

Celebrating the Laguna Uplands Preserve: A 20-Year Success Story

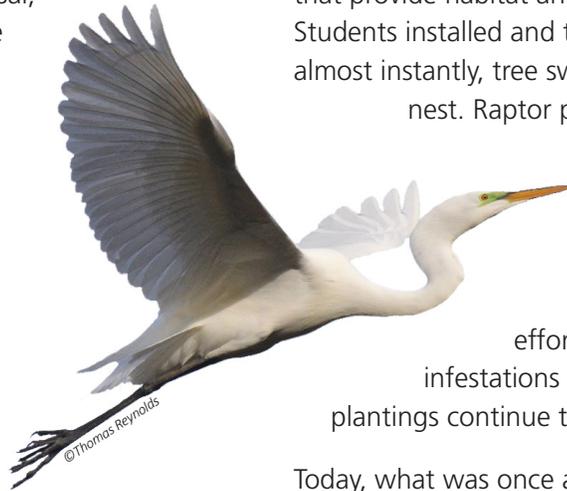
In 1981, a residential housing project consisting of 80 condos was proposed for the 8 acres of open space behind the former Palm Drive Hospital in Sebastopol. The City of Sebastopol rejected the proposal, plus 5 more similar proposals over the next 16 years. Each time, concerned citizens fought to preserve the site's wildlife habitat and natural beauty. By 1995, the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation, along with the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCOAPSD) and private donors, had secured enough funding to purchase a conservation easement on the property to prevent future development. In 1997, the property was generously donated to the Laguna Foundation for permanent protection and future restoration.

When the Laguna Foundation received the Laguna Uplands property, it was crisscrossed with fencing, barren and over-grazed. In 2003, a restoration plan was drawn up, the sheep and fences were removed and volunteers

began the restoration effort by planting hundreds of native trees, shrubs, grasses and sedges. Brush and logs were brought in to mimic the natural features that provide habitat and encourage wildlife to return. Students installed and tended bird nesting boxes and, almost instantly, tree swallows and bluebirds came to nest. Raptor perches were erected and kestrels now had a great vantage point from which to hunt their prey. Dedicated volunteers and Laguna Foundation staff have continued the restoration efforts ever since. Blackberry and thistle infestations are kept in check and the native plantings continue to be tended.

Today, what was once a barren field is now a thriving wildlife habitat area. The little seedlings that were planted in the early stages of the restoration efforts have grown into tall trees teeming with wildlife. In addition to the bird boxes, many other bird species can now nest in the nooks and branches of native trees and shrubs. Deer, coyote and jackrabbits pass through the Uplands and take refuge there when the Laguna floodwaters rise. Badgers also

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The improvements to the landscape and wildlife habitats shown here are taken at the same location within the Laguna Uplands Preserve. Along with the staff of the Laguna Foundation, this transformation was possible only through the hard work and financial support of hundreds of volunteers and community members.

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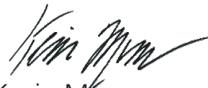
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Amphibian Ambassadors

If you live near a wetland this time of year, you're serenaded by the calls of the male Sierran treefrog (*Pseudacris sierra*). This tiny 1-2" amphibian with stunning green, brown and gray markings is the perfect ambassador for wetland wildlife. Just as wetlands connect land and water, this frog's life connects both aquatic and terrestrial habitats. The females lay their clutch of more than 500 eggs in shallow water, where tadpoles take 2-3 months to mature. However, adults spend much of their life hiding and hunting in terrestrial vegetation, such as shrubs, grasses and occasionally small trees. These frogs require conservation of our lands and waters.

We can use their raucous calls as both inspiration and a cautionary reminder; inspiring to know Sonoma County has large populations of this wetland animal, and a reminder that frogs are disappearing at an alarming rate across the globe. Habitat destruction, water pollution and an exotic fungus have reduced or eliminated frogs from whole ecosystems. Their loud voices in the Laguna watershed remind us of the internationally recognized wetland here in our own backyard, while giving us a sense of what could be lost if we're not vigilant in our efforts to restore and conserve our Laguna.

The best conservation requires a foot in each of two worlds; one foot planted in a place of hope, optimism and vision, and the other grounded in the pragmatic understanding of the problems and threats that face our environment. We can use our local frog song as a symbol of wetland conservation—a way to both celebrate our successes and stay engaged with our challenges.



Kevin Munroe
Executive Director

Nature's Corner: Coho Salmon

Dr. Wendy Trowbridge, Director of Restoration and Conservation Science Programs



Each fall, coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) used to travel upstream from the ocean to the Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed to spawn in Mark West and Santa Rosa Creeks in large numbers. Around mid-November they would begin gathering at the mouth of the Russian River near Jenner waiting for the rainy season to begin so they could start their migration. Once they reached their spawning grounds high in the Mayacama Mountains they would spawn and then

die, contributing important nutrients to the creeks and forests. In the spring, baby fry, emerged from the gravel and head for the shallow stream edges. Unlike other Pacific Salmon, coho spend a whole year in freshwater before heading out to the ocean the following spring. This makes them particularly vulnerable to stream alterations and drought. As a result, coho are on the Federal Endangered Species List. The last few drought years have been hard on the coho, but Don Clausen Fish Hatchery below Warm Springs Dam raises and releases young coho throughout the Russian River watershed including in Mark West Creek maintaining the population through the drought.

Laguna Uplands *Continued from page 1*

frequent the Laguna Uplands. Although these nocturnal animals are rarely seen, we can tell that they have been hunting in the area by the large holes that appear overnight, so watch where you step!

The Laguna Uplands Preserve is adjacent to the Laguna Wildlife Habitat (Calif. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Brown Farm (Santa Rosa), and the Laguna Wildlife Preserve (Sebastopol). Together these properties create the largest continuous block of protected land in the Laguna.

Though the Uplands Preserve is the only property the Laguna Foundation owns, it is one of many sites we work to encourage conservation and restore healthy ecological systems. Our restoration work provides wildlife habitat, improves water quality, supports and protects biodiversity and endangered species, and provides an "outdoor classroom" for children and adults. We all depend on a healthy watershed. Not just to live, but to live well.

Support the Laguna - Join Today!

Memberships fuel our inspiring, science-based programs to improve the Laguna's ecosystems.

We have been able to transform much of the Laguna wetlands from landfills and sewage ponds of the past into healthy and bountiful habitat. More than 200 acres along rivers and creeks have been restored and are now home to over 50,000 native trees, shrubs and grasses.

Memberships fund inspired environmental education programs. Our *Learning Laguna* program gives children an alternative to screen-time and connects them with nature. This school year, this important program will serve 54 classes and 1,500 students. Memberships will help us expand service to additional grade levels and under-served populations.

Clean water, healthy soil, restored habitat, and inspired children and adults...the Laguna Foundation is committed to making a lasting difference in our community. But, we can't achieve our goals without you. Join today and your membership will help to ensure a thriving Laguna.

There are national and global challenges that daily come to the attention of us all. We hope you will view our work in the Laguna as an opportunity to respond to these challenges and make your contribution on a local level.

CELEBRATE THE SUCESS STORY OF THE LAGUNA UPLANDS PRESERVE

APRIL 23, 2017, 5-7PM
FREE MEMBER EVENT!



Laguna Uplands Preserve

(Behind Sonoma West Medical Center)



Schedule of Events

- 5:00pm - Welcome and Refreshments
- 5:30pm - Brief Presentation
- 6:00pm - Plant a Sedge
- 6:30pm - Evening Bird Stroll

All 2017 members are invited to attend this celebration. *Renew your membership or join today!* Simply return the enclosed envelope with your donation or visit us online. More details are available on our website at LagunaFoundation.org

Please RSVP by April 15:

To Bev Scotland at (707) 527-9277, ext. 106
or email Bev@LagunaFoundation.org

For membership information:

Contact Nancy Hauptmann at (707) 527-9277, ext. 109
or email Nancy@LagunaFoundation.org

Learning Laguna: A Win, Win, Win... Win

Christine Fontaine, Director of Education Programs



Learning Laguna Docent, Angela, shows a group of students several nests built by birds that can be found in the Laguna watershed.

The amazing team of *Learning Laguna* docents are gearing up for the spring semester and the more than 600 children they will inspire during classroom visits and Laguna field trips. Also this spring, we are conducting the 10-week docent training course, preparing new community members to join the Laguna education team. Trainees will spend more than 60 hours learning through presentations, hands-on interaction with the *Learning Laguna* activities and experiencing the Laguna during field outings. Additionally, each person will spend another 15 hours shadowing working docents in the classroom and in the field. That is a lot of teaching, learning and engagement going on!

This circle of interaction between engaging community members as Laguna teachers who support the schools and inspire children is a winning combination. School teachers, some of whom have been with the program since its inception in 1999, request the program to help meet the Next Generation Science Standards by supplying their students with real-life, close-to-home experiences. Students are inspired by their Laguna-specific activities and docents are rewarded by their meaningful contributions and the Laguna sense of place they develop.

I invite you to pause for a moment to envision the potential and possibility of those individual and community connections and what they create for the future of the Laguna. Think of *Learning Laguna* as a win for teachers, a win for students, a win for the docents, and a win for the Laguna!

Our Community Programs are Soaring!

Have you ever looked around Sonoma County and wondered why the Laguna is here? Or, where is the Laguna exactly? Have you been wondering which bird species spend spring in the Laguna watershed, or why others leave this time of year? Perhaps you are curious about the creek near your home and its connection to the Laguna. Maybe, you are sometimes so taken by your experiences in the natural world that you want to learn how to express your awe through poetry, or with a paint brush or colored pencil.

Look no further. Fun learning adventures await you at the Laguna Environmental Center! From enjoyable birding outings to reflective, creative days, to stimulating presentations by experts, we strive to create engaging experiences that help you deepen your relationship to our shared home environment.

Last year, more than 50 programs were offered and more than 2,500 people joined us for a learning adventure in our community education programs. This year, we plan to grow the offerings by bringing back proven favorites while introducing new instructors and field experiences. We are currently researching new citizen science programs to bring you even closer to the wildlife and natural systems all around that make Sonoma County a special place to live. We invite you to stretch your wings and join us soon!

For more information on our upcoming walks, talks and classes, check out page 5 or visit our website at LagunaFoundation.org.



The juncus cheese basket workshop with Charlie Kennard (left) and the plant identification workshop with Peter Warner (right) were a couple of the many workshops that we hosted this past year.

Upcoming Community Education Events

Walks, Talks and Workshops Galore!

Get to know your Laguna watershed. More events added regularly to our website. Make sure we have your email address so we can keep you up to date on these and other learning adventures.



Spring Birding in the Laguna

Bird Watching with Lisa Hug
Sundays: March 26, April 23,
and May 21.
8:30am-1:00pm
\$45 per class.
Pre-registration required.

Laguna Environmental Center Open House and California Native Plant Society Plant Sale

Saturday, May 13, 10:00am-4:00pm
FREE. No RSVP necessary.

Spring Fling: Hike & Picnic in the Laguna Wilds, Laguna de Santa Rosa – Past, Present and Future

Natural History walk, talk, and picnic with Denise Cadman
Friday, May 19, 5:30pm-8:30pm
FREE. Pre-registration required.

Family Ties: String-Making for All

Cordage Workshop with Charlie Kennard
Saturday, April 8, 9:30am-1:00pm
FREE. Pre-registration required.

Sonoma County Drive-By Geology

Presentation with Dr. Jane Nielson
Thursday, April 20, 7:00pm-8:30pm
\$10. Pre-registration required.

Reimagining Nature: The Development of Ecological Consciousness in the U.S.

Presentation with Dr. John Smihula
Thursday, April 27, 7:00pm-8:30pm
\$10. Pre-registration required.



Laguna Watershed Perspectives

Hike at Crane Creek
Regional Park
Saturday, May 27
9:00am-1:00pm
Details and registration
coming soon.

Close-up and Macro Photography

Workshop with Susan and Neil Silverman
Saturday, June 3
Details and registration coming soon.

Full-Moon Irwin Creek Walk and Picnic

Natural History Adventure with Kevin Munroe
Friday, June 9, 5:30pm-9:00pm
Details and registration coming soon.

Laguna Headwaters Exploration in Cotati

Walk with Jenny Blaker and Michael Knappman
Saturday, June 17
Details and registration coming soon.



Day of the Child

Special Open House
Saturday, April 29
11:00am-3:00pm
FREE. No RSVP necessary.
Fun for the whole family!

Writing the Watershed

Poetry and Prose workshop with Elizabeth Herron
Saturday, May 6, 10:00am-4:30pm
Details and registration coming soon.

Delta Pond Rookery Walks

Visit a Double-crested cormorant nesting site!
Sunday, May 7, Two walk times: 8:00am and 9:00am
\$15. Pre-registration required.



Colored Pencil Techniques:

Drawing Nature

Workshop with Nina Antze
Saturday, June 24.
Details and registration coming soon.

All events take place or begin at Heron Hall, at the Laguna Environmental Center at 900 Sanford Road, Santa Rosa, Ca.
To register or for more information, please visit our website at www.LagunaFoundation.org
or, contact Anita Smith, Public Education Manager at (707) 527-9277, ext. 110 or Anita@LagunaFoundation.org.

Learning From Our Native Plant Demonstration Garden

Maggie Hart, Outreach Coordinator



Our Native Plant Garden isn't just beautiful landscaping, it's a thriving ecosystem that provides food and shelter for native birds, pollinators and small animals. Come visit us to learn more about how native plants can be used in your own backyard!

After the construction of Great Blue Heron Hall was completed in 2012, staff and volunteers started working right away to develop the landscaping. We created a Demonstration Garden to educate our community about the benefits of planting with native species to create healthy wildlife habitat. Our 4-acre landscape now includes native wildflowers, grasses, sedges, trees, shrubs, forbes and herbaceous plants, as well as 14 heritage fruit trees, a berry patch and a native plant nursery. The site also includes a living willow tunnel and playscape for children to explore, a wetland demonstration pond and swale, and an observation deck for bird watching or just taking in the scenic viewscape.

Our Demonstration Garden is open Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm and during special events serving as an "outdoor classroom" for visitors. We also offer

educational events, summer camps, special tours for senior centers, garden clubs and more!

The landscape is thriving: swallows, bluebirds, finches and killdeer are all regular nesters on site. Several species of snakes have been spotted, and even quail are here taking advantage of all of the available food and shelter.

We have come a long way in cultivating our garden, *and yet we have so much more to do!* We invite you to join us at one of our Garden Volunteer Days held every first Friday of the month, from 9am–Noon. We also host gardening days for corporate groups, community organizations, and schools. We welcome collaboration on all fronts!

For more information on how you can help in our Native Plant Demonstration Garden, see page 7.

Thank you volunteers for all your incredible time and effort in supporting our Demonstration Garden!

Habitat landscaper Tony McGuigan and the Orchard View School students, certified arborist Diane Van Anda, landscape architect Greg Arthur, gardening and food production consultant Wendy Krupnick, willow tunnel artist Tony Black, bridge builder Peter of Beaman Designs, Garden Day volunteers, Laguna Stewards (formerly known as Laguna Keepers), Team Prunus, Guy Smith, Tom Lambert, Greg Arthur of Passemar Electric, and Denise

Cadman and Stuart Schroeder of Stone Horse Farm.

Thank you donors for making this Demonstration Garden financially possible!

The Rotary Clubs: Sebastopol Noon, Sebastopol Sunrise, Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa West, and Santa Rosa Sunrise; Sebastopol Ace Hardware, New Endeavor Foundation, the City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma County Water Agency, plus many individual donations of landscape materials!



Garden Volunteer Days

First Friday of the Month, 9am – Noon
Laguna Environmental Center
900 Sanford Road (at Occidental Rd.), Santa Rosa, CA

Share your passion for pollinators by helping our native plant garden thrive! Volunteers are essential in beautifying our site. Activities include planting, weeding, spreading wood chips and general site cleanup.

Enjoy a morning getting your hands in the soil and making new friends while learning about the many native plants that can be found in the L.E.C's garden.

No experience necessary, just a willingness to get dirty. Training and tools will be provided, plus abundant and hearty snacks! An RSVP is only necessary if you are planning on bringing a group of five or more. Only heavy rain cancels.

For more information, please contact Maggie Hart, Outreach Coordinator at (707) 527.9277, ext. 100 or by email at MaggieHart@LagunaFoundation.org.

Tool Drive!

We are in need of used or new tools that are in good working condition. Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors!

wheelbarrows	hand pruners
chainsaws	hula hoes
pickaxes	digging bars
mattocks	rubber boots
general shop tools	wire brushes
pliers	cleaning brushes
bench vice grip	heavy-duty flashlights
wire cutters	large chest coolers
sheet metal cutters	10 gal. water dispensers
ratchet set	ladders
allen wrench set	extension cords

You can also purchase these and other much needed items from our Amazon Wish List! Search for "Laguna Foundation" under List Registries.

Dropping off tools? Questions?

Contact Paul Weber, Restoration Field Supervisor by email at Paul@LagunaFoundation.org.

Current Art Exhibit: Birds of the Laguna Mixed Media by Diana Majumdar

On display through April 27, 2017



This gorgeous exhibit in our Great Blue Heron Hall features local artist Diana Majumdar's mixed media and encaustic paintings of birds and landscapes of the Laguna de Santa Rosa. In this show, Diana explores the connections between humans and birds in Sonoma County.

*"Birds are all around us. We live together.
My works are inspired by their beauty and
our coexistence." -D. Mahumdar*

The gallery in Heron Hall is open to the public Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm, but because of the variety of Hall uses during the week, **please call ahead** to make sure the gallery is available for viewing. (Adrienne Gause, Administrative Manager: 707-527-9277, x107)

Upcoming Exhibit: "FAUNA" Paintings and Mosaics by Stacey Schuett

On display May 5 through August 29, 2017

Opening Reception on Saturday, May 20, 3:00pm-5:00pm. FREE. No RSVP necessary.



Founded in 1989, the Laguna Foundation is a place-based organization focused on the Laguna de Santa Rosa. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with the mission to restore and conserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and to inspire public appreciation of this Wetland of International Importance. The Foundation conducts educational programs, implements conservation science and restoration projects, works with landowners and public agencies to protect and improve Laguna resources, and advocates for appropriately managed opportunities for the public to enjoy the Laguna.

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Rent Heron Hall

Heron Hall is a great place to hold your event! With sweeping views of Mount Saint Helena and the Laguna, our beautiful building offers an easily configured space with AV and Wi-Fi, outdoor patios, landscaped grounds, and a caterer-friendly kitchen. Ideal for meetings, professional gatherings, retreats, workshops, etc. All rental proceeds benefit the Laguna Foundation, and support our restoration, conservation and educational programs.

Details available on our website at LagunaFoundation.org.



California Quail. ©Michael Leahy

Planned Giving

Help ensure that the Laguna is a healthy part of our community forever by remembering the Laguna Foundation in your will or estate plan.

Let us know if you have designated a planned gift to the Laguna Foundation. All Laguna Legacy Society Members will be invited to our annual Legacy luncheon. For more information please contact Bev Scotland at (707) 527-9277, ext. 106 or email Bev@LagunaFoundation.org.

