



News from Watsonville Wetlands Watch

In This Issue

[Surveying, Measuring, Monitoring, and Collecting Data in the Wetlands](#)

[Celebrate National Trails Day with a Bike Ride](#)

[Wetlands Photography Tour](#)

[Presentation: Predator or Prey - What's for Dinner?](#)

[Tour - Exploring Special Spots on the Watsonville Sloughs](#)

[Kathy Fieberling Is Retiring](#)

[Volunteer Judy Verbeck - Healing Through Native Plant and Habitat Work](#)

[Saturday Community Restoration](#)

WWW Website

[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Education](#)

[Events](#)

[Restoration](#)

[Citizen Science](#)

[The Sloughs](#)

[You Can Help](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Editors:

Surveying, Measuring, Monitoring, and Collecting Data in the Wetlands



Environmental Education Specialist Hugo Ceja assisting students from PV High's W.A.T.C.H. class with identifying native and non-native plants

Springtime in the wetlands is a time of blooming plants, migratory birds, and sloughs full of water from the winter season. It is also the season when we head out to the wetlands to measure and monitor plant population changes in our restoration areas, conduct spring migratory bird surveys, and collect water quality data from throughout the slough system.

This year the Watsonville Wetlands Watch Restoration and Education staff teamed up to monitor the newly restored areas of the Upper Watsonville Slough Habitat Restoration Project as a part of our **Climate Change Adaptation Project**. This project's aim is to develop new strategies to restore resilient wetland habitats, wildlife and ecological services within a framework of climate driven environmental changes that are associated with sea-level rise, changes in the hydrology, and changing weather patterns. In order to track and measure these changes, data was collected on bird populations, water quality, and plant populations that are most vulnerable to changes in salinity associated with sea level rise and king tides. Monitoring is being used to assess the survival and adaptation of salt tolerant plant species that were planted over the previous two winters in freshwater wetlands,

experiencing varying amounts of increasing tidal influence.

In mid-May, the [W.A.T.C.H.](#) (Watsonville Area Teens Conserving Habitat) class and statistics classes from Pajaro Valley High school worked with our staff to track changes of survivorship and success of the restored plant populations. With the help of Watsonville Wetlands Watch staff, students in the classes identified the plant species using field guides, estimated the percent cover of those species in their monitoring areas, and recorded the data. They will then analyze the data in the classroom and create reports tracking the trends observed in the field. The statistics classes have worked on the plant population monitoring data collection as part of the [Project Tierra](#) program for the past 5 years and each year, the students prove to be quickly adept at identifying plant species and collecting informative data that has been used by restoration staff in adaptive management strategies.

Celebrate National Trails Day With a Bike Ride



The Watsonville Wetlands Watch, City of Watsonville, [Trips for Kids](#) and Watsonville residents will be celebrating **National Trails Day** with a bike ride on the City of Watsonville's paved wetlands trails.

This adventure will start out at the local Trips for Kids Launch Pad on Harvest Drive ([click for directions](#)), where participants will be suited up with safety gear and a loaner bike. Trips for Kids will be fitting our local youth individually with a bike, helmet, gloves, and providing skills instruction and even moral support! Space is limited and RSVP is required to reserve your spot. To RSVP please call the City of Watsonville Nature Center at (831) 768-1622.

Wetlands Photography Tour



White-tailed Kite taken by Efren Adalem

Watsonville Wetlands Watch docent Denise Murphy and her husband Efren Adalem are award winning photographers who love to take photos in the wetlands. On **Saturday, June 24th**, they will lead a wetlands photography tour where they will take you to some of their favorite spots, share photo tips, and show you how to see the wetlands through the eye of your camera.

Efren's sea otter photographs are in the Monterey Bay Aquarium's otter exhibit and he was a finalist in the International Photo Exhibit in Varna, Bulgaria in 2013. Collectively they have won 1st, 2nd and 3rd place at the Santa Cruz County Fair for Wildlife Photography, Professional Class and 1st place in the Monterey Bay Birding Festival photo contest. Visit <http://www.oohlookphotography.com/> to see their incredible photographs.

The two-hour tour starts at 4 p.m. Meet at the Fitz Wetlands Educational Resource Center ([map/directions](#)). The tour is free, but you must register by [clicking here](#). Tour size is limited to 10 so RSVP early. For information, email wetlandscordinator@gmail.com.

Presentation: Predator or Prey - What's for Dinner?



Jack Rabbit by Efren Adalem

Join us on **Wednesday, July 19th**, for a special outdoor evening event where biologist and wildlife expert **Bruce Elliott** will talk about local wildlife today and in the recent past, viewing them through the daily and seasonal cycles. He will concentrate on the animals found in south Santa Cruz and northern Monterey counties, covering the various animal groups, their predation and relationships, and how they use the night time hours to feed and prey.

This talk is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the outdoor classroom, overlooking the beautiful wetlands, behind the Fitz Wetlands Educational Resource Center. Please dress accordingly. [Click for map/directions](#). Admission is free but you must reserve a seat online by [clicking here](#). For information, email wetlandscoordinator@gmail.com.

Tour - Exploring Special Spots on the Watsonville Sloughs

On **Saturday, July 22nd**, join City of Watsonville naturalist and educator **Cindy Scott** as she takes you on a walking and driving "do-it-yourself" tour of interesting sites in the City's wetland trail system. You will learn about the City's plans for building new trails and do some birding while exploring a variety of habitats.

This tour, co-sponsored by the Watsonville Wetlands Watch and the City of Watsonville, starts at 9 a.m. and is free. Attendees will meet at the City of Watsonville Nature Center, 20 Harkins Slough Road, in the back of Rainbow Park and embark on the various sites. Binoculars are provided. The tour will end by 11:30 a.m. Attendance is free, but you must reserve a space by [clicking here](#). Please call the City's Nature Center for details at 831-768-1622.

Kathy Fieberling Is Retiring



Kathy enjoying a walk in the wetlands

On **June 16th** our beloved Kathy Fieberling will retire after serving for close to eleven years as Watsonville Wetland Watch's Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator. Not only did Kathy coordinate all of the volunteer activities for field trips, tours, and special events, but she managed our highly successful docent training program, personally overseeing the training and graduation of 190 docents, the educational bi-monthly speaker series and summer tour series, the annual holiday party, the monthly newsletter, and so much more. She has been a cornerstone of Watsonville Wetlands Watch for the past decade, greatly strengthening the community of people dedicated to the conservation of the Pajaro Valley's wetlands and ensuring that our programs in turn give back to the community. Her great spirit, dedication, and creativity have been a tremendous asset to our organization and ability to raise awareness about the importance of Watsonville's wetlands and provide meaningful

education to thousands of Watsonville's youth and community members throughout the Monterey Bay.

Prior to joining Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW), Kathy had a successful career in the hi-tech industry in training and marketing positions. She decided to come to WWW because she believed in the mission and the important work the organization was doing.

On this Kathy states: "Our restoration efforts are providing a much-needed safe haven for native species to thrive, and we are bringing so many young people into the wetlands and giving them the opportunity to learn about and connect with nature, which I think is one of the keys to leading fulfilling and thoughtful lives. It is very gratifying to be part of such an exciting and effective organization."

After retiring Kathy will continue to assist with the successful transition of the next volunteer and outreach coordinator and enjoy her much earned time off. She also plans to volunteer in order to stay engaged with the organization. Kathy says: "I will miss the people the most! I have had the opportunity to work with dynamic, talented staff members and wonderful volunteers, and I am sad to leave them. I have made many friends and I plan to carry my friendships forward."

Please join us in thanking Kathy for her many years of service to Watsonville Wetlands Watch and for her priceless contributions to our organization and community!

Volunteer Judy Verbeck - Healing Through Native Plant and Habitat Work



Judy Verbeck

Since Spring 2011, volunteer and Garden Guru Judy "J.T." Verbeck has contributed to the success of our beautiful Native Plant Demonstration Garden by helping to plan the layout, plant native plants, weed out the non-natives, and doing off-site plant propagation for the garden. She also welcomed and coordinated new garden volunteers, produced detailed illustrated status reports, and tracked the garden's historical development. Reflecting on the garden, she said, "work in this garden is a part of healing broken or destroyed habitat "connections". It is a place of people committed to habitat restoration. It is a refuge for me as I work on my own physical habitat restoration". In addition to garden work, Judy has cataloged books in our Wetlands Resource library and helped with special events. Her calm, deliberate and thoughtful nature is valuable to any job she tackles.

Her work as a registered nurse came to an abrupt halt a year after a car accident and traumatic brain injury in the mid-1990s. No longer able to be a nurse and struggling with her brain

injury challenges, Judy dedicated herself to volunteer work, which she calls a "sanity saver".

Judy became a Master Gardener in Colorado in 2005. Metastatic breast cancer dire expectations prompted a move here to be near her family. As her health stabilized she took a crash course in Monterey Bay native plants with work at the Wetlands Watch garden, the UCSC Arboretum, Cabrillo Horticulture classes, and Master Gardener collaboration with SC City Hall Gardens. A life-long learner, Judy has many interests, including participating in bat research surveys and education, and raptor rehab and education.

Judy is one of the heroes of our volunteer team and has been an inspiration to us all. She is enthusiastic about her work, looks for new ways to contribute, and goes to considerable efforts to participate. We wish her the best as she takes a sabbatical from her volunteer work to attend to her health.

Thank you, Judy!

Saturday Community Restoration



Volunteers making a difference helping to restore our wetlands

On **Saturday, June 24** we invite you to help restore wetland habitat as part of our fourth Saturday 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.

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.