



# NEWSLETTER

**Autumn 2021**

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## **President's Message**

Autumn — my favorite season of the year! It's so intriguing to watch the transition from the brightness and heat of the summer as it leads to a realization of the bounty and dynamic diversity of nature. The glory of the changing colors of fall illustrates the power and beauty of the natural world. At EFM we have been celebrating the natural world for nearly 50 years. The theme for Forum 2021 is the interconnectedness between biodiversity and climate change.


The first of our webinars and field trips for Forum 2021 have taken place, but it's not too late to sign up for the next webinars to be held September 29 and November 10, and our Advocacy series starting October 13. What is special about EFM's programs is that we interweave a cadre of fascinating speakers with hands on advocacy training from experts that help participants learn how to translate a burning desire to help the environment with practical ways to

accomplish just that.

EFM has seen its membership grow during the past few years and we are ever so grateful. The support of our members makes it possible for EFM to maintain its high quality of programs. Later this fall, our membership drive starts.

So [Renew](#)! because we have a big year ahead. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of EFM takes place in 2022 and we want this year to be really special — culminating in a gala celebration on May 15, 2022. Mark your calendars and save the date!

**Susan Rusche, *President***



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# FORUM 2021

**When is our next event?**

**September 29 @ 4 pm**

**Biodiversity on Land, at Sea, and on Tam**

Northern California is a global biodiversity hotspot. Protecting this large variety of plants, animals, and ecosystems is essential to the health of our environment — and ourselves! With loss of biodiversity threatening to amplify the effects of climate change,



**Forum 2021 Presents**

come near now you can support local and statewide efforts to protect species and their habitats. [Register today](#)

Biodiversity on Land, at Sea, on Tam

9/29/2021

[www.MarinEFM.org](http://www.MarinEFM.org)

Stay tuned to more information coming about the webinar on **November 10 2021 featuring Obi Kaufmann.**

**Speak up for the environment: make change happen**

**October 13 – November 3, 2021**

EFM-trained advocates have achieved substantial environmental “wins” in Marin County for more than 50 years, and we invite you to join in this proud tradition by completing our advocacy training program.

Advocacy training is a four-part series of interactive webinars that show you how to take

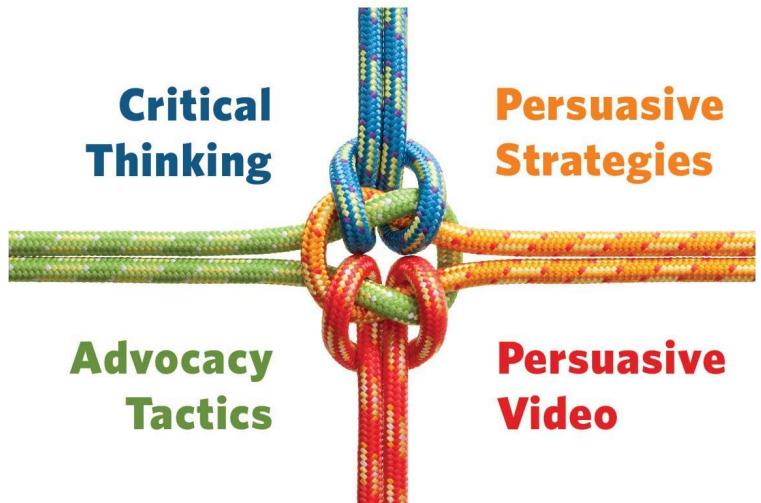
your passion and create change. Our training, which is continually updated to help ensure the effectiveness of our advocates, will help you to identify:

- What you need to know
- Who you need to share that with
- How best to share that information
- How you can express your passion to help your community deal with complex issues.

Webinars are from **4:00 to 5:30 pm** on:

**October 13, 2021 — Critical Thinking**

## Advocacy Training



**October 20, 2021 — Persuasive Strategies**

**October 27, 2021 — Advocacy Tactics**

**November 3, 2021 — Persuasive Video**

[Click here for more information and registration](#)

REGISTRATION



## **Recapping our recent 2021 Events**

### **September 9, 2021: Biodiversity and Climate Change**

We are grateful to our speakers and our sponsors for helping us to offer our community and our Forum 2021 students with such a thought-provoking experience. Here is a copy of the our [sponsors action items](#) so you too can get

involved.

Many attendees reached out to thank us for our 9/9 event on "Biodiversity: the essential survival strategy for the climate crisis." This was an event where we sketched out the program as well as we could and then... something even better happened.

Each of our three speakers had different but complementary perspectives on biodiversity. Each challenged us to reflect on our own place in this web of biodiversity. Although the speakers have command of a remarkable depth of knowledge, at this event they did not overwhelm us with facts. Instead, they took it up a level to probe what all that data actually means.

David Ackerly, the Dean of UC Berkeley's [Rausser College of Natural Resources](#), challenged us to start thinking about our priorities as a society, and how those should shape our response and our plans for prioritizing the survival of certain species over others.

Justin Robinson, an ethnobotanist with a remarkably diverse background of academic and cultural achievements, asked us to start thinking about the cultural lens through which we each see the places where we live and where we are from.

Our moderator, the journalist and author Mark Hertsgaard, who specializes in environmental issues, provided background about the political threats to biodiversity today, and then led a Q&A about the role that we can play in protecting biodiversity.

*Synopsis provided by Anne-Christine Strugnell, EFM Director of Communications*

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## **September 15, 2021: Field Trip to Bothin Marsh**

with Project Managers Rob LaPorte, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and Veronica Pearson, Senior Ecological Restoration Planner with Marin County Parks





Forum 2021 Series cohort met in person, with masks, to experience a sense of place at Bothin Marsh in Mill Valley. Walking through the marsh, we learned about the marshlands, feeling cool breezes on our faces, observing big, clouded skies, golden marsh plants, birds, gray waters, and hearing freeway noise.

Bothin Marsh is dynamically changing and needs assistance from humans. The last hundred years changed the Marsh significantly, with development, and straightening creeks that historically entered the Marsh. Watersheds nutrient flow was channeled to the Bay instead of nourishing the marsh.

One Tam has studied and developed plans to enhance and evolve marsh productivity. We learned that the “high marsh” is particularly important and needs sediment build-up to maintain marsh biodiversity as sea levels rise. These higher elevations in the marsh are places where wildlife finds refuge in high tides, have greater biodiversity of species, and require protection and restoration. Healthy tidal marshes can help reduce the impacts of sea level rise and climate change by absorbing flood waters and storm surges.

Organizations will need our advocacy support to implement plans to test efficacy and successes of restoration activities to possibly model in other marshland enhancements.

### [Bothin Marsh Adaptations Report](#)



Veronica identifies the high and low marsh lands needed to maintain marsh productivity and provide defense with sea level rise.

*Photographs and synopsis provided by Karen Mendelow-Nelson, EFM Vice President of Environmental Education*

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## **September 22, 2021: Field Trip to Muir Woods**

On a sunny, crystal clear day, EFM and Forum 2021 members met ranger naturalist Mia Monroe at the watershed model at the entrance to Muir Woods National Monument. Using the model (and little bit of liquid soap), she explained how the rain moves to Redwood Creek, and helps create the



explained how the rain moves to Redwood Creek, and helps create the ecosystems of the woods. Redwood trees live in the fog zone and have many ways of reproduction and other adaptations that allow them to be resistant to impacts.

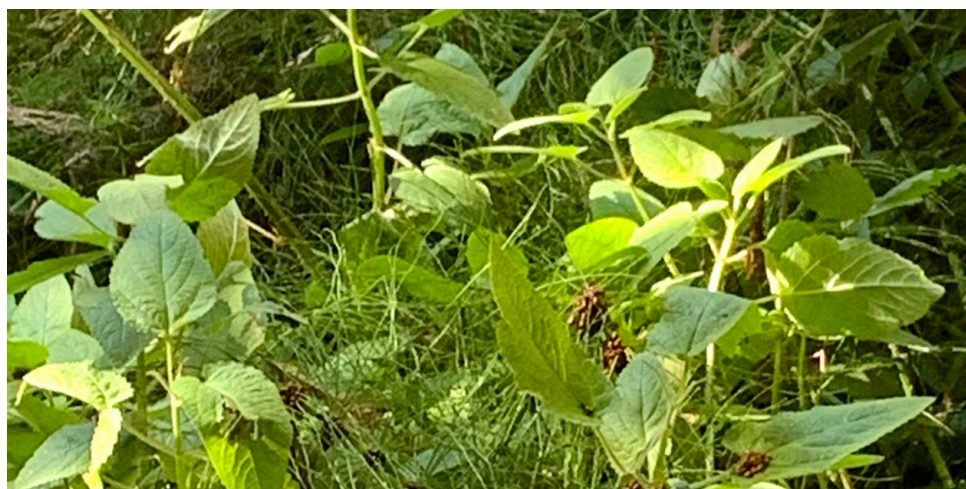
To conserve the creek ecosystem, the NPS is moving parking away from the creek, removing riprap from the creek and widening bridges, to allow natural meandering of the creek for the restoration of aquatic habitat. Coho salmon in the creek are endangered and the drought has increased their threat. Efforts are being made to save them by collecting young fish and growing them off site until they are able to be released into the creek again.

Spotted owls in the woods are also endangered. Their most recent threat has been from barred owls, a competitor that made it into the woods, and needs to be managed to protect the redwood ecosystem. Noise also bothers spotted owls, so many land management agencies require quiet practices during nesting season. Hopefully the fire prevention agencies will as well, as they remove vegetation.

Mia showed us ladybug clusters, described the plight of the monarchs butterflies and made us think about the biodiversity of ecosystem as a whole. She recommended using the app, *Seek by iNaturalist*, to help us identify all the species we see in the woods and elsewhere.

The tall trees and quiet creek created an amazing backdrop to learn about this rare ecosystem.

*Submitted by Terri Thomas, EFM Director of Ecology*







How many clusters of ladybugs can you find in this photo?

What do ladybugs do in your garden?

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## Welcome Jonny DeBorst as the EFM Assistant Program Director

Born in Ecuador and growing up in Latin America, Jonny comes to EFM with an interest in supporting communities' engagement in environmental issues. Jonny got a degree in Environmental Science and Economics, and has worked in fields ranging from agriculture to education. Outside of his administrative role at EFM, he currently works in construction, off-grid living systems, and as an outdoor guide. Though he's not sure how to solve climate change (yet), he enjoys spending his free time outside and in amazement of the environment, be it hanging from a wall in Yosemite or kayaking the bay.



## Many thanks to Trevor Stevenson and our partnership with Drawdown:Marin

This summer Trevor provided a three part advocacy series to approximately twenty Drawdown:Marin ambassadors and Multicultural Center affiliates. The classes were provided in Spanish and covered Critical Thinking, Persuasive Strategies, and Advocacy Training. In breakout exercises, students collaboratively selected the subject of advocating for a Community Plan for the Canal Neighborhood. Working with EFM board, family members and volunteers, the group; 1) identified concerns of their community including, high rents and substandard housing, insufficient street lights, and lack of youth art and recreation programs 2) practiced persuasive message strategies and 3) prepared a power map of people who could be supportive and advocate on their behalf. The experiential breakouts resulted in an action strategy for moving forward with a group presentation to the Town Council. These classes will be available again in English this [October](#).

*Synopsis provided by Norma Fragoso, EFM Ambassador*

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## SAVE THE DATE

We celebrate 50 glorious years of EFM education and environmental activism in 2022! Please join us for the 50th Anniversary Celebration on **May 15, 2022** at the Mill Valley Community Center. We will honor our founders, take a fond look back at 50 years of highlights, and enjoy good food and fellowship together. Details to follow in early 2022.

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[EFM Notebook](#) — **don't miss an installment!**  
[Subscribe](#) today



# **When in Drought.... Mid-Summer Update**

**New Post on EFM Notebook**

**[www.MarinEFM.org](http://www.MarinEFM.org)**



Protecting Marin Since 1934

By serving as the countywide authority on environmental policy, [MCL](#) studies and analyzes issues; proposes policies; educates and mobilizes citizens; and monitors outcomes.

Bob Miller, President of MCL states why MCL supports EFM:

*"Marin Conservation League is the County's environmental guardian: a fierce advocate, informed educator, and collaborative partner. Our over-arching goal is to preserve and enhance biodiversity of native species and habitats.*

*MCL supports the education that EFM provides to those becoming environmental advocates--our advocacy work neatly complements EFM's advocacy training. Become part of the Marin Conservation League team that gets environmental advocacy results!"*

**Thank you to Marin Conservation League ([MCL](#)) for being a Business Supporter for EFM.**

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### **Vaux Swifts entering a McNear's Brickyard chimney to roost overnight**

This species, pronounced "Vawks," historically roosted communally in large, hollow trees. With the limited availability of such trees along this stretch of their southward migration route from the Pacific Northwest to Central America, they now take advantage of similar manmade structures such as the unused chimneys at San Rafael's McNear Brickyard off Point San Pedro Road.

*Photo courtesy of Mark Huffman*



# The Vaux swifts are migrating...and a reminder: our FACEBOOK page has migrated as well

EFM has a new Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Environmental.Forum.Of.Marin](http://www.facebook.com/Environmental.Forum.Of.Marin)

Please "like" and "follow" us at this new address. This Facebook page is linked to our website and all other EFM materials.

*Not a social media user? Just give this a try!*

LIKE US on the right side in the masthead above the feed — it looks blue and will say "like" before you've liked the page and then will turn gray and say "liked" once you've liked the page:

SUBSCRIBE to the page by changing your follow settings — click the three little dots at the top of the page to get a pull-down menu and click on "follow settings" and then choose "favorites" to make EFM's content show up first in your feed.

INVITE your friends to like the page. This is a very important step! Under the same 3-dot pulldown menu, click "invite friends" and you will get a list of all your friends. When you click the box next to their name (you can bulk select a whole bunch at a time!) you'll have a button that lights up that says "send invites".

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## EFM board and staff

**Kim Rago**, *Executive Director*

**Susan Rusche**, *President*

**Karen Mendelow Nelson**, *Vice President of Education*

**Barbara Ball**, *Treasurer*

**Norma Fragoso**, *EFM Ambassador*

**Kirsten Nolan**, *Secretary*

**Maggie Fillmore**, *Newsletter Editor*

**Gayle Marsh**, *Graphic Design and Website*

**Leslie Gerstenfeld**, *Program Director*

**Jonny DeBorst**, *Assistant Program Director*

**Susan Holloway**, *Author of EFM Notebook*

**Anne-Christine Strugnell**, *Director of Communications*

**Marty Blum**, *Development Director*

**Leah Faw**, *Social Media Coordinator*

**Terri Thomas**, *Director of Ecology*

**[www.MarinEFM.org](http://www.MarinEFM.org)**