

Lagoon Flyer

B u e n a V i s t a A u d u b o n S o c i e t y



Jón Baldur Hlíöberg

Message From The President...

A WARNING FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

BEGINNING BIRDERS BEWARE!

Some of you may be enrolled in our Beginning Birding Program, which began last month. Others may be planning to participate in the Birding by Ear Program scheduled for April 15th and 22nd. I feel compelled to share with you this cautionary tale. It's a story of a beginning birder just like you. Look what happened to her.

I have no reason to believe that there was anything wrong with Margaret Matlack of Bonsall prior to November 5th, 2005. As far as I can tell she was a decent and responsible person. But on that Saturday morning in early November her life changed forever. With little thought for the consequences, she showed up at Buena Vista Lagoon for a beginning birding class led by Tom Troy (the notorious founder of the Ruddy Duck Club). Margaret quickly began to show one of the early warning signs of a compulsive birder: she started keeping a list of birds seen! A personality disorder quickly became evident: she started to argue about the distinguishing characteristics of gadwalls, shovelers and ruddy ducks. She has since failed to miss a single BVAS general meeting, wasting valuable time listening to lectures on such arcane topics as the birds of Ecuador, the flora of San Diego County and the Endangered Species Act. It has been rumored that she spent good money on a field guide to bird identification (available at our Nature Center with no sales tax paid by Friends of BVAS members). It is a known fact that she went to Oceanside Photo and Telescope and bought a spotting scope. Puleez! That might have been the grocery money!

(Continued on page 2)



Join the BVAS Birdathon and Participate in America's Birdiest City Contest

April 29, 2006 8 am

Details on Page 2

April General Meeting



CALIFORNIA GRUNION: THE FISH THAT BREEDS ON OUR BEACHES

Speaker: **Melissa Studer**

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Social: 7pm; Lecture: 7:30pm

When people first hear about the California Grunion, they sometimes think it's a joke.

This is a fish that breeds on the beach under a full moon, lays its eggs in the sand at the high tide line, and wiggles back out to sea on the next big wave. The eggs then incubate in the warm sand for a couple of weeks until another high tide rolls in and the tiny grunion larvae hatch and are carried off with the receding wave. This phenomenon repeats itself twice a month on a predictable schedule right here on North County beaches. Lots of people have witnessed the amazing sight of hundreds of glistening grunion writhing around on a beach in the silvery moonlight. Have you?

Our April program will answer all your questions about this fascinating fish, and offer up photographic proof of the grunion's existence. Melissa Studer is Senior Program Officer of Grunion Greeters, a program which monitors grunion runs on California beaches as part of a special research project headed up by Pepperdine University. The Grunion Greeter project has already taught us a lot about this unique member of our coastal wildlife community. Our Wednesday evening talk will be followed up by a Friday night grunion hunt for adventurous (or still skeptical) souls.

Message From The President (Cont'd from page 1)

It gets worse. One Sunday morning she called me about a bird she had seen (what else should your president be doing besides taking such calls?). While out running on a trail east of Lake Hodges (Margaret tutors beginning marathoners preparing for charity runs - one of the many worthwhile activities she will probably have to give up as her obsession with birding takes up more and more of her time) she saw an owl. She concluded it was a burrowing owl. Nah, not likely, I told her; once common, burrowing owls have just about disappeared from San Diego County as more and more of their grassland and open scrub habitat has been bulldozed. I suggested alternative owls. With the fanaticism of a recent convert she dismissed my suggestions. This from someone who has only been birding since November! Go see for yourself she said. Walk the trail to where there are two interpretive displays, count fourteen fenceposts back, look left for a log and you will see it standing on the log. I went there. I did that. The owl was there. It was standing on the log. It was a burrowing owl.

Margaret is now too far gone for there to be any hope. Her life has been utterly, irrevocably changed. Her future? Bleak. The compulsion to add more and more birds to her life list will get worse and worse. Soon, no doubt, as the compulsion takes over her life, she will start keeping county, state and monthly(!) lists. She is likely to wake in the morning, possessed by the thought: how can I add more birds to my list this April than I counted last April? It's a prospect just too ghastly to contemplate.

For Margaret now it's too late. But you, dear beginner, can still pull back from the precipice. What is birding worth to you? Will you spend your children's inheritance in search of that additional bird on your life list? Will you squander the limited time you have left on earth birdwatching, instead of pursuing the common good and promoting the general welfare?

As you take up these beginning birding classes, think about the consequences of your actions. Seriously. And then, having done so, join Margaret and all the rest of us in saying the hell with it. What could be better, especially now in the spring of the year, than being out looking for birds, every one of them beautiful in its own way?

Get out there and bird, even if it's only afar afield as your backyard. Participate in this month's Birdathon and help us make Oceanside the birdiest small city in America.

Enjoy,

Dennis Huckabay

Full Moon Grunion Hunt

Friday, April 28, 2006

9-11pm

Come join us as trained Grunion Greeter guides lead us on a Friday evening grunion hunt on a local Oceanside beach. While we can't guarantee success, our chances of observing a grunion run should be quite good. We'll meet at the BVAS Nature Center at 9pm to get directions to the local beach which our guides have determined offers the best opportunities for grunion. This will be an official monitoring event taking place during the "no-take" grunion breeding season. While this will be a friendly, informal walk, participants will be asked to maintain proper monitoring decorum so as not to disrupt the grunion. Wear warm clothing and shoes which you don't mind getting a little wet and sandy. Bring your flashlight. No dogs please.

BVAS Birdathon

and

America's Birdiest City Contest

April 29, 2006 8 am

Buena Vista Audubon invites you to join in the Birdathon, our annual springtime effort to raise funds in support of our mission of environmental conservation, education and advocacy. How does the Birdathon work? Every year during the spring migrations, Audubon members and friends from all over America spend a day birding, trying to spot (with their eyes or ears) as many species as possible. Then they collect on pledges they have secured from family, friends, barbers, hairdressers, and anyone else they can. Some people pledge anywhere from 25 cents to 10 dollars or more for every bird species spotted, while others prefer to make a flat pledge of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more!

For the second year in a row we are combining our Birdathon with America's Birdiest City Contest - an attempt to count more birds in Oceanside than any other small city in America. Last year we narrowly lost to Dauphin Island, Alabama.

Observers may bird separately or join in any of the group outings scheduled. To join groups headed for places such as Guajome Park, Whelan Lake, Buddy Todd Park, etc., be at the Nature Center on Saturday, April 29th at 8:00AM. Birds counted must be seen/heard by an observer within the city limits of Oceanside between noon Friday, April 28th and noon Sunday, April 30th. Turn in your reports to the Nature Center or email them to Dennis Huckabay at jdhuca-bay@sbcglobal.net



Northern Flicker
Kirsten Munson

April Field Trips

Sat - Apr 1 - 8:00 am - Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count. - I-5 to 76. Turn left at Douglas and continue to light at North River Rd. Turn left and meet at end cul-de-sac by entrance gate. Leader: John Haddock, 760 941-7842

Sat - Apr 8 - 9:00 am - San Elijo Lagoon. I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe. West to N. Rios Ave. Turn right and proceed to end of road. Leader: Andy Mauro, 760-753-1266

Sat - Apr 15- 9:00 am -San Elijo Lagoon - East. I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe. East to Santa Helena (first traffic light east of I-5). Turn left on Santa Helena and follow the road as it curves up over the hill and finally dead-ends at the trailhead, about 1.5 miles. No facilities. This is a special walk to see breeding activity of chaparral birds. Leader: Andy Mauro, 760-753-1266.

Fri - Sun - Apr 21-23 - Kern River Valley Trip. This trip is full at this time. To be added to the waiting list, call Mary Ellen, 760-918-6622.

Sat - Apr 22 - Birding by Ear Class Field Trip, 7:30 - noon. Meet at the Nature Center and car pool to location.

Sat - Apr 29 - 8:00 am -Buena Vista Audubon's Birdathon. See page 2 for details.

(The regular monthly Buena Vista Lagoon count will be a part of the birdathon. Data collected will be reported for the monthly count and will be included in the birdathon data. Basic Birding at the Lagoon Landing will resume next month.)

Heavy rain cancels field trips.

Field Notes...

Five hardy birders braved the wet, windy weather on our field trip to Mesa Grande Rd. and Lake Henshaw on Feb. 18th. The snow level stayed in Julian and the mountains above us much to our relief. A side trip stop at Mission Santa Ysabel yielded Western Bluebirds in abundance and a wonderful look at a Rock Wren sitting a top a wood pile. Our drive down Mesa Grande Rd. gave us a chance to see different sparrows, including flocks of Lark Sparrows. Our raptors were limited to Red-tail hawks, White-tailed kites, and American Kestrels. When we arrived at Lake Henshaw, the wind was blowing very cold so, after locating the Eagle's nest, we opted for a bowl of hot soup at the local cafe before heading home. Our count of 28 different birds warmed our hearts for such a chilly, but beautiful day in the mountains.

Mary Ellen Marquand

Nature Storytime for Preschoolers

Monday, April 24 - 10am

BVAS Nature Center

There's been some rumbling and snorting in Little Bear's cave. Could he be getting ready to meet the Spring?

Come join us for the fun on the 4th Monday of each month at 10am For more information, call Mary Ellen. 760-918-6622.

Birding by Ear Class

with Mary Beth Stowe

Classroom Presentation

Saturday, April 15, 2006

9am-2pm (Bring your bag lunch)

Field Trip

Saturday, April 22, 2006, 7:30am-noon

(meet at Nature Center and car pool to location)

Participants will receive a free cd, "Bird Songs of the Coastal Sage and Chaparral"

Mary Beth Stowe is a master birder and expert in the field identification of birds by song and call. Her straightforward and effective techniques for teaching bird vocalizations make this fascinating and rewarding aspect of birding available to all birders, regardless of their level of experience. This class is highly recommended for all who wish to improve their birding skills by gaining understanding and access to that special quality possessed by birds which makes them so unique and enjoyable—their ability to sing! Call the Nature Center to sign up for this class. 760-439-2473.

BUENA VISTA NATIVE PLANT CLUB

4th Annual
Native Garden Tour
April 23rd, 2 pm

This 1 mile walking tour visits over 10 residential California native plant gardens in the historic seaside neighborhood of downtown Oceanside. Meet at 2pm, Sunday, April 23rd at St. Mary's School, 515 Wisconsin St., Oceanside. The guided walk is free and kids will be selling lemonade and cookies along the route. St. Mary's School is one block east of the 101 Cafe at Coast Highway and Wisconsin St. This annual event is sponsored by the Buena Vista Native Plant Club and the Oceanside Coastal Neighborhood Association. For more info, contact the Buena Vista Native Plant Club at BVNPC@sbcglobal.net.

BVNPC meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Nature Center at 2 pm. Please come!

Monthly Nature Center Grounds Cleanup

Join us on the first Saturday of every month from 8-10am. We will do hand weeding and pick up trash around the Nature Center and along the trail. Bring your hat, gloves, sunscreen and hand gardening tools. We'll look forward to seeing you on April 1, 2006.

For more information on any Native Plant Club events, call the Nature Center and leave a message for Joan Bockman 760-439-2473.



The gardens and habitat surrounding the Nature Center are blooming and attracting visitors of all kinds. This great egret was a recent visitor and proves the saying "if you build it, they will come". Join us on our native garden tour and come by the Nature Center and check out the native plants you can use to build a bird friendly habitat in your yard. Planting drought tolerant natives not only attracts birds and butterflies, it also helps conserve water. Come to a Buena Vista Native Plant Club meeting to learn more about the many advantages of native plants.

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Tue - Sat 10 am - 4 pm
Sun 1pm - 4 pm
Closed Monday

2202 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside CA
East side of street just north of lagoon bridge

Mailing Address:

PO Box 480
Oceanside CA 92049-0480

www.bvaudubon.org

RARE BIRD ALERT 619-688-2473

* Board Members

FRIENDS OF BUENA VISTA AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

As a Friend of BVAS, I will receive the chapter newsletter, be invited to special events just for Friends and receive a discount on BVAS Gift Shop purchases. 100% of my contribution will go to support the BVAS Nature Center and its educational programs. Minimum donation required - \$20

I would like to donate \$ 25 _____ \$ 40 _____ \$ 50 _____ \$ 100 _____ Other: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Please bill my VISA card

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Make Checks Payable to:

**Buena Vista Audubon Society
P.O. Box 480
Oceanside, CA 92054**

**Ruddy Duck Club Welcomes
Charter Members**

BVAS is excited to announce the following charter members of the Ruddy Duck Club. We send out thanks to them for supporting our community through their support of BVAS and its Nature Center and educational programs. We urge our members to support these businesses and to thank them for supporting BVAS!

North County Radiology Medical Group

410 S. Melrose Suite 104, Vista

Cream of the Crop

Natural Market, Juice Bar and Deli
2209 S Coast Hwy, Oceanside

Friends of BVAS

BVAS extends our sincere appreciation to the following "Friends" for their recent contributions. Because of your generous support, we are able to continue to offer our programs to thousands of visitors each year. Thanks for your support! We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.

Be sure to identify yourself as a "Friend" to received tax free purchases from the Nature Center gift shop.

John Prokop
Douglas & Cynthia Kosty
Kathy & Jim Campbell
Cheryl Alden
Klaas & Gerda Meurs

Conservation Corner

Two massive Caltrans projects now moving through the planning phase, the widening of the I-5 Freeway and construction of a new I-5 and I-78 interchange, will have significant impacts on the Buena Vista Lagoon. A wider and much steeper freeway berm will be required to accommodate the extra lanes across the lagoon, complete with steep buttressed retaining walls. The freeway bridge will be torn down and completely reconstructed. The new interchange will require wide ramps arching over the lagoon, with concrete support columns extending down into the water. A significant amount of additional residential, commercial, and public land adjacent to the reserve will also be needed in order to contain some of the new interchange infrastructure.

BVAS and a coalition of other groups will be meeting soon with project officials to discuss possible mitigation projects which might help offset some of these impacts. We're still working on our input, but I think it is safe to say that we would like to see funding set aside for a restoration project which would return the lagoon to a fully functioning salt water estuary. The new I-5 bridge should have a wider span to allow a freer flow of water beneath the freeway. There are several key undeveloped parcels of land adjacent to the reserve which could be purchased for wetlands restoration. This includes the land directly across the street from the Nature Center now being proposed for hotel/commercial development. There are additional projects upstream from the reserve which could significantly benefit water quality and other habitat values within the reserve. In short, we would like to ensure that impacts to the Buena Vista Lagoon are mitigated by funding projects which directly benefit the habitat values of the reserve. Properly done, the freeway projects could result in a much healthier Buena Vista Lagoon in the years ahead, and wouldn't that be nice? We'll keep you informed on our progress.

--Andy Mauro, Conservation Chair

Lagoon Flyer



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QUICK CALENDAR

Apr 1	Whelan Bird Count 8 am
Apr 1	Garden Clean-up Day 8 am
Apr 3	Nature Guides 10 am
Apr 7	Board Meeting 9 am
Apr 8	San Elijo Walk 9 am
Apr 15	San Elijo Lagoon East Walk 9 am
Apr 15 & 22	Birding by Ear Class
Apr 16	Native Plant Club 2 pm
Apr 21-23	Kern River Valley Trip
Apr 23	Native Plant Garden Tour 2 pm
Apr 24	Nature Story Time 10:00 am
Apr 26	General Membership Meeting Social 7 pm / Lecture 7:30 pm
Apr 28	Full Moon Grunion Hunt 9 pm
Apr 29	BVAS Birdathon 8:00 am

BVAS ANNUAL BIRDATHON!

April 29th

Details on Page 2

Birding By Ear Class

April 15 & April 22

Details inside.

The *Lagoon Flyer* is published nine times a year.
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Moving?

Notify Suzann Spann for address changes
760-231-9709 Or email bvaudubon@cox.net

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www.bvaudubon.org

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