Green Tips

Written by John McDonald, Gloria Dei, Duluth

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Green Blades Rising Newsletter

*Why Wetlands?*

Wetlands can easily be undervalued due to our ignorance of all the ecological and economic benefits they provide. A recent study identifies *two dozen* undervalued ecological services we get from wetlands, such as, water purification and biodiversity. \_\_\_\_\_

Wetlands preserve genetic diversity for a wide range of aquatic organisms and provide food and habitat for migrating birds and other creatures.  They reduce flooding, purify water, build soil from sediments, regulate groundwater recharge and discharge, and provide local and even global climate stabilization. \_\_\_\_\_

While *learning from nature* how to redesign our ecologically-ignorant technologies, we have discovered that wetlands can play a role in wastewater treatment. They can remove large quantities of farm runoff nutrients, detoxify compounds, and neutralize pathogens while remaining healthy. \_\_\_\_\_

The [Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary](https://www.arcatamarshfriends.org/) is a 154-acre wetlands park next to the city of Arcata in Northern California.  It offers the best bird watching around and is a favorite lunch spot for office workers.  Surprisingly, it has also been part of the town’s wastewater treatment process since 1986. \_\_\_\_\_

Wetlands are one of our most threatened ecosystems, having lost more than [50 percent](https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Understanding-Conservation/Ecosystem-Services) of wetlands in the United States. The wetlands along the Mississippi River once stored at least 60 days of floodwater. Now they store only [12 days](https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/why-are-wetlands-important) because most have been filled or drained. \_\_\_\_\_