

bird watching walks on **Saturday, May 13th, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.:**

Nanci Adams will lead a walk along the paved East Struve Slough trail that is wheelchair accessible. You will also see some of our restoration work in progress.

Hugo Ceja's bi-lingual walk across Department of Fish and Wildlife lands to West Struve Slough requires walking over some uneven terrain and is a great venture out into one of the more wild areas of the Watsonville Slough System.

For both walks be sure to wear layers, bring binoculars, hat, sunscreen, and water.

Both trips will meet at the Wetlands Educational Resource Center [map/directions](#). Car caravans will leave from there for each tour.

Admission is free but please reserve your spot online by [clicking here](#).

For more information, contact Debbie Diersch at debbie@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org

Celebrate Urban Birds Grant Funds Student Habitat Garden



Students working on Wetland Stewards Habitat Garden with Restoration Specialist Mary Paul

Watsonville Wetlands Watch recently received a [Celebrate Urban Birds](#) mini-grant from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to support the growth of our [Wetland Stewards](#) Habitat Garden, located just behind the Fitz Wetlands Educational Resource Center, on the Pajaro Valley High School (PVHS) campus.

The grant will support our Stewards and many PVHS students to create a habitat for local wildlife, particularly resident and

migratory birds that spend time at the campus. Led by our own stellar birder and Environmental Education Specialist Hugo Ceja, the students will remove non-native annual grasses and replace them with local native plants that provide nectar and seed food sources for birds and pollinating insects.

Art is a major component of the project and the grant will support the creation of plant signs and a continuing project of twelve new garden mosaic stepping stones, a legacy project of each graduating Wetland Steward alumnus. We also have a dream of adding a bird bath, fed by our greenhouse rainwater catchment system!

The culmination of the project will take place on Friday, May 12th, when we will host a school-wide all day event where students divide up to do art and restorations projects, as well as conduct 10-minute Celebrate Urban Birds citizen science bird surveys throughout the day.

Cycles of Restoration Field Trips



Elementary School Children at Bird Watching Station

As the spring wildflowers bloom next to the full sloughs, we come to the end of our Cycles of Restoration Program for this school year. Eight 5th grade classes from Amesti, Landmark and MacQuiddy Elementary Schools participated in our program this year.

Led by enthusiastic Environmental Educator Stephanie Rios, students visited the wetlands at West Struve Slough once in the fall and a second time this spring to collect native seed, pull invasive weeds, collect water quality data, monitor birds, observe aquatic invertebrates and plant natives into the habitat.

For most of the students, these field trips provided their first intimate experiences in the wetlands with hands-on science, and the opportunity to observe how a habitat changes with the seasons. The students also get to enjoy exercise, fresh air and a whole lot of fun, and altogether these experiences foster an appreciation of the outdoors and the wetlands.

We wish to thank the many docents who helped to facilitate these field trips!

City of Watsonville Treats Pinto Lake Algal Blooms



Photo by Catherine Bosley of HAB Aquatics LLC

Pinto Lake is a 120 acre lake located in Watsonville that develops massive algal blooms every fall with toxin levels typically exceeding State health criteria. As a result, the lake is closed for contact recreation during the bloom periods.

In response to these toxic algal blooms, The City of Watsonville, using the services of [HAB Aquatic Solutions](#), recently administered an alum (aluminum hydroxide) treatment in order to effectively manage these cyanobacteria. Also known as blue-green algae, the cyanobacteria severely impair water quality and pose a significant threat to aquatic habitat and human health.

Alum, which is safely used for treating drinking water, has been shown to be effective in controlling cyanobacteria. It controls the algal blooms by permanently binding onto the phosphates that feed the algae, thus creating a slurry that sinks to the bottom of the lake and continues to suppress the phosphorus in the sediment. Post treatment, the City will continue to monitor for cyanotoxins and expects to see clearer water and a reduction in algal scum this summer.

For more information about this important project, visit the [City of Watsonville website](#).

Monthly Community Restoration



Volunteers making a difference helping to restore our wetlands

On **Saturday, May 20** we invite you to help restore wetland habitat as part of our monthly Community Restoration events. We will work from 9 a.m. to noon, and we always make time for birding or a short hike around the wetlands. We supply the gloves, tools, and yummy snacks.

Meet at our Fitz Wetlands Educational Resource Center ([map/directions](#)).

For questions, please contact Mary Paul at mary@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org or 831-566-4938.

Happy Mother's Day!



Every year on the second Sunday of May we celebrate someone very special - our Mother! Although we love and honor our mothers quietly all through the year, Mother's Day is when we express just how special she truly is to us. We are grateful to her for taking such good care of us, providing us with a comfortable home, good food, and lots of love.

This can be said of our Mother Earth as well. Watsonville Wetlands Watch honors the earth by working to protect and restore the wetlands of the Pajaro Valley and providing environmental education to our youth who will carry love and respect for the earth forward into future generations.

Help support our mission and join us in celebration of Mother Earth on this very special day.

[Donate](#)

Thank you!

Watsonville Wetlands Watch advocates for wetland issues, educates elementary, middle, and high school students, restores degraded habitats, preserves what remains whole, and teaches appreciation for the unique beauty and life of the Pajaro Valley wetlands. In cooperation with numerous other agencies, we support studies of and planning for these sites.

Watsonville Wetlands Watch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, federal tax i.d. #77-0519882.

