



September 2017

News from Watsonville Wetlands Watch

In This Issue

[Please Join Us for the Annual Native Plant Sale](#)

[Introducing Our New Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator](#)

[Presentation: Reconsider the Coot - the Crazy Reproductive Antics of a Common Marsh Denizen](#)

[Green Careers Summer Institute Completes an Incredible Summer to Remember](#)

[El Mercado Scholarship Awarded](#)

[Saturday Community Restoration](#)

[Happy Autumn!](#)

WWW Website

[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Education](#)

[Events](#)

[Restoration](#)

[Citizen Science](#)

[The Sloughs](#)

[You Can Help](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Editors:

Please Join Us for the Annual Native Plant Sale



Plants for sale at Annual Native Plant Sale

Mark your calendar for our annual **Native Plant Sale**, which will take place on **Saturday, October 7 from 8:30 - 1:00 p.m.** This year we've been so focused on our education and restoration projects that we decided to take a hiatus from our Habitat Festival and focus on the native plant sale.

Please join us and help spread the word about our incredible selection of native plants from the Pajaro Valley and the Monterey Bay. All of our plants are locally adapted and excellent choices for attracting birds, bees, and butterflies to a beautiful drought tolerant landscape.

We'll have tons of information on each of the over 60 plant species for sale, tours of our native plant

demonstration gardens and nursery, and expert advice from staff and volunteers about how to select, grow, and care for your native plants and landscape. And best of all, all proceeds directly support our efforts to preserve and restore the Pajaro Valley's wetlands and educate youth and the community about this incredible natural resource in our backyard.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Introducing Our New Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator



We are excited to welcome **Ria Mukerji** as our new **Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator**! Ria studied Environmental Science at the University of California Santa Cruz and most recently spent a year as an AmeriCorps Fellow with the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County. She is certified in non-profit and volunteer program management by the Corporation for National and Community Service and is dedicated to supporting volunteers in making a huge impact on our community and region. Ria joins our team with a lot of volunteer management expertise, great energy for outreach and a passion for the local environment.

"I'm so excited to be starting as the new Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator for the Watsonville Wetlands Watch. After serving in AmeriCorps for a year in an

events and fundraising capacity, I'm really looking forward to getting back to my environmental roots with this important work. I would love to start getting to know all of you, so please stop by and say hello anytime!" - Ria

Please join us in welcoming Ria to our team!

Presentation: Reconsider the Coot: The Crazy Reproductive Antics of a Common Marsh Denizen



American Coot chicks photo courtesy of Bruce Lyon

Please join us on **Wednesday, September 13th**, when **Bruce Lyon**, Professor of Evolutionary Ecology at the University of California, Santa Cruz, will talk about the American Coot, a bird that is often overlooked because they are so common.

Dr. Lyon has been studying the reproductive antics of American coots for the past two decades and has discovered that there is far more to this bird than meets the eye. He'll highlight discoveries about the parental and reproductive strategies of coots, from both a natural history and scientific perspective. Coots are bizarre when it comes to raising their chicks, and there are many puzzling features of coot parental care behavior. For example, why do coots lay far more eggs than they can normally raise and why do they beat up their kids so much? And, finally, why are baby coots born with such a ridiculously fluorescent orange plumage? He will answer these questions and many more in his talk.

This talk is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Fitz Wetlands Educational Resource Center. [Click for map/directions.](#)

Admission is free but you must reserve a seat online by [clicking here](#).

For information, email wetlandscordinator@gmail.com.

Green Careers Summer Institute Completes an Incredible Summer to Remember



Intern and Pajaro Valley High School student, Karina, fishing out on the Bay with a Monterey Bay Aquarium Senior Fisheries Scientist.

Thanks to funding from a NOAA B-WET Grant, eleven interns from Pajaro Valley High School spent the bulk of

their summer vacations exploring opportunities in environmental fields throughout Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties.

The goal of the Green Careers Institute is for teens to be exposed to and learn skills in a wide range of careers in the environment, to become stewards of the environment, to understand the impact of climate change and other environmental challenges facing the community, and to develop networks with local green career professionals.

The four-week paid internship, guided by Environmental Education Specialist Hugo Ceja, offered students hands-on experiences in sustainable fisheries, water quality management, habitat restoration, organic farming and a whole lot of fun.

Interns will continue the program during the first half of the school year in the job readiness portion of the program developing their portfolios and learning more through workshops with guest speakers.

El Mercado Scholarship Awarded



This year, through a generous donation from **Patricia Rodriguez**, we were able to offer a college scholarship to one of our exceptional Wetland Stewards Interns.

We are happy to announce that this year's recipient of the **El Mercado Scholarship** went to **Dulce Garcia**.

Dulce was chosen based on her commitment to the Wetland Stewards Program and involvement in many community events.

Dulce graduated from Pajaro Valley High School this past June and will study at the University of California Davis starting in the fall.

Please join us in congratulating Dulce and wishing her the very best in her future endeavors!

Saturday Community Restoration



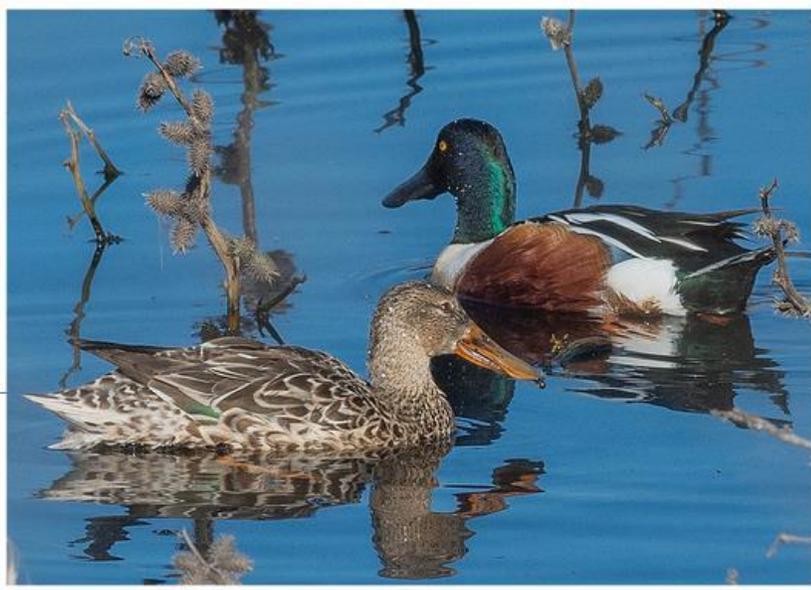
Community volunteers gather to help restore the wetlands

On **Saturday, September 23rd**, 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.

Happy Autumn!



A pair of Northern Shoveler ducks enjoy the wetlands
Photo courtesy of Jeff Bleam

The Autumnal Equinox, or the first day of fall, happens on September 22nd in the Northern Hemisphere this year. An equinox is the moment in which the plane of Earth's equator passes through the center of the Sun's disk. This occurs twice each year - in the spring and in the fall. Day and night are of approximately equal duration all over the planet on an equinox.

This day marks the official end of summer and is an important time for agriculturally based communities.

It is a time of bounty and of gratitude.

In our local wetlands it marks the beginning of an important migration for many of the bird species that will pass through over the coming months, reminding us of the importance of our precious wetlands as a critical stopover during fall migration.

We invite you to join us in the celebration of the changing of the seasons with a walk along our wetland trails to enjoy this transition and wish you a very happy Fall Equinox!

**Please help support the mission and goals of
Watsonville Wetlands Watch.**

[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.