

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 Hlíðberg

Wednesday, January 18

Mountain Lions

How to Live with the Big Cats

with Robin Parks

7 p.m. Social—7:30 p.m. Program

Spotting a mountain lion (a.k.a. cougar, puma, etc.) out in the wild would be a rare or, perhaps more likely, completely unique experience for most of us. This fabled top-of-the-line predator is all cat—graceful, agile, strong, and stealthy. And as much as we admire these feline traits in that dear tabby that rubs up against our leg every morning, the serious thought of a wild mountain lion possibly lurking somewhere down the trail is another thing altogether. Sure, we'd love to see a mountain lion, but we'd prefer it to be on our own terms and from a decidedly safe distance.

Surefire Recipe for Mountain Lion Management Issues

(1) Start with a general sense of unease felt by those on nature hikes; (2) Add in the more intense concerns of those who have a vested interest in the animals that sometimes fall prey to cougars; (3) Stir into this mix of emotions the pressures associated with the growing urbanization of mountain lion habitat.

Heat well until done.

San Diegan Robin Parks retired from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) in 2004 after a 25-year career in federal law enforcement. A lifelong admirer of the great



cats, he began doing volunteer work at animal sanctuaries in California and elsewhere in 1999, when he first encountered captive mountain lions. This later led him to the Mountain Lion Foundation (MLF) where he has been a field volunteer on several projects. He now is very much involved in reaching out to law enforcement agencies, who are often the first responders to cougar incidents. Robin will talk about basic cougar biology and general safety tips, and address the myths and misinformation that surround cougars. He'll also discuss various "shoot/don't shoot" considerations and evidence that shows that killing a wayward cougar simply because it has wandered into human territory is rarely necessary and is often the wrong decision. Please join us.

Birdhouse Auction Set for February!

The much-anticipated 2012 BVAS Birdhouse Auction will take place on Saturday, February 25. At last year's inaugural event, over 50 unique, hand-crafted birdhouses were auctioned off as attendees rubbed shoulders with our celebrity auctioneer (Martha Barnett from NPR's "A Way With Words"), sipped wine and beer, snacked on gourmet tacos, and swayed to the background music of a live jazz ensemble. Everyone had a great time. We've had many requests to do it again, and have already started receiving birdhouses for the 2012 auction.

For those with a creative impulse, it's time to start planning your birdhouse. Plain wood birdhouses suitable for decoration are available for sale at the Nature Center, or you can start from scratch and fashion your own creation from whatever medium that strikes your fancy.

For more details, follow Buena Vista Audubon on Facebook, visit our website at www.bvaudubon.org, or drop by the Nature Center. This is going to be fun!



Angela McDowell's Birdhouse

Conservation Matters

by Andy Mauro

Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration

When last we reported, the Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration Project had been officially put on hold. California Department of Fish and Game had announced a halt to completing the final Environmental Impact Report. Unwillingness by the two beachfront homeowners' groups to consider a saltwater restoration alternative was cited as a primary reason for calling a halt.

The reaction. Most adjacent stakeholder groups immediately began expressing a desire to see the EIR process restarted. The cities of Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Vista each wrote official letters urging the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to revisit the issue. Oceanside councilmember and Coastal Commissioner Esther Sanchez then took the lead by setting up a meeting in Sacramento with Natural Resources Secretary John Laird and CDF&G Chief Deputy Director Kevin Hunting. A delegation traveled to Sacramento in early December, led by Councilmember Sanchez and including Carlsbad Assistant City Manager John Coates, Carlsbad Associate Engineer Steve Jantz, and BVAS board member Andy Mauro.

Issues addressed. Issues discussed at the meeting included efforts by CDF&G to address concerns of beachfront homeowners' groups; the availability of funding needed to complete the EIR; the possibility that efforts expended to date might be wasted should the project be indefinitely delayed; the benefit of having a final EIR already completed should a future funding source for implementation of the restoration become available; and possible obligations of state and local jurisdictions to proceed with a restoration project to address requirements associated with the lagoon's designation as an "impaired water body".

The critical need. There is widespread agreement that the lagoon must be restored. Failure to do a restoration would result in a continuing decline in the lagoon's habitat values and biological and hydrological functioning. Water quality, flood protection, vector control, and aesthetic values would all be negatively effected.

Good news! The delegation was well-received in Sacramento, and pledges of cooperation and support were exchanged between the parties. Since the meeting, the Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation has received word that Secretary Laird has now directed CDF&G to use "all available resources" to complete the EIR. Efforts will be made to insure that the cities will be bigger participants as the process moves forward.

Much still needs to be done, but there now appears reason to hope that one day the Nature Center might look out on a healthy and fully-functioning coastal wetland.

Whelan Lake

There have been recent suggestions that the City of Oceanside might begin charging for the water it pumps into Whelan Lake from the adjacent sewage treatment facility. The lake is a dedicated bird sanctuary maintained by the non-profit Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Association. Under previous agreements in effect since 1958, the water has been provided free of charge.

About 50,000 gallons of reclaimed water are pumped into Whelan Lake each year. The water transfer is used to maintain the lake's water surface and to provide a reservoir for the excess supply of partially treated water produced by the sewage treatment facility. The new fee structure would result in an estimated annual expense of approximately \$14,000 for the reserve.

A number of people are raising concerns that this unanticipated expense, while representing a tiny percentage of additional revenue in the City of Oceanside's challenged budget, might seriously impact the very limited private funds available to the reserve for maintaining Whelan Lake. Several additional issues have also come to light which question the fairness of imposing a new charge for transferring excess reclaimed water to Whelan Lake.

BVAS, of course, considers the Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary a wonderful natural asset for the wildlife of our community, and certainly deserving of this modest level of operational support from the city.

We hope the City of Oceanside will turn a sympathetic ear to the sweet trills of birdsong emanating from Whelan Lake, and continue to freely provide the water necessary to maintain this important sanctuary. Join our monthly bird walk at Whelan Lake (See P. 3), and experience its beauty.



Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary—With a bird list approaching 200 species, the reserve provides a home for birds that seek a variety of habitats. The freshwater lake is edged by reeds and marsh. Extensive thickets of willow and other riparian plants give way to mixed chaparral. Rolling hills and grassy fields, healthy stands of cactus, a small oak grove—each caters to its own cast of visiting and resident birds.

January Birding Schedule—Join Us!

Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count

with John Haddock

Saturday, Jan. 7—8 a.m.

Whelan Lake is a bird reserve with a freshwater lake, riparian-edge habitat, grass-covered hillsides, and an oak grove. The varied habitat results in a nice assortment of bird species in all seasons. It is especially noted for its wintering duck populations and interesting sightings during fall and spring migration.

Directions: I-5 to Hwy. 76 East, left at Douglas, continue to light at North River Rd., go left on North River Rd. Pass through the entrance gate and follow the signs to the lake.

Leader: John Haddock, 760-941-7824.



Oceanside Harbor

with Steve Brad

Sunday, Jan. 8—8 a.m.

Birding at the Oceanside Harbor and mouth of the San Luis Rey River in January can be very productive for a wide variety of gulls, water birds, and wintering shorebirds. The bait barge at the harbor attracts the usual assortment of cormorants, pelicans, herons, and egrets, with mergansers, grebes, loons, and an occasional rarity thrown into the flock. The rocky breakwater can have surfbirds, turnstones, oystercatchers, and other species. The adjacent river mouth provides fresh water and a

sandy beach, perfect for loafing gulls, terns, and multiple species of sandpipers. If we have time and inclination, we may caravan down the coast a few miles to nearby Buccaneer Beach.

Directions: From I-5, take Harbor Drive west; stay on Harbor Drive by turning left at light; bear left at bottom of short hill onto Harbor Drive South and proceed to Joe's Crab Shack restaurant. We'll meet in the small parking lot between the restaurant and the Helgren's Sportfishing offices and docks. For plenty of free parking, drive through the one-lane undercrossing of the RR tracks, directly east of Joe's Crab Shack.

Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639; stevebrad1@earthlink.net.



Annual Appeal—Your BVAS 2011 Annual Year-end Appeal letter should have arrived in your mailbox by now. We know you receive solicitations for help from many worthy organizations at this time of year. Your generous support of BVAS helps provide the funds necessary to keep the Nature Center open and offer our many nature education programs.

Thank You!



Buena Vista Lagoon Bird Count

with Joan Fountain

Saturday, Jan. 28—8 a.m.



Become a citizen scientist! Join the regular monthly bird survey team and get to know the Buena Vista Lagoon. This monthly bird survey has been conducted by BVAS for many years, and the extensive database of bird sightings will be a factor for consideration as officials continue to study the best approach for managing, maintaining, and restoring this ecological reserve.

Directions: I-5 to I-78 East, take Jefferson St. exit, turn right and make another right turn onto Lagoon View Dr. Park along road at cul-de-sac.

Leader: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379.

Basic Birding Class at the Buena Vista Lagoon Landing

with Tom Troy

Saturday, Jan. 28—8:30 a.m.



Are you interested in learning a little more about the birds of our lagoon? Join the friendly group of fledgling birders that regularly turn out for Tom Troy's basic birding class at Buena Vista Lagoon on the last Saturday of each month. Everyone is invited to join the class for some informal, no-pressure birding and lots of friendly tips.

Directions: I-5 to I-78 East. From I-78, take Jefferson St. exit and turn right. At the light on Jefferson St. turn right again. Make an immediate right turn into the BVL Landing parking lot. Leader: Tom Troy, 760-420-7328.

Annual BVAS Pelagic Bird Trip—February 4



The BVAS Chapter's Sixth Annual Whale, Marine Mammal and Seabird outing takes place on Saturday, Feb. 4, in the heart of gray whale migration. Once again, we'll go out of San Diego Harbor to be closer to the productive waters surrounding the Point Loma and La Jolla kelp beds. This trip is designed for birders and non-birders alike. Full ticket price is \$59, but BVAS members can save \$20 with an early bird registration (deadline: Jan. 23).

Reservations: Call Point Loma Sportfishing at 619-223-1627, and let them know you'd like a spot on the Feb. 4 pelagic birding trip on board the *Grande*. For info about this and other pelagic birding trips throughout the year, as well as photos, trip lists, and tips, go to: www.socalbirding.com.

San Diego Bird Festival

March 1-4, 2012

For info and on-line registration, go to:

www.sandiegoaudubon.org

Preschool Nature Storytime

Monday, January 23, 10 a.m.

We can't find Little Bear anywhere. I think he is out looking for a nice den in which to spend these cold winter days. When you come to Storytime in January, we will find out more about Little Bear's habits. We will also talk about some of our other forest friends who like to "hibernate". Hope to see you then for more songs, stories, and crafts.



If you have any questions please call Mary Ellen at 760-918-6622



Happy New Year!

BVAS OFFICERS, BOARD*, AND CHAIRS

President	Dave Billings*	760-753-7925
Vice-President	Dennis Huckabay*	760-757-6437
Secretary	Kathy Billings*	760-753-7925
Treasurer	Sandy McMullen*	760-944-5690
Audubon Adventures	Ruth Gransbery	760-729-2240
Center Manager	Annette Schneider	760-945-8891
Christmas Bird Count	Terry Hunefeld*	760-908-3453
Conservation Co-Chair	Danny DiMento*	858-688-6891
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E-mail: ekindsvater1@gmail.com .		
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Field Trips	Andy Brumbaugh	760-434-3334
Field Trip Leader	Steve Brad*	760-633-1639
Gift Shop	Rosalyn Dong	760-806-1430
Library	C. J. DiMento	760-231-9096
Membership	Harvey Hart*	760-945-9601
Native Plant Club	Joan Bockman*	760-433-9401
Native Plant Garden	Joan Bockman*	760-433-9401
Nature Storytime	Mary Ellen Marquand	760-918-6622
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Pelagic Birding	Terry Hunefeld*	760-908-3453
Programs	Dennis Huckabay*	760-757-6437
Publicity	Kelly Deveney*	760-721-2441
Ruddy Duck Club	Kelly Deveney*	760-721-2441
Volunteers	Bob Crowell*	760-207-3884
Webmaster	Larry Spann: E-mail: larry@spannweb.net	

Follow BVAS on Facebook

Have you befriended BVAS yet on Facebook? Get on Facebook and search for "Buena Vista Audubon" to connect to our page, and please join our growing group of Facebook friends. We'll be posting regular updates in the coming weeks, including photos of the latest birdhouses being donated for February's Birdhouse Auction. We welcome you to join in the dialog with your comments and posted photos.



For those of you who haven't cracked the social media code yet but are interested in finding out what it's all about, log on at www.facebook.com and establish your Facebook account. It's simple, painless, and free. Once you have your account, just type in "Buena Vista Audubon" on the search line and you'll be connected to the BVAS Facebook page. We're still a little new at this ourselves, but we'll be posting more and more news and interesting nature-oriented tidbits in the weeks to come.



Two young naturalists use their Nature Treasure Hunt guides along the Nature Center trail.
—Posted on the BVAS Facebook page by Jennifer Skaptason.



Location:
2202 South Coast Hwy.
Oceanside, CA
(East side of street on north shore of lagoon)

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 480
Oceanside, CA 92049
Phone: 760-439-2473

Hours:
Tuesday-Saturday —
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday—1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Closed Monday

Website:
www.bvaudubon.org
E-mail:
bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net
Field Trip Hotline:
760-688-0660

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. The BVAS Nature Center and its educational programs will receive 100% of my contribution. Minimum donation suggested: \$25.

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

Send me info about the BVAS Legacy program.: ___

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

*Send me my newsletter by e-mail.

My Annual Donation

Enclosed is my donation to the 2011 BVAS year-end fundraising campaign to support the Nature Center, nature education and environmental conservation programs at BVAS.

Please bill my credit card:

Card # _____
CRN _____

Make Checks Payable to:
Buena Vista Audubon Society
P.O. Box 480
Oceanside, CA 92049

Buena Vista Native Plant Club

Sunday, January 15, 2 p.m.—The Buena Vista Native Plant Club meets at the Nature Center at 2 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month. Everyone’s welcome, regardless of their native plant knowledge or gardening expertise. Club members will answer your questions and help solve your gardening issues, as well as offer tips for native gardening activities appropriate for the season. And there’s always an opportunity to get a little “hands-on” experience among the native plants in the demonstration gardens or along the trails at the BVAS Nature Center. For more info, follow the Native Plant Club link at www.bvaudubon.org.

It’s time to propagate and grow! Our January meeting will focus on how to propagate cuttings of native plants in order to stretch our gardening dollars. This is the beginning of the growth cycle for many natives as our winter rains, coupled with a few sunny days, awaken established plants from their fall dormancy.

Volunteer News

Sue Sharon joined the BVAS volunteer ranks in 1996, rapidly becoming an invaluable member of the Nature Guides. She served as the BVAS Education Coordinator from 2000 to 2006, also serving as Publicity Chair during that time. Recently, Sue and her husband relocated south to the Olivenhain area of Encinitas, and Sue is taking a break from the Nature Guides in order to better deal with the time and energy requirements associated with settling in to their new home and yard. We wish her a “Happy New Home” (and hope to see her back at the Nature Center soon!).

Arla Stadler passed away in October, and BVAS has received several generous donations in her memory, honoring her friendship and good work on behalf of the Nature Center. Arla first became a BVAS volunteer in 1996, and often served as Nature Center receptionist. BVAS greatly benefited over the years from Arla’s dedicated involvement. She continued working on the newsletter mailings right up until her recent passing. Thank you, Arla, for all you meant to us.

The Ricky Hayes Memorial “V” at Vista H.S.

The BVAS Native Plant Club has received recognition for its role in helping with the landscaping surrounding a special monument at Vista High School. A large red letter “V” was installed late last year at Vista High School as a memorial in honor of former student and athlete, Ricky Hayes, who died much too young at the age of 25. An irrigation system and native plant landscaping was then installed around the memorial by Brenton Baker, Troop 752, as his Boy Scout Eagle Service project.



The “V” at Vista High School



Buena Vista Native Plant Club president, Joan Bockman designed the landscape element and provided general oversight for that portion of the project, and the Native Plant Club donated over 50 plants used in the installation. A bronze plaque sits adjacent to the “V”, defining the memorial and acknowledging the contributions of Eagle Scout Baker and the BVAS Native Plant Club. The memorial was dedicated at a ceremony before the November 2 football game between Vista High and Rancho Buena Vista High.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Lagoon Flyer



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BVAS Quick Calendar

January

- Sun. Jan. 1—New Year's Day Pelagic Trip
- Fri. Jan. 6—Board Meeting—9 a.m.
- Sat. Jan. 7—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
- Sun. Jan. 8—Oceanside Harbor Bird Walk—8 a.m.
- Fri. Jan. 13—Nature Guides Meeting—10 a.m.
- Sun. Jan. 15—Native Plant Club Meeting—2 p.m.
- Wed. Jan. 18—General Meeting—7 p.m.
- Mon. Jan. 23—~~Preschool Nature Storytime~~—10 a.m.
- Sat. Jan. 28—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
- Sat. Jan. 28—Basic Birding at BVL Landing—8:30 a.m.

Coming in February

- Sat. Feb 4—Annual BVAS Pelagic Bird Trip—8 a.m.-1:30 p.m.



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Clark's Grebe Now Confirmed Breeding at Buena Vista Lagoon

A pair of Clark's grebes accompanied by their young chick were observed at Buena Vista Lagoon in October. The sighting was made by Paul Lehman, president of San Diego Field Ornithologists, and was the first confirmation of nesting at the lagoon by this species. The Clark's grebe is distinguished from its close cousin, the western grebe, by a less extensive black cap that doesn't extend down below the eye. Western grebes have been observed nesting at the lagoon for a number of years.



Clark's Grebe

—C. Mayne