



Star of the Show

story by Peter J. Hayes and photographs by Kari Bauer

One of the smallest of owls was perhaps pursuing a tasty mouse near Marysville when it started across



the highway and was hit by a speeding semi-truck. When, at a truck stop, the driver discovered his little passenger in the grill of the truck, he drove 60 miles out of his way to bring it to the Roseville Bird and Pet Clinic. Soon afterward, it began a new life at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

A Northern Saw-whet Owl, the round-headed, robin-sized bird, had been treated by clinic veterinarian Vicky Joseph and at the California Foundation of Birds of Prey for a fractured shoulder and head trauma. Although unable to maintain sustained flight, since 2008 she has been a popular performer in the nature center's educational programs in her glass-walled enclosure in the lobby. She also spends time outdoors for her close-ups with photographers in the Carol Doersch Courtyard and on tour to public schools where, says naturalist Rachael Cowan, "she mesmerizes classrooms."

"She was named Sophia after actress Sophia Loren for the size of her big, beautiful eyes," says JoLynn Jarrett, EYNC Animal Care Supervisor.

"People murmur 'ahhh' when they see her. They think she's a baby owl. They're surprised to learn that at more than 9-years-old she's older than Echo, the much bigger Great Horned Owl, who is 5 years old."

Unlike the tufted Great Horned Owl, Sophia wears no tufts. Her breast is mottled brown and white, all the better to blend into the bark of the conifers that are the species' home in southern Alaska east to Quebec, through much of the midsection of the United States, and finally through California. The species was first discovered by European explorers in a North American colony called Acadia (now Nova Scotia).

More specifically, Sophia is a member of the sub-species

of the Saw-whet first discovered by the Rev. John Henry Keen, a missionary in Canada in 1896.

Sophia is the center of attraction at her daily feeding time when she dines on thawed mouse. Rachael eases her way into Sophia's enclosure, shows her the mouse, and slowly brings it up to her talons. "Her eyes are big as she takes the mouse head first, and deposits the body on a nearby branch for later," says Rachael.

In the wild, the female Saw-whet, which is larger than the male, does all the incubation and broods 5-6 eggs on a nest in

see *Sophia*, page 3

Art Where Wild Things Are Gala and Art Auction Call to Artists

by Barbara Lezon

Artists interested in interpreting the American River, its surrounds, and all creatures associated with it have been called to enter Art Where Wild Things Are. The show, to be held at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center from May 1 through May 20, is sponsored jointly by Sacramento Fine Arts Center and the American River Natural History Association. The Second Saturday reception will be on May 14.

Artists who wish to enter their work in the show and auction can find the prospectus at the Sacramento Fine Arts

see *GALA*, page 13



President's Message

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ARNHA
American River Natural History Association
P.O. Box 241 • Carmichael, CA 95609
916-489-4918 • www.arnha.org

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Dear ARNHA Members:


Two thousand and sixteen will be a year of celebration for ARNHA and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. We will be celebrating the 40th birthday of the Nature Center and the 35th anniversary of the founding of ARNHA. The Nature Center was officially opened in June of 1976, and ARNHA was founded in 1981.

The Nature Center has served generations of families. Frequently, parents bringing young children to the Center recall fondly the visits they themselves made as grade school students. An extraordinary number of these visitors ask after a particular animal they saw 20 years ago, usually Virginia, the Great Horned Owl, or one of our several opossums. Clearly these animals made an impression on the child, an impression that stays with the adult. We are, also, a very popular venue for grandparents who want to connect their grandchildren with nature. Meeting, and often counting the number of, Wild Turkey and Black-tailed Deer is a highlight of their nature walk. With our fortieth anniversary on the horizon, it can't be long before these grandparents tell us how much they enjoyed visiting the Center with their grade school class.

We have been able to flourish for these forty years only because some strong forces are at work: the powerful mission of ARNHA to connect people to nature, the commitment and talents of the staff who provide such memorable and high quality programs, the enthusiasm and skills of hundreds of volunteers, and the generosity of our many ARNHA members and supporters. Thank you to you all.

Fortieth birthdays are traditionally a time to evaluate how one is progressing, plan for the future, and -- if you have younger siblings -- receive a profusion of gag gifts. While we will be forgoing the gag gifts, we are organizing a strategic planning session at the end of January to make future plans for ARNHA and the Nature Center. As we look into ways to expand our reach, geographically and programmatically, the tradition of excellence we have built up over the decades will be maintained.

Sincerely,



Liz Williamson
ARNHA President



Photo by Susan Skinner

*Above: Liz and Echo,
our animal ambassador
Great Horned Owl.*

Sophia, from page 1

the bottom of a tree cavity, usually an abandoned woodpecker hole. Meanwhile, the male does the hunting. When the nestlings are about 18 days old, the female leaves the nest to roost elsewhere. The male continues to bring food to the young. After 4-5 weeks, the young will leave the nest, stay together, and survive on food brought mostly by the male for at least another four weeks. Sometimes, females find another mate and nest once more in the same year, according to the *Audubon Guide to North American Birds*.

The Saw-whet is nocturnal, hunting usually at dusk. From a low perch, it drops down on its prey on the ground, feeding rapaciously on small mammals such as Deer Mice, Ornate Shrews, and voles. It will also take small birds like chickadees, along with frogs and large insects. Sometimes the 8-inch-long Saw-whets themselves fall victim to bigger birds of prey, such as hawks or owls.

Because Saw-whets mainly fly by night, it is not easy to follow their migration patterns. In the 1990s, researchers joined in Project Owl-net to establish more than 100 owl migration banding sites. They use the Saw-whet's rhythmic "Too-Too-Too" call to lure thousands of owls into nets every fall. In October 1999, a fishing boat

crew welcomed a Saw-whet aboard in the Atlantic 70 miles from shore.

The Saw-whet name is usually traced to the raspy sound of a saw being sharpened on a whetstone. It has also been called Acadian Owl, Blind Owl, Kirkland's Owl, The Saw-filer, the Sawyer, Sparrow Owl, White-fronted Owl, Farmland Owl, Little Nightbird, Queen Charlotte Owl, and the Whet-saw Owl.

JoLynn says Sophia's call sounds like "Hear-Hear." It has also been described as "Toot-Toot" and has been called haunting when mentioned in the lyrics of The Grateful

Dead rock band's "Unbroken Chain:" "Lilac Rain, unbroken chain, song of the Saw-whet owl. Out on the mountain, it'll drive you insane, listening to the winds howl."

But JoLynn begs to differ with any such put-down. "Sophia used to get out of her anklets and jesses (restraints), but not any more," she says. "She's a sweetheart."

Peter Hayes is co-chair of ARNHA's Media/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 Board of Supervisors. ■



Sophia's mottled brown and white breast serves as camouflage for EYNC's resident Northern Saw-whet Owl. Photo by Kari Bauer.

Route of Saw-whets. In this region the Northern Saw-whet Owl spends the spring and summer in the lower to upper conifer regions, from 3,500 feet up to 6,500 feet (but varies depending on whether the slope is north facing (more conifers) or south facing (more oaks), say E. Beedy and E. Pandolfino in *Birds of the Sierra Nevada*. The authors add that Saw-whets winter from the foothills down to the Valley floor -- depending on the severity of the season.

Valley Oak Acorns Planted at EYNC

by Margaret Leavitt

There is an experiment going on in Effie Yeaw Nature Center's (EYNC) Nature Study Area (NSA)! Can the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) foster the growth of the beloved Valley Oaks (*Quercus lobata*) that populate the NSA and provide the natural location for the acorn granaries actively used by the NSA's iconic Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)? That is the challenge that ARNHA's Resource Maintenance and Monitoring Committee (RMC) has taken on with its recent acorn planting project.

According to Connie Wade, Ecologist, and Chair of the RMC, studies have determined that riparian oak habitat in California, and in particular that habitat home to the Valley Oak, has been greatly reduced over the past forty years.** The decline is attributed to development and the difficulty of natural regeneration of oaks. Upstream dams preclude the annual spring flooding that historically provided rich soil to the Valley Oak; California's drought may have contributed to recent decline as well.

Those conclusions are echoed by EYNC Executive Director Paul Tebbel, who notes that staff and volunteers have observed the decline of the Valley

Oaks that have grown naturally in the area immediately behind the Nature Center buildings. Ten or twelve Valley Oaks have been lost in the last few years, and an inventory of new trees

revealed only about a dozen small

replacements. Many of the existing Valley Oaks are reaching the end of their natural life, and the habitat issues listed above have contributed as well to their loss. In addition, although oaks in the NSA generally regenerate pretty well, the NSA's thriving deer population devours little oak trees "like candy." Although volunteers have "caged" many naturally-generated little oaks to protect them from the deer, it seemed that a more concerted effort was necessary to maintain the Valley Oaks.

Not only are the Valley Oaks a graceful anchor for the beauty of the NSA, they provide important structure to the lives of the colonies of Acorn Woodpeckers that populate the NSA. As the oaks grow to maturity, several of their limbs will die, providing the perfect location for the woodpeckers to construct their "granaries" - collections of holes drilled in the dead wood in which the woodpeckers store their acorns. Acorn Woodpeckers, which have a strong and complex social network, dedicate much of their efforts to building and defending their acorn granaries. Their activity, chatter, and constant movement are a source of enjoyment and delight to EYNC staff and visitors alike.

After much discussion, deliberation, investigation and consultation with other Parkway organizations, including American River Parkway Oak Tree Specialist Phil Lutz, and after learning that seedlings were difficult to establish, the RMC decided to try planting and growing locally-gathered Valley Oak acorns. As Connie Wade describes, "Local acorns, [gathered] as close to the planting site as possible, are likely to share genetic traits which increase the chances of survival. Acorns gathered outside the local area will likely have different genetic traits and could introduce poorly adapted genes."

As the project progressed, the Sacramento Tree Foundation (STF) became a valuable resource and ally. Zhara Wyly, Restoration Ecologist with STF, donated locally-gathered acorns from the STF's inventory and offered advice based on her experience with oak planting. The acorns were collected in early fall, when they were properly mature. Then, according to RMC member Marilyn Escobar, the acorns were rinsed in a bleach solution to discourage mold, packaged, and refrigerated for about 6 weeks. The cold storage, explained Connie Wade, promotes faster germination after planting. Planting can take place from early November, after the rains have dampened the soil, until early March.

On a wet November day, RMC members cleared an area behind the museum building and planted eight groups of three acorns each. Many of the acorns had already sprouted, noted Marilyn Escobar, and they were planted root side down, with a cone placed over the top and a little fence constructed around them. During dry periods, Marilyn and other volunteers have watered the acorns by hand, and Marilyn plans to draft a group to help maintain that effort this summer after the rains stop. When the acorns begin to sprout and produce leaves, they will be caged to protect them from grazing animals.

Survival of the planted acorns depends on a host of factors - weather, predation, viability of individual acorns and trees - most of which are beyond the control of the RMC. But as Connie Wade noted, "This [planting] area is easily viewed by visitors, providing an educational opportunity in stewardship of the Nature Study Area." For Marilyn Escobar, whose enthusiasm

continued next page



for the project is infectious, the little acorns provide a vision of a future that guarantees the continued presence of Valley Oaks and Acorn Woodpeckers in the NSA. "The Acorn Woodpeckers are our mascot," she says, "a wonderful presence. I love to hear them chatter. This project was really a joy to work on!"

...

***Oak Tree Care* by Doug McCreary, Natural Resources Specialist, University of California Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program, Technical Review by Pam Muick and Mike Weber, edited by Sharon G. Johnson. Presentation to RMC by Phil Lutz, American River Parkway Oak Tree Specialist

Margaret Leavitt is a docent, volunteer receptionist at EYNC, and member of ARNHAs Media/Publications Committee. ■

Spring Nature Camps

From Monday, March 21 through Friday, March 25, half-day spring nature camps for children from ages three to eleven will be offered at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Topics include squirrels, deer and fawns, eggs, butterflies and blooms, and other aspects of the natural world. For more information and to register for spring nature camps go to SacNatureCenter.org.

Top: "Did you know that rhizomes on Broad-leaved Cattails can be eaten," asks Naturalist Thom Parrish. Middle: Nature camper meets the California Newt. Bottom: Campers test the warmth a pile of leaves creates, a fact good to know for survival in emergencies.



Photos by Peggy Kennedy

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insects, fish, and amphibians
that share the planet.

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SHOP**

AT THE EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER
TUES-SUN, 9-5
489-4918

New Members -- October-December

- Paige Ashley & Fred Fix
- Cleita M. Baradi
- Marcia Bauer
- Chad Beach
- Mark Beason
- Robert Beltram
- Paige Bender
- Ella Benoza
- Laura Berard
- Christy Berger
- Jack Berger
- Anne Berner
- Karen Bishop-White
- Audrey Blue
- Kim Brady
- David Breninger
- Matthew Brittain
- Robert Burness
- Lucille Caldaron
- Marge Cari
- Dawn Cassinelli
- Michael & Stilyana Cervantes
- Jeff Clayton
- Jodi Clingan
- Debbie & Jim Coffin
- Chris Comas
- Lisa Coronado
- Juliann Coronado
- Maria Crane
- Phillip Danz
- Mary Dorris
- Trina Drotar
- Matthew Eldridge & Rashida Lang
- Pam Farinelli
- Christine Farren
- Tricia Gaiduk
- Michelle Garcia
- Laura Garwood
- Melissa Gates
- Jan Gatheral
- Angelina Gibbs
- Sanna Golod
- Sherry Greathouse
- Sheila Green
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- Meredith Ryan
- Kathleen A. Sabatini
- Elisa Sabatini
- Mary & Peter Sandlin
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- Patrick Saunders
- Regan Scott-Chin
- Bob Slakey
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- Susanne Sommer
- D. George Spencer
- The Stephanys
- The Stromayer-Maurer Family
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- A J Watson
- Mina White
- Kelly & Doug Whited
- Jim Willetts
- Jeffrey K. Wilson
- Adam & Summer Wilson
- Martine Wilson
- Dan Winkelman
- Kevin Yamamura
- Jerome Yatsko

A Successful Sale

The Effie Yeaw Nature Center sold more than \$9,000 in gift items at its annual Holiday sale at the center December 5.

"The weather was beautiful, the refreshments were delicious, gift wrapping was the perfect finishing touch and, despite a brief power outage, it was a successful day," Melanie DuBoce, Naturalist/Store Manager, said.

Most of the returning vendors had one of their best sales. New vendors Thom Parrish, selling photos and cards, and Heather Gabel, selling hand-made soaps, just about sold out their goods.

Gift sales included Rusty Birds Garden Decor Stakes and Wreaths, Owl Pint-sized Glass Sets, Owl and City Critter Cork Coasters, nature-themed Adult Socks, Mini Gourd Ornaments, Children's Books and many books for adults, especially American River Natural History Association's *American River Almanac* and *John Muir's Book of Animals*.

Thirteen new ARNHA memberships were sold, including one at the Sponsor Level (\$250).

2015 Donors

October-December

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- Virginia Feuchter
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- The McConnell Foundation
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- John & Patsy McIntosh

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Effie Yeaw Nature Center Receives Donation from County of Sacramento

On Wednesday, December 9, Sacramento County Supervisor Susan Peters presented a check for \$5,000 to the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. When Supervisor Peters presented the check, she explained that the Nature Center and the service it provides to the community is truly an asset, and the hard work and dedication needed to keep the Center open is very admirable and much appreciated.

The Nature Center was formerly a unit of the Sacramento County Regional Parks, but in 2010 the County declined to continue funding the Center due to devastating shortfalls in the General Fund. The American River Natural History Association, the non-profit support group for the Center, stepped forward to accept fiscal and management responsibility for the Nature Center, which will soon celebrate its 40th year of service to the Sacramento Region. The popular visitor center with its live animals, interactive museum, and beautiful nature preserve is now reliant on donations and grants to remain open.

The funds presented by Supervisor Peters were forwarded by her from the County's Transient Occupancy Tax which is collected by hotels and other visitor lodging establishments. ■



left to right: Nature Center Development Director Betty Cooper, American River Natural History Association President Liz Williamson, County Supervisor Susan Peters, Nature Center Executive Director Paul Tebbel. Photo by Joey Johnson.

- Sylvia Mehlhaff
in memory of Patricia Richardson
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- Ella & Roger Warloe
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in memory of Ted Robinson;
in honor of Nancy Oprsal;
in honor of Peter Hayes
- Deborah Watson
- Amy Watts
- Laurie Weir
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- The Wroblicky Family
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- Trudy Ziebell

Doersch Memorial Offers \$7500 in Scholarships for Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts

For each of the next three years, five \$500 grants are available for Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops who would otherwise be unable to attend programs offered at the EYNC. Whether scouts are unable to attend due to lack of finances, transportation or adult chaperones, programs will be provided free of charge at the EYNC or another location.

Programs will be offered on days and times that do not impact the school programs and when staffing resources are not allocated to large events at the center.

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts already reach out to young people in schools and neighborhoods with low-income challenges. The coordinator of such efforts in the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts will be the liaison between troop leaders and ARNHA, who will provide information about available activities and programs and dates.

Funding for this program comes from the Dr. Kemp Doersch Memorial Fund of donations in memory of Dr. Doersch.

ARNHA board members and EYNC staff hope that the generous Doersch Memorial will help young people who might never have experiences close to nature learn more about nature and become the stewards of nature in the future. ■

The Nature of Things Series Continues with Spring Programs

The Nature of Things lecture and field study series for adults will continue this spring.

Rich Howard will offer Beginning Birding for the Spring with lectures on March 21 and 28 and April 4 and 11 and field studies on April 2 and 16.

Kate Marianchild author of Secrets of an Oak Woodland, will be back by popular demand with a lecture and field study on May 14.

Additional speakers are Michael Starkey on frogs, Shawna Protze on raptors of the Sacramento region, and Tim Au-Young and members from California Fly Fishers Unlimited on fly fishing as a sport and art.

Please see SacNatureCenter.net for more details and registration. ■



Ask a Naturalist

Q: "Will we get to see a beaver today?"

A: EYNC Associate Naturalist Heather Gabel:

"It is a question that many visitors to the Nature Area ask after I point out the chew marks on the two cottonwood trees that stand near the river's edge. Beavers are nocturnal, and the chance of seeing one in the middle of the day is slim to none. But one day in late December, the odds were defied, and as I led a tour group down to the American River we spotted a beaver! We were able to watch it for several minutes as it swam upstream, stopping once on the island to readjust the branch it carried in its mouth, before resuming its journey.

"Beavers are excellent swimmers, but as North America's largest rodent, they aren't as graceful on land. Therefore, they tend to stay very near the water in case they need to make a quick getaway from a predator.

"But they must venture onto land to retrieve wood. It is not only their source of food, but also their building supplies. A beaver will use its strong teeth, which are yellow due to high iron levels, to fell a tree. Perhaps the beaver we saw was taking the branch back to build or repair its lodge, which may be home to six or more family members, consisting of parents, yearlings and kits.

"Whenever you're in the nature preserve, keep your eyes open. You never know what you might see!" ■

CRITTER COUNT RESULTS

by William E. Avery, Ph.D.

The 31st annual ARNHA Wildlife Count, sometimes affectionately known as the Critter Count, was completed on December 5th, 2015. Eleven of twelve historical teams participated again, but this actually included 17 subteams and 57 birders. This represented 250 person hours (number of birders multiplied by time spent on count) which was down from 304 last year (2014) and 257 the year before (2013). We have some new team leaders and a few new birders, and we would do well to recruit a few more. Together, we observed 20,257 birds in 116 species compared with 19,756 and 19,166 birds (122 and 111 species) in 2014 and 2013 respectively.

Overall, the results were fairly typical with a few exceptions, possibly due to the fact that it was once again the warmest year on record and another year of drought. Water flow was low again at about 540 cfs.

Nearly all the common bird species were seen again this year. These included such reliable favorites as Canada Geese, Mallards, Wood Ducks, Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, California Quail, Great Blue Herons, Pied-billed Grebes, Spotted Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, Belted Kingfishers, Acorn Woodpeckers, Oak Titmice, Song

Sparrows and many more. Some less common sightings reported this year included the Common Yellowthroat, Virginia Rail, Red Crossbill, and a Scaly-breasted Munia. Canvasbacks were noted in great abundance again this year, 4,500, on the Quarry Pond near Discovery Park. A complete data summary can be provided upon request.

Notable absences this year included: the Northern Harrier, Common Gallinule, Mew Gull, Tree Swallow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Savanna Sparrow. A possible decline in abundance occurred for Common Mergansers with counts dropping from 503 to 214 to 180 over the last three years. White-throated Swifts observed declined from 101 to 87 to 54. Declines were also noted for Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and White-crowned Sparrows. Nobody spotted a Bald Eagle or a Common Loon this year.

It is interesting to note that Tree Swallows were absent and White-throated Swifts declined suggesting that these species may be similarly affected by the high temperatures and drought conditions.

Other wildlife observed included 72 Mule Deer (18 bucks, 47 doe and 7 fawns), 51 Western Gray Squirrels, 102

Eastern Fox Squirrels, 21 California Ground Squirrels, 3 Coyotes, 4 River Otters, 54 feral housecats (mostly in the areas around Discovery Park), 9 Black-tailed Jackrabbits, and 5 Beavers. Herpetofauna included 3 Western Pond Turtles, 3 Red-eared Sliders, and 11 Pacific Tree Frogs.

Some of the birders ran into notable concentrations of homeless encampments in the areas adjacent to Discovery Park, Camp Pollock, and Cal Expo. These encampments seemed especially treacherous with much human waste, debris, and several pit bull dogs, to name a few of the hazards encountered. A letter has been sent to the city council expressing a wish that the city might soon attend to this growing problem that threatens both wildlife and humans wishing to enjoy the American River Parkway.

Please consider participating in the wildlife count this coming December!

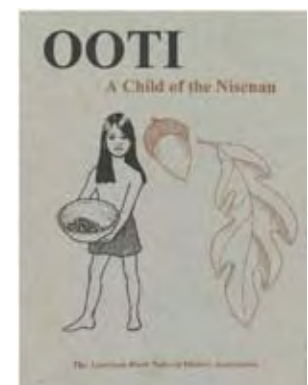
William Avery, a frequent contributor to The Acorn, is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, CSUS. He recently completed artwork for Field Guide to California Rivers, UC Press, 2012, and Field Guide to Oregon Rivers, OSU Press, 2014. ■

Ooti: Child of the Nisenan on sale at the Smithsonian in Washington D. C.

Ooti: Child of the Nisenan, the ARNHA book about a Nisenan family who might have lived in our region before the arrival of Europeans, is now part of the special program at the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D. C.

At the Museum, the month of February and a special public event in the Potomac Atrium on the last weekend of the month celebrate American Indian languages and American Indian storytelling.

Copies of the Maidu creation story as written in *Ooti: Child of the Nisenan* will be free to the public during the public event, and the book will be sold in the Smithsonian Enterprises Gift Shop. ■



Winter Volunteer Recognition Party

A filled-to-capacity EYNC Assembly Building was the site of the February 4 Winter Volunteer Recognition Party hosted by EYNC staff. An evening buffet served homemade hearty soups, salads, breads, and desserts. Several volunteers won door prizes.

ARNHA President Liz Williamson, Executive Director Paul Tebbel, and Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Washington thanked volunteers and reminded attendees that their creativity, dedication, and generosity are what make EYNC programs robust, interesting, and successful.

Forty-eight active volunteers received service awards. Twenty-two active volunteers have served well over 1,000 hours. Three new members have volunteered at least 1,000 hours each. The full list of honorees follows.

Well Over 1000 hours --and still Volunteering!

Jackie DeLu • Docent/Board Member
Walter Dong • Docent
Marilyn Escobar • Receptionist
Pete Hayes • Associate Board Member/Writer
Elaine Hujambojoie • Clerical/Receptionist
Claudia Hulbe • Board Member/Mailing
Gregg Hutchison • Maintenance
Joey Johnson • Fund Raising/Board Member
Molly Keller • Artist/Book Sales/Associate Board
Peggy Kennedy • Board Member/Publications
Jennifer Kerr • Docent
Suzanne Krale • Receptionist
Beverly Lewis • Receptionist
Don Mongeau • Board Member
Nancy Oprsal • Docent
Diane Ramsey • Receptionist
Margaret Rogers • Docent/Fund Raising
Bill Spaller • Board Member
Linda Thomas • Docent/Special Events/Associate Board
Larry Washington • Board Member
Betsy Weiland • Special Events
Liz Williamson • Board Member/Animal Care

Just Reached 1000 hours

Susie Abbott • Docent
Noah Baygell • ARNHA Board Member
Nancy Westlund • Receptionist

Volunteered over 500 hours

Abi Allred • Animal Care
Marsha Bedwell • ARNHA Board Member
Jaclyn DeWeese • Animal Care
Rachel Freund • Animal Care
Jean Marcy • Docent
Phyllis McGrath • Docent/Animal Care
Deborah Moskovitz • Docent
Trudy Ziebell • Habitat Restoration

Volunteered over 250 hours

Sue Brown • Docent
Bob Brown • Docent
Stephanie Cyr • Animal Care
Bob McCleary • Docent/Board Member
Karin Richardson • Receptionist
Melissa Shumate • Docent
Dorothy Wagner • Receptionist

Volunteered over 160 hours

Mike Cardwell • Research/Maintenance
Daniel Deleon • Animal Care
Denise Garland Cardwell • Receptionist
Chris Hulbe • Mailings

Volunteered over 100 hours

Jean Burke • Receptionist
Jay Kumar • Animal Care/Nature Camp
Delia Ramirez • Animal Care
George Wagner • Animal Care



Milkweed in the Gardens at Effie Yeaw



story by Rachel Cowan

Bird and Breakfast 2016

Mark your calendars, and make your reservations soon for ARNHA's annual Bird and Breakfast, Saturday, March 19, and Sunday, March 20, 2016. This very popular event, a collaboration between ARNHA and Sacramento Audubon, features a morning of birdwatching guided by some of Sacramento's best birders, followed by a delicious breakfast, excellent coffee, and warm camaraderie, all to benefit the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

For several weeks prior to the event, volunteer guides from Sacramento Audubon and EYNC scout the EYNC Nature Study Area (NSA) for nests, migrating species and local rarities. On Saturday morning, the guides lead groups on a 90-minute walk through the NSA, followed by a breakfast buffet provided by our excellent volunteer chefs. The Saturday event is open to birders, ages 12 and older - no extensive birding experience necessary!

Sunday morning offers birding for families with younger birders as well. Participants can choose from an Adult Bird Walk lasting approximately 90 minutes, or a Family Bird Walk, for approximately an hour. The Family Bird Walk is open to ages 6 and older. The Sunday event features a traditional delicious pancake breakfast prepared by Carmichael Kiwanis, and a nature-themed craft for children.

Both events begin at 8 a.m. The Saturday Bird Walk for ages 12 and up is \$40 per person General Admission; \$35 for ARNHA and Sacramento Audubon members. The Sunday Event is \$40 per person ages 12 and up General Admission; \$35 for ARNHA and Sacramento Audubon members; and, \$10 per person ages 6 to 11 General Admission; \$8 for ARNHA and Audubon members. All proceeds benefit the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

This event typically sells out. For information and reservations, go to naturecenter.net or call 489-4918. ■

While spring does not officially begin until March 20, the staff at Effie Yeaw Nature Center note signs of spring as early as late January. By mid-to-late March, visitors will observe flowers, nesting behavior in birds, and emerging Pipevine Swallowtail butterflies that overwintered in their chrysalids. April is a great month to observe the Pipevine Swallowtails in their larval stage as black and red caterpillars become more visible among the Dutchman's Pipevine as the month progresses. However, the famous Monarch Butterfly caterpillars will not be observed in the gardens around Effie Yeaw until later in April when the leaves of its milkweed host plant are large enough to support the voracious caterpillars.

Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*) is a native milky-sapped perennial with up to three-foot tall stems and broad green-gray leaves protected by their fine woolly hairs. This plant is late to the spring party in the gardens around Effie Yeaw, but once it grows from its rootstock you can feel the soft new leaves. In early summer, you can find aromatic pink compound flowers on display like a firework, but be sure to check for pollinators before you get in close for a smell! If you are lucky, you may spy a black, white, and yellow Monarch caterpillar munching away in the underside of a leaf, out of the intense heat of the sun.



Photo by Rachel Cowan

Rachael Cowan is an Associate Naturalist at Effie Yeaw Nature Center and a certified UC Naturalist. From Grass Valley, she has a lifelong passion for the natural world and science education. ■



Photo by Thom Parrish

GALA, from page 1

Center's website: www.sacfinearts.org/exhibitionEntryForms.html Artists of **all media**, including fabrics, ceramics, glass, wood, metal, mixed media, paint, and collage are encouraged to enter the show.

After the month-long show at the Fine Arts Center, all art works will be moved to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center for the Art Where Wild Things Are Gala and Art Auction.

This year's Gala and Art Auction will be held on Saturday, May 21, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the beautiful grounds of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, along the American River Parkway. This is ARNHA's largest fundraiser. It benefits the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and its environmental education programs for youth.

This grand event, which sells out every year, draws arts patrons and nature-lovers, as well as local community leaders. This year's honorary chairs are Russ Solomon, founder of Tower Records, and Estelle Saltzman, board chairwoman of Runyon, Saltzman & Einhorn, Inc.

Gala guests will be treated to an exquisite supper by Jackson Catering, local wines, music, silent and live auctions of juried artwork, including original pieces by some of Sacramento's most esteemed artists

Tickets on sale early-April at www.SacNatureCenter.net.

Since January 2013, Barbara Lezon has served as Development Associate at EYNC, handling the Nature Center's marketing and communications. ■



Forster's Tern, an elegant flier, is seen primarily in the spring and to a lesser extent in the fall.

The first all-color edition of
The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region
with 550 illustrated species
is available at the Discovery Shop
inside the Effie Yeaw Nature Center,
and selected local bookstores,
for \$16.95.
or online at www.arnha.org



Superflower

If proof is needed that spring is upon the Sacramento Valley, look for the golden waves of mustard springing up along the roadsides, in open fields and between rows of fruit trees. Now there is a floral superstar!

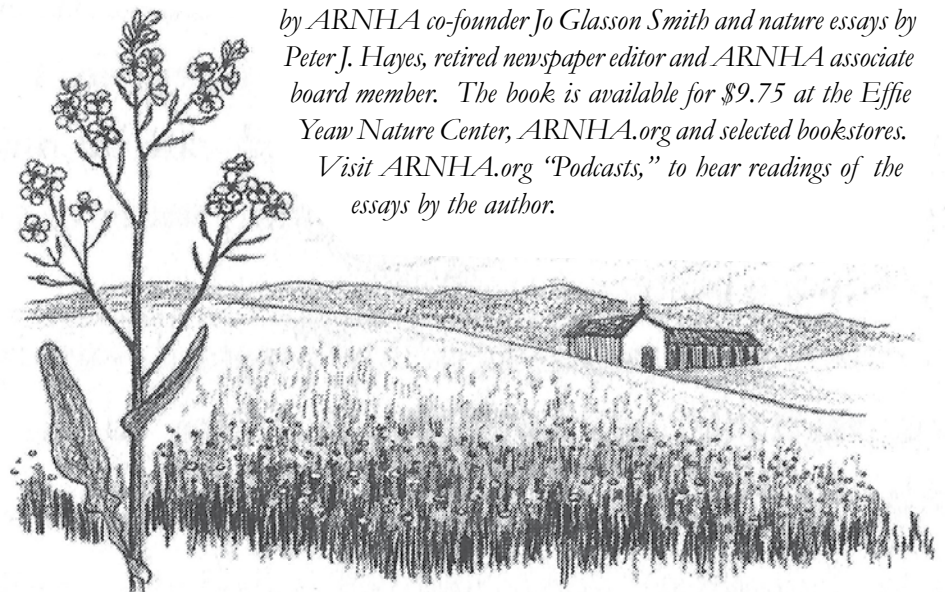
Mustard is early and it is edible; it is tall and it is tough and above all it is showy. Its slender stems soar up to six feet high, topped by clusters of flowers as yellow as daffodils. Each flower has four petals shaped like a cross, recalling the story that the European plant followed the path of the mission fathers as they moved up California beginning in 1769.

The wide-ranging mustard belongs to a big family. It has more than 2,000 cousins, including such garden flowers as sweet alyssum, candytuft, and stock, and vegetables such as cabbage, broccoli, radish and cauliflower.

Many people gather tender young mustard greens for the dinner table, using them raw in salads or cooked like spinach, for a highly nutritious vegetable. Later in the season, homemade table mustard can be made by grinding wild mustard seeds and adding water or vinegar to produce a paste.

So let us salute the yellow mustard—wildflower, herb, vegetable or weed—on its return to the valley landscape.

Reprinted from An American River Journal, published by the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA). It features illustrations by ARNHA co-founder Jo Glasson Smith and nature essays by Peter J. 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 bookstores. Visit ARNHA.org "Podcasts," to hear readings of the essays by the author.



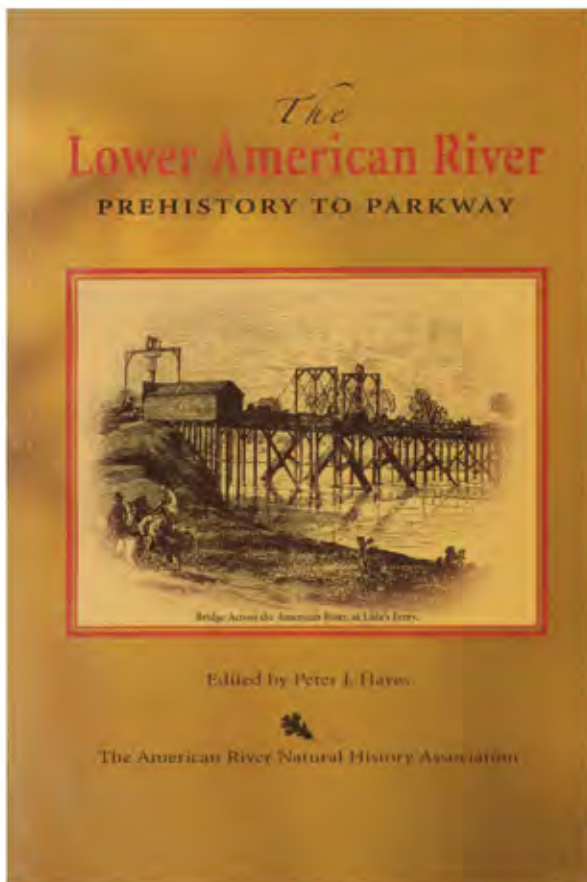
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ARNHA Calendar of Events

- **Spring Nature Camps**
March 21 through 25
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see page 5)
 - **Nature of Things Series**
Rich Howard **Beginning Birding for the Spring**
March 21 and 28 and April 4 and 11
Kate Marianchild **Secrets of the Oak Woodland**
May 14
Effie Yeaw Nature Center (see page 9)
 - **Parkway Cleanup**
Saturday, April 9, 9 am to noon
Sign up at volunteer@arpf.org or call (916) 486-2773
Ancil Hoffman Park
 - **Where the Wild Things Are Call to Artists**
Entry closes April 2, 2016
Accepted artists notified April 11; Exhibit May 3-20
Sacramento Fine Arts Center (see page 1)
- See SacNatureCenter.net for more information.**



GOLD! GOLD! GOLD FROM THE AMERICAN RIVER!

A “pure gold” account of those who tapped the riches of the lower American River.

Here are the Nisenan, the early trappers, the gold-seekers, the growers, the entrepreneurs, the empire builders and the latter-day heroes who still protect and preserve the 30-mile-long parkway.

Dozens of vintage photographs, drawings, a historic map and timeline are included.

134 pages, \$14.95 at the Discovery Shop inside the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and local bookstores.