskeleton of the neuron? This is still a mystery, and yet memory and thought are real emergent phenomena.

So we can see that a single neuron alone is a marvel, if not a miracle, of complexity. But the real magic occurs when two or more neurons come together. Now they can communicate; now they can relate and in that relationship form “ideas” that can be altered, retained, processed, and also remembered. Primitive animals such as jellyfish have nerve nets. More advance

animals such as flatworms, otters, and humans have greater and greater numbers of nerve cell bodies (the large portions of neurons) packed close together—this is called ganglionation, cephalization, or the emergence of a brain.

And with the emergence of brains, miraculously, emerges the interplay of ideas, feelings, memories—mind. With greater numbers, and tighter packing, of nerve cell bodies (the “gray matter” in our nervous system), we see increasing processing power. Of all the animals, including humans, biologists observe the greatest numbers of neurons in blue whales and the densest packing of neurons in the brains of birds. We observe that, rather than occupying the pinnacle of nervous system evolution, humans represent part of a continuum of increasing complexity of the animal nervous system.

On the other hand, an emergent property clearly arising from the human nervous system is the ability to create and manage symbolic information outside of the nervous system. We have spoken languages to share ideas from

one nervous system to another. We have written languages, now digitally encoded, emergent societal patterns, and an emergent physical technology that is persisting and evolving outside of ourselves. This is a truly phenomenal, emergent, evolutionary step! But

including its cerebral cortex for information processing, temporal lobes for processing hearing and speech, limbic system for emotional processing, and hippocampus for memory management. In overall structure, it is nearly identical with those of closely related

mammals. The neurological underpinnings of most of our feelings and even thoughts are probably shared by our mammalian relatives—thus we have more in common with the otter than we might normally appreciate.

The anthropocentric tendency to point out mental skills that humans have that animals do not is becoming obsolete. We now see astonishing feats of memory, tool invention and manufacture, com-

munication of new skills, the ability to use and understand symbols in many other species of animals. For example, we know that Clark’s nutcrackers can hide, remember, and relocate, months later, some 30,000 pine seeds each year. Arctic terns can navigate by landscape memory and celestial navigation from Antarctica to the Arctic. Octopi, chimps, green herons, ravens, and crows can invent tools to solve novel problems. Whales and dolphins apparently transmit rich levels of information to each other in their complex vocalizations.

Crows can transmit information about specific dangerous people to other crows via novel and unique vocalizations. Parrots can assemble human words into sentences to communicate ideas to humans. Dogs can be shown photos of objects never seen before, asked to retrieve objects represented by such photos, and successfully bring them back - even surpassing the abilities of human children to accomplish the same tasks. The more we observe animal behavior, the more we see simi-



does this mean, on an individual basis, our nervous system, and even mind, represent quantum leaps above those of other animals? I would argue no, but rather we have had a tendency to identify ourselves with the emergent memes, units of information, that arise

“We now see astonishing feats of memory, tool invention and manufacture, communication of new skills, the ability to use and understand symbols in many other species of animals.”

from our human minds.

From our mammalian ancestors, we have inherited a wonderful brain

*continued on next page*

## Your Donations Make It All Possible!

- Christina Allan
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- Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Bucholz
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- Maxine & David Clark
- Crocker Art Museum Association
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- Cheryl & Tom Ward
- Betsy & Fred Weiland

### In Memory of Raleigh Ewing:

- Doris Dugdon & Linda Aker
- Joan & Gordon Heidt
- Sue Reece
- Shirley & Cliff Stayton
- LaVerna Jackson & Karen Watt

### In Memory of George F. Nemetz:

- Bruce and Peggy Kennedy

### In Memory of Fred Waser

- Bruce and Peggy Kennedy



*Animal Minds*, from previous page  
larities between their minds and ours, rather than simply differences.

So what is an otter thinking? Well, imagine yourself, small, naked except for fur, extremely comfortable in the water but always a little hungry, with a profound and highly discerning sense of smell and touch, curious about your surroundings, aware of the tasty crayfish hiding below, a little playful, very present in the moment, but aware of the potential for danger from large unknown animals. Imagine all this, but try to sense your feelings and thoughts before the words emerge in your mind, and you will probably be very close. We exist within a continuum of evolutionary adaptations among animals here on planet Earth. We have a common genetic and evolutionary heritage; we share the same biochemistry and neurophysiology. The emergent properties of memory and mind also exist on a continuum with no clear line of demarcation separating us from our sweet and closely related cousins.

*William E. Avery, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, California State University, Sacramento, and a frequent contributor to The Acorn. ■*

## For Further Reading on Animal Minds

*Dolphin Mysteries: Unlocking the Secrets of Communication.* 2010. Kathleen M. Dudzinski, Toni Frohoff, and Marc Bekoff.

*Alex & Me: How a Scientist and a Parrot Discovered a Hidden World of Animal Intelligence—and Formed a Deep Bond in the Process.* 2009. Irene Pepperberg

*The Emotional Lives of Animals: A Leading Scientist Explores Animal Joy, Sorrow, and Empathy—and Why They Matter.* 2007. Marc Bekoff with foreword by Jane Goodall.

*Mind of the Raven: Investigations and Adventures with Wolf-Birds.* 2007. Bernd Heinrich.

*Among Whales.* 1996. Roger Payne.

*Made for Each Other - A Symbiosis of Birds and Pines.* 1996. Ronald M. Lanner.

*Animal Minds.* 1992. Donald R. Griffin.

## Snapshots from the Field

Tabitha Advincula was one of 75 volunteers who collected a total of 150 pounds of trash and 100 pounds of recyclables at Ancil Hoffman Park Sept. 17. ARNHA's Sue Davis headed up the effort, part of the Great American River Cleanup sponsored by the American River Parkway Foundation. Photo by Kari Bauer.





# EYNC Showcases Nature Education

The Effie Yeaw Nature Center hosted Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy and Congresswoman Doris Matsui, D-Sacramento, September 26 as part of a federal government effort to spread the word on its America's Great Outdoors conservation initiative.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, arranged for 66 students from Maple Elementary School in Sacramento to come to the Nature Center to meet the two officials and participate in nature activities with Army Engineers, specialists, and EYNC naturalists and docents.

After being welcomed by Nature Center Executive Director Paul Tebbel, the students, seated in the replica Maidu Nisenan Indian Village, heard Darcy and Matsui extol the importance and benefits of making the most of America's great outdoors.

Matsui pointed out that the

Nature Center was named for Effie Yeaw, a teacher and an environmentalist, adding: "Because we have such wonderful open spaces, we must respect them for future generations, so they can bring their children here."

President Barack Obama launched the America's Great Outdoors initiative last year with the recognition that many of the best conservation and recreation ideas are initiated outside of Washington at the grassroots level. ■

## Snapshots from the Field



Maple Elementary School students join Rep. Doris Matsui, D-Sacramento, and Assistant Secretary of the Army Jo-Ellen Darcy, center, at Effie Yeaw Nature Center to promote conservation. At left is Colonel Bill Leady, commander, Sacramento District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and, at right, Army Engineers Park Rangers Heather Wright and Terry Hershey. Photo by Kari Bauer.

Remember the  
Effie Yeaw  
Nature Center  
Gift Shop for all  
your Holiday  
Shopping Needs!



Incoming ARNHA President **David Wade** gets a formal introduction to **Tanner**, Effie Yeaw Nature Center's resident red-tailed hawk. While the exact conversation the two had is not being officially released, eye witness accounts say it went something like this:

"I understand that you now have some pull around here, Mr. Wade. My requests are rather simple, and a small price to pay for the entertainment and learning experience that I provide to thousands of visitors every year."

"I prefer range-fed mice, none of those cheap dime store mice. And while I loved Virginia the owl dearly, and will miss her, I would be just as happy if you didn't replace her. All that who-who-ing, all night long..."





"If it wasn't for Carol's work, we wouldn't be sitting here today," said Greg, who served as master of ceremonies at the courtyard dedication.

ARNHA President Larry Washington, who later turned over the gavel to President-elect David Wade, expanded on the evening's upbeat tone, declaring "We're here and we're in the black!"

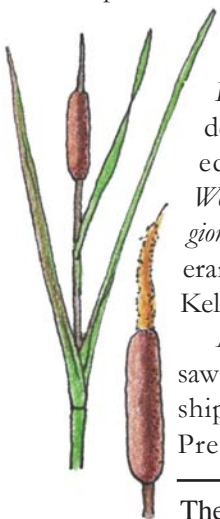
That message was documented in the printed program produced by Liz Williamson in which Treasurer Don Mongeau's preliminary figures for ARNHA's debut year as EYNC manager showed total revenues of \$506,000, with expenditures of \$328,000.

Contributing to that achievement were major contributions by the family of the late Jo Glasson Smith, ARNHA co-founder; David and Maxine Clark; Aerojet and the GenCorp Foundation, and Chevron Products Company. Other grants reflecting Development Director Betty Cooper's stellar efforts were awarded by the Wells Fargo and Teichert Foundations, Sacramento County Department of Water Resources and Environmental Management Division, Sacramento Region Community Foundation, River Cats Foundation, and Soroptimist of Northern California.

In addition, seven educational events proved profitable, including IMAX Movie Night, Bird and Breakfast, Painting Where the Wild Things Are, beaver walks with Jack Hiehle, and a nature photography workshop with Lewis Kemper.

Publications Committee Chair Peggy Kennedy displayed a copy of ARNHA's latest publication, an expanded edition of the popular *Hiking and Biking the American River Parkway* guidebook. Underway is a new, full-color edition of *The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region*, the handiwork of veteran ARNHA artist Molly Keller.

ARNHA's historic year saw high marks for membership and volunteers. Vice President Lee Wilner re-



The **Broad-Leaved Cattail** is a 4 to 7 foot tall perennial with stout, pithy stems and long, grass-like leaves. 7



Relaxing in the newly-dedicated Carol Doersch Courtyard are, from left, EYNC Executive Director Paul Tebbel, incoming ARNHA President David Wade, Carol Doersch, Carol's son, Todd Doersch, daughter Ann Doersch, and outgoing ARNHA President Larry Washington. Photo by Kari Bauer.

ported 931 members, up from 815, and EYNC Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Washington reported that 180 volunteers donated over 10,500 hours of time, which, according to an authoritative analysis, translates to \$246,542.

EYNC Executive Director Paul Tebbel, who took over from Marilee Flannery (who retired in May), introduced and thanked his staff and declared EYNC "a good, solid Nature Center." With almost 20 years experience creating and running nature centers, he announced he was looking forward to making the most of the EYNC Nature Preserve, and to coming up with new programs for the schools. "I want Sacramento people to love this place," he said.

Although Marilee couldn't be present, she sent an eloquent message read by Betty Cooper saluting Carol Doersch and her good works over 30 years, citing her fundraising, generous donations, advocacy, officer duties, and her writing and editing for ARNHA publications.

"Carol is our glue," Marilee wrote. "She connects us to our community and to each other. She teaches through example to be gracious and sweet like delicate new leaves in the sunshine when we deliberate with others."

An equally ardent supporter of Carol was longtime friend and former County

Supervisor Muriel Johnson, who was a prodigious fundraiser on behalf of the construction of the Carol Doersch Courtyard. In an 'Ode to Carol from Friends and Admirers,' she recited, "... She never gave up when the County funds went away ... Effie Yeaw could not have had a stronger lobbyist, I'd say ..."

Carol was joined by her son, Todd, and daughter, Ann, who paid tribute to her mother's talent for "gracefully holding things together" with her ongoing pleas for "congenial collaboration" among the various interests represented on the ARNHA board.

For her part, Carol declared, "I'm grateful that you're all here, all my friends. It's been a great year, the Nature Center is thriving. It's going to be okay."

Peggy Kennedy presented President Larry Washington with a framed, inscribed color photograph of the Nature Center by Linda Thomas "in great appreciation for having led us through difficult times" during his five years in office. Larry, an architect, also designed the elegant iron and wood trellis framing the Carol Doersch Courtyard.

Other highlights of the evening included the haunting strains of "Amazing Grace" played by Native American flutist Mary Youngblood who, in Paul Tebbel's

*continued next page*



words, was a “roaring success” at an EYNC concert earlier in the year; and the light refreshments made possible by a generous donation by the Doersch Family and the many volunteers who prepared and brought food for the buffet. Orchestrated by tireless Betsy Weiland, the repast helped make for a memorable evening of food, wine, and celebration.

*Peter J. Hayes is co-chair of ARNHA's Publications Committee. A career journalist, he is author of THE AMERICAN RIVER ALMANAC and AN AMERICAN RIVER JOURNAL and editor of several ARNHA publications. In 2009, he was named county parks Outstanding Volunteer by the County Board of Supervisors. ■*

## 'Tis the Season for Nature Camps

Why do leaves change color? How does the Nature Area's wildlife survive the winter? Children can discover the fascinating answers to these questions and more while exploring nature's seasonal playground through hikes and crafts at this year's Fall Nature Camps and Winter Nature Camps (formerly “Winter Fun Days”) this November and December at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

The camps, for grades K-2 and 3-6, take place on November 21 and 22 and December 20, 21, 27, and 28. There are also Family Camps available for parents and their K-6 children. Each goes from 9 am to 12 pm.

The Fall Camps give kids the opportunity to learn all about trees in autumn, get to know turkeys and turkey vultures, or uncover the mysteries of salmon migration. The Winter Camps cover other fun topics such as winter wildlife, winter plant life, hibernation, nocturnal animals, the winter solstice, wetlands, and winter birds.

Make reservations in person at the Nature Center, by phone at 916-489-4918, or by fax at 916-489-4983. Awaken your child's curiosity about the natural world and enroll today! ■

## Snapshots from the Field



Docent Walter Dong points out Acorn Woodpeckers on an oak tree snag to a class from Cowen School on a nature walk in the EYNC Preserve. Acorn Woodpeckers are communal nesters and the children watched them noisily interacting. They could also clearly see the granary in the tree, where acorns are stored. Photo by Kari Bauer.

## Wish List from EYNC

If you can donate any of the following, you will be helping Effie Yeaw Nature Center staff continue to present award-winning educational programs and care for the Center's animals:

- Sound system for Assembly Building
- Spotting scope
- Heavy-duty weed whacker
- 8-foot fiberglass ladder
- Gift cards for Home Depot
- Gift cards for Staples (for cases of toilet paper & paper towels)
- Small 4WD tractor with a brushhog to control invasive weeds in the Preserve.

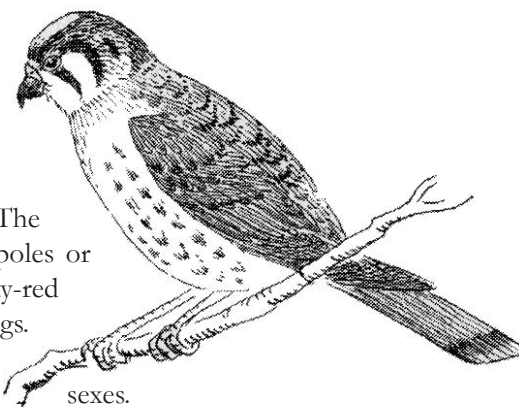
To donate these and/or other useful items you have, please contact Paul Tebbel at [pault@Sac-NatureCenter.net](mailto:pault@Sac-NatureCenter.net) ■





# Farmer's Friend

This is a good time to see what the well-dressed bird will wear in Sacramento County. The American Kestrel, perched atop telephone poles or dead tree tops, is the only small hawk with rusty-red back and tail, and the male has blue-gray wings. Distinctive sideburns accent handsome black, white and reddish face patterns on both sexes.



It's hard to miss the kestrel, the least wary of birds of prey. When not sitting erect eyeballing the landscape, this streamlined falcon is hunting with rapid wing strokes, making quick turns, hovering or floating down on long, narrow wings to seize a grasshopper or deer mouse. Thus, it is the farmer's friend.

And the kestrel announces its presence with high-pitched "killy-killy" calls.



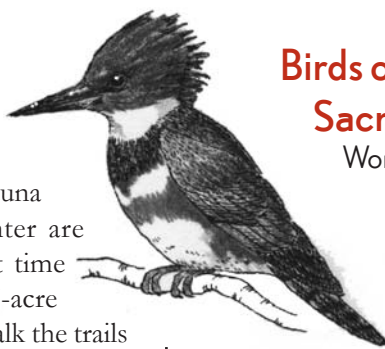
Formerly known as the sparrow hawk, the kestrel has been known to make a meal of smaller birds, but the "sparrow" part of the old name overstated its diet preferences. The English name of kestrel is more appropriate. But sparrow hawk or kestrel, its colorful plumage and appetite for insects and rodents make it a valued member of our natural world.

From *AN AMERICAN RIVER JOURNAL*, published by ARNHA. It features drawings by ARNHA co-founder **Jo Glasson Smith** and nature essays by **Peter Hayes**, retired newspaper editor and ARNHA associate board member. The book is available for \$9.75 at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, ARNHA.org, and selected stores. Visit ARNHA.org "Podcasts" to hear readings of the essays by the author. ■

## Bird and Breakfast Set for March 10

In spring, the flora and fauna of Effie Yeaw Nature Center are most glorious. It's a perfect time to walk the trails of the 77-acre Preserve. Even better is to walk the trails early in the day with a birding expert, who can point out bird nests, birding courtship behavior, nest-building as well as other living things in the Preserve, and then return to the Assembly Building for a hot, home-cooked breakfast.

This is Bird and Breakfast, scheduled for March 10, from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. It costs \$35 per person and is for people at least twelve years of age. Phone 489-4918 to make reservations or for more information. ■



## Birds of Winter in the Sacramento Valley

Workshop by Ed Harper at EYNC



### Thursday Lectures

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm,  
February 23, March 8 & 22

### Saturday Field Trips

8:00 am to noon, February 25  
7:30 am to 1:30 pm, March 10,  
8:00 am to noon, March 24  
Fee: \$80 for all lectures and field trips.  
pre-registration is required. Call  
EYNC at 489-4918 to register. More  
information at SacNatureCenter.net

If you want to get your copy of *The Acorn* on line, please contact our webmaster Georgia Jones at ARNHA.org and tell her to hold your paper copy.

Remember the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Gift Shop for all your Holiday Shopping Needs!



# HOLIDAY SALE

**GRAND ANNUAL EVENT!**

Inspiring Nature Books

## Pottery

X NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETS X

## ART

\* JEWELRY \*

## Photography

**Festive MUSIC**  
Sacramento Symphonic Winds Ensemble  
2:00 – 4:00

**Refreshments and gift-wrapping**



• at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center •

**Saturday, December 3, 2011**  
9:00 <sup>until</sup> 4:00

20% discount in the Discovery Shop  
10% discount from vendors  
for ARNHA members

Proceeds benefit educational programs at  
The Effie Yeaw Nature Center  
489-4918

## Special Awards For Eight Volunteers

"Volunteers are the heart of what we do. We wouldn't be here without them!"

So said Effie Yeaw Nature Center Volunteer Coordinator **Jamie Washington** as she awarded Special Certificates of Recognition for Outstanding Service to eight volunteers at the ARNHA Annual Meeting September 9.

The honored volunteers were:

**Tomas Woolston**, for animal care at EYNC and fundraising at his family's restaurant, Matteo's Pizza and Bistro.

**Nik Domek**, for his Eagle Scout project building three picnic tables and restoring two others.

**Erin Landry**, who is the animal care lead volunteer.

**Liz Williamson**, who does animal care, is an EYNC receptionist, ARNHA Board member and webmaster, and for making and donating knitted "Owlies"—coin and phone purses that raised over \$1,000 in the past year.

**Elaine Hujambojoie**, office assistant at EYNC who does data entry, thank you letters, and many other projects.

**Betsy Weiland**, ARNHA special events coordinator/hostess, who orchestrates food and decor at all events.

**Roberta Wilner**, ARNHA Board member and EYNC receptionist. She has volunteered over 9,000 hours!

At the end of the ceremony, Jamie herself received special recognition. Acting on behalf of all the volunteers, Elaine Hujambojoie and **Marilyn Escobar** presented her with a basket of food goodies and two gift cards. Said Elaine, "Things run smoothly and happily with Jamie in charge. We love you!" ■

## Migrating Ducks . . .

. . . have something to teach  
with seasonal arrowed certainty  
how freely they abandon earth  
lifting in a focused clatter  
soar through orange & purple sky  
accept first the call of need  
and only then the yearn for love  
hold what is real in the calm head  
the downy breast  
in recall of slate taste of wind  
blue-gold smell of cold and grain  
and water  
will dive for joy, for food  
preen for survival, not passion,  
then, with exquisite timing, knife  
away  
release offspring and home  
know what to leave behind

By JoAnn Anglin

*JoAnn Anglin has worked in the Poet in the Schools Program and takes part in local poetry activities. Rattlesnake Press published her poetry collection, Words Like Knives, Like Feathers. Other poems have appeared in various anthologies. ■*



## New ARNHA President is Environmental Planner

David Wade, a land planner who, with his wife Connie, an ecologist, has operated a land and environmental planning firm in the Sacramento region for over 30 years, is the new president of the American River Natural History Association. He was elected at the ARNHA Annual Meeting September 9, succeeding Larry Washington, who served for five years through the perilous transition leading to ARNHA taking over management of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center from the county.

David grew up in Carmichael and spent many summer days on the American River near the present ENYC. A Garfield School class trip to the river around 1957 (perhaps led by Effie Yeaw) is a strong memory that contributed to his affinity for the natural environment along the river.

"My career in community planning has convinced me of the critical importance of environmental education that fosters an awareness and appreciation for nature in an urban setting as well as getting kids outside and moving," he said.

Other board members elected at the annual meeting are as follows:

### 1st Vice President

Diana Parker

### 2nd Vice President, Publications

Peggy Kennedy

### 3rd Vice President, Membership

Lee Wilner

### 4th Vice President

Liz Williamson

Secretary, Claudia Hulbe

Treasurer, Don Mongeau

Past President, Larry Washington

### Members at large:

Bud Banker, Noah Baygell  
Linda Thomas, and Greg Voelm.



## Nature Fest Rated a 'Great Success'

By Peter Hayes

The Effie Yeaw Nature Center's first fall Nature Fest, an all-day exhibition of wild animal demonstrations, birding walks, music and more, had been expected to draw little more than 500 visitors to the center on Sunday, Oct. 23.

"But we had well over 1,300 in attendance, a great success for the first year," said Jim Crosthwaite, EYNC Development Associate, who coordinated the event.

One of the primary aims of Nature Fest was to introduce the Nature Center to local residents who may not have visited it previously. This objective was reached, at least among the capacity crowds that filled the Assembly Building to meet Shoshone the Mountain Lion and Tiquanna the Lynx. An informal survey of those in attendance indicated 60 to 70 percent were first-time visitors to EYNC.

Other Nature Fest highlights included a bat demonstration by NorCal Bats, raptor and reptile demonstrations by EYNC naturalists, ladybug and native bee presentations by Julie Serences, and guided bird walks by Sacramento Audubon Society leaders. The mountain lion and lynx demonstrations were presented by Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund leaders.

(To see mountain lion and lynx and how to do fish prints booth, and more, see Liz Williamson's Nature Fest video at [www.sacnaturecenter.net](http://www.sacnaturecenter.net) and follow "video" prompts just above and below Nature Fest logo.)

An American River Natural History Association table, staffed by Molly Keller, Diana Parker, and Peter Hayes, grossed \$437 from sales of ARNHA books, donations, and memberships.

Music was provided by singer/guitarist (Ms.) Jahari Sai and guitarist Lew Johnson, who performed with Julie Serences in her ladybug demonstration.

Another objective of Nature Fest was to obtain email addresses from visitors, so they could be informed of upcoming classes and events; 437 addresses were obtained.

Interviews of Nature Fest visitors drew positive responses. "We think it's so great that you stepped in to run the Nature Center when the County stopped funding it," said Norman Brule of Sacramento, who was with his wife, Terry and son, Jackson, 3. "It would be such a shame to lose this wonderful resource."

Terry Brule added, "This is where I come to get back to nature. The docents are extremely knowledgeable." And young Jackson chimed in that his favorite activity was "going to the river."

Laura Amaya, Sacramento, with her son, William James, 3 1/2, enjoyed the bats demonstration and wild turkeys, while William's companion Dillon Danner, 3 1/2, remembered fondly getting wet and throwing rocks in the river. Laura Amaya said: "I love this open space where it's so safe for young children and parents, where you see wild turkeys and rattlesnakes. I want William to be nature-oriented."

Mark Patitucci of Carmichael summed up a regular visitor's opinion: "This is wonderful. It's a great experience for the kids. We love this place, and bring our kids here all the time." ■

*Our roving photographer, Kari Bauer, captured high points of the first EYNC Center Nature Fest, including, from top, Barbara Dicely introducing Shoshone the Mountain Lion; one of NorCal Bats' prize specimens enjoying a meal of mealworms; Caleigh Taylor happily wearing her salmon hat and displaying fish print, and Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Washington, clearly pleased by the turnout of more than 45 volunteers who helped make Nature Fest such a success.*

American River Natural History Association  
P.O. Box 241  
Carmichael, CA 95609-0241  
(916) 489-4918 • www.arnha.org  
Address Service Requested



Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 226  
Carmichael, CA

## ARNHA Calendar of Events

- **Fall Nature Camps**  
November 21 and 22, 9 am to noon  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see story page 8)
- **Holiday Sale at Discovery Shop**  
Saturday, December 3, 9 am to 4 pm  
Effie Yeaw nature Center (see ad page 9)
- **Winter Nature Camps**  
December 20, 21 27, 28 9 am to noon  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see story page 8)
- **Birds of Winter in the Sacramento Valley**  
Workshop with Ed Harper  
February and March  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see story page 9)
- **Bird and Breakfast**  
Saturday, March 10, 8 am to 10:30 am  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see story page 9)
- **Painting Where the Wild Things Are**  
Saturday, June 2, 4 pm to 7:30 pm  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center

## New Members

- |                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Dona & James Affleck        | • Sonya Lyons                     |
| • Barbara & Ellis Andras      | • Bob McClearly                   |
| • Patricia Baker              | • Elizabeth and Ian McPhail       |
| • JoAnn & Solon Barbis        | • Marilyn McRae                   |
| • Charlene Bastian            | • Mimi & R Burnett Miller         |
| • Mary Alice & George Basye   | • Elizabeth & Robert Peabody      |
| • Linda Clayton               | • Sarah & Jesse Scatton           |
| • Bill Davis                  | • Julia & William Schaw           |
| • Ellen Dillinger             | • Roland Scholar                  |
| • Sylvia & D M Enoch          | • Sandra Smoley                   |
| • Nancy Fisher                | • Anna Stinson                    |
| • Beverly Geremia             | • Mary Lou & Ray Stone            |
| • August S Hahn               | • Joan Taylor                     |
| • Anne Hibbitt                | • Craig & Michael Thomas          |
| • Leon Hodge                  | • Brian Van Camp & Diane Miller   |
| • Sally & Stephen Huffman     | • Carman Villarreal               |
| • Estera & Victor Jebelean    | • Jessica Tietjen & Scott Walters |
| • Neli Jebelean               | • Katie & A Alan White            |
| • Muriel & Ernest Johnson     | • Joyce Whitney                   |
| • Marjorie & Ralph Koldinger  | • Rebecca & Mark Wiest            |
| • Greg Kondos & Moni Van Camp | • Jill Wright                     |
| • Martha P Larkey             | • Melinda Wulff                   |
| • Sevim & Eric Larsen         | • Sandra & Franklin Yee           |
| • Dorothy & Norman Lein       | • Anne Young                      |
| • Susanne & Ron Leineke       |                                   |

## We're on Facebook!

Next time you log in, be sure to “like” us so your newsfeed contains our posts.

You’ll love “Pete the Parkway Coyote”, a fictional character who prowls the Parkway.

His curious nature, sharp eyes and keen sense of smell make him a great ambassador for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and the American River Natural History Association. He’ll keep you informed of their activities from the wild animal perspective. Pete loves seeing your photos and commenting on your stories about the Nature Center.

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) page shares important information, such as news and events as well as linking you to the Effie Yeaw and ARNHA websites and calendars.

