



Oregon Coordinated Aquatic Bird Monitoring:
Description of Important Aquatic Bird Site

Humboldt Bay NWR

BCS number: 86-4

****NOTE: We were unable to determine all necessary information for this site description. If you would like to contribute the needed information to this description, please contact the Klamath Bird Observatory at kbo@klamathbird.org.*

Site description author(s)

Danielle Morris, Research and Monitoring Team, Klamath Bird Observatory

Primary contact for this site

N/A

Site location (UTM)

Datum: NAD83, Zone: 10, Easting: 396962, Northing: 4508391

General description

“One of the premiere natural estuaries in the state, Humboldt Bay transforms from a placid lagoon to an extensive mudflat rimmed with saltmarsh during low tide, with much of its habitat managed as Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Just south of the bay, a vast system of tidal channels cuts through wet pastures and dairy farms along the Eel River. Historically prone to major flooding events in early spring, it has remained undeveloped, and is partially protected as the Eel River Wildlife Area (DFG). The Nature Conservancy's Lanphere-Christensen Dune Preserve, one of the finest examples of coastal dunes in the state, lies within this IBA, separating the bottomlands from the ocean. A significant amount of freshwater marsh habitat has been restored/recreated at Arcata Marsh, a progressive, city-owned wetland/water treatment facility on the northeast side of Humboldt Bay that has become a model for such efforts worldwide.” (National Audubon Society 2010)

Boundaries and ownership

Boundaries:

The refuge extends from McKinleyville north of Arcata south to the confluence of the Eel and Van Duzen rivers along Hwy. 101. (National Audubon Society 2010)

Ownership:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Public, and Private Lands.

Water levels

Briefly outline historical water levels, since being managed. What causes water level fluctuations? How does water level fluctuate throughout the year?

Unknown

Focal species use and timing

Focal Group/Species	Wintering	Breeding	Migration
Secretive Marsh Bird Group	Present	Present	Present
Colonial Nesting Bird Group	Present	Present	Present
Migrating Shorebird Group	Present	Present	Present
Ground-based Waterbird Group	Present	Present	Present
American Bittern	Occasional	Occasional	Occasional
American White Pelican	Unknown	Unknown	Present
Barrow's Goldeneye	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black Tern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black-crowned Night Heron	Present	Present	Present
Black-necked Stilt	Rare	Rare	Rare
Bufflehead	Present	Present	Present
California Gull	Present	Present	Present
Caspian Tern	Present	Uncommon	Present
Clark's Grebe	Present	Unknown	Present
Common Loon	Present	Present	Uncommon
Dusky Canada Goose	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Eared Grebe	Present	Unknown	Present
Forster's Tern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Franklin's Gull	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Great Blue Heron	Present	Present	Present
Greater Sandhill Crane	Rare	Unknown	Rare
Green Heron	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Least Bittern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Lesser Sandhill Crane	Rare	Unknown	Rare
Long-billed Curlew	Uncommon	Present	Uncommon
Pied-billed Grebe	Uncommon	Uncommon	Uncommon
Red-necked Grebe	Uncommon	Uncommon	Uncommon
Snowy Egret	Present	Present	Present
Sora	Uncommon	Uncommon	Occasional
Upland Sandpiper	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Virginia Rail	Present	Present	Present
Western Grebe	Present	Present	Present
Western Snowy Plover	Unknown	Present	Unknown
White-faced Ibis	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Yellow Rail	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Focal Species information adapted from USFWS Humboldt Bay NWR Watchable Wildlife (1999)

Location of Type 1 and 2 habitat within the site

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
Ground Based Aquatic Birds	Agricultural wetlands and intertidal mudflats	Unknown
Secretive Marsh Birds	Saltmarshes and wetlands	Unknown
Colonial Nesters	Riparian forests and marshes	Unknown
Migrating Shorebirds	Tidal wetlands and agricultural fields	Unknown

Access to Type 1 and Type 2 habitats

Briefly describe challenging aspects of accessing bird habitat, e.g. the road to aspen lake has not been graded for many years, 4WD is recommended. Or access by boat only
Unknown

Audibility/visibility of focal species

Describe any issues that would diminish the detectability of birds. e.g Secretive marsh birds are difficult to detect due to hwy noise
Unknown

Conservation issues

“Though the edges of the bay are reasonably well protected as a national wildlife refuge, the bay itself must contend with the effects of a major oyster-culture operation, which periodically dredges the eelgrass beds, and covers them with used shells (Harris 1996). Dune stabilization with non-native beach grasses and lupines has eliminated Snowy Plover nesting habitat. Many sensitive species depend on the non-wetland vegetation (grassland, riparian stringers), and maintenance of these habitats even on public lands has been a challenge to local conservationists.” (National Audubon Society 2010)

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed

Unknown

Past and current surveys

Briefly describe past and or current surveys, and how completed. Refer to certain protocols/other documents or persons (list contact info) if survey specifics are unknown
Unknown

Potential survey methods

Description: (describe survey methods that are appropriate for your site and recommend the best means in which to complete them considering the limitations and history above. Include information on suggested standardized or specialized protocols)
Unknown

Selection bias: (Discuss the potential for selection bias when designing a survey in the future, especially when sub-sample of the site will be studied. Point out how bias could be introduced and recommend ways to prevent this)
Unknown

Measurement error and bias:

Unknown

Potential pilot studies

Unknown

Literature cited

- Google, Inc. 2010. Humboldt Bay NWR. Google Earth (Version 5.1.3533.1731) [Software]. Available from <http://earth.google.com>. Accessed April 26, 2010.
- Google Map. 2010. Map of Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, California. <http://maps.google.com/>. Accessed April 26, 2010.
- National Audubon Society. 2010. Important Bird Areas in the U.S. Available at <http://iba.audubon.org/iba/viewSiteProfile.do?siteId=43&navSite=state>. Accessed April 26, 2010.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (1999). Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge: Watchable Wildlife. <http://www.fws.gov/humbolddbay/wildlifelist.pdf>. Accessed April 26, 2010
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2010a. Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. <http://www.fws.gov/humbolddbay/>. Accessed April 26, 2010.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2010b. National Wetlands Inventory website. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/>. Accessed April 26, 2010.

Figure 1: Google Earth (2010) map of Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge with the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (2010) layer.



Figure 2: Google Map (2010) road view of Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

