

# Buena Vista Audubon Society

Birding Together Since 1953



Jón Baldur Hlíðberg

# Lagoon Flyer

## November General Meeting

Wednesday, November 19

## Australia— A Birding Experience

with Fred Roberts

6:30 p.m. Social—7 p.m. Program

Australia. The name invokes visions of red-sand deserts, eucalyptus, ancient tropical rain forest, and exotic mammals like the kangaroo, echidna, and platypus. About the size of the continental United States and isolated for millions of years, Australia has developed a unique and interesting suite of plants and animals. About 300 species of birds are endemic to Australia, found nowhere else. For the bird enthusiast or naturalist, Australia is often high on the list for a visit. Here you can find honeyeaters, emus, fairy-wrens, cassowaries, lyrebirds, and pardalotes, birds with no counterparts in North America.

Fred Roberts has been fortunate to travel several times to the

Land Down Under, exploring Queensland, the Darwin region, the Blue Mountains, Alice Springs, and the entire west coast. During these travels, Fred photographed over 200 species of birds. Sit back and enjoy a virtual tour of this varied, wonderful land and its avian occupants.

Fred Roberts graduated from UC Santa Barbara in 1982, worked in the herbarium at the Museum of Systematic Biology at UCI, and for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He is an accomplished botanist and author or co-author of several books including *An Illustrated Guide to the Oaks of the Southern California Floristic Province*. However his interests have ranged far beyond plants. Currently he conducts surveys, writes books, and paints watercolor portraits of wildlife, especially birds. Fred enjoys birding and bird photography as a serious hobby. The list of birds he has kept since high school has topped 1,800 species.

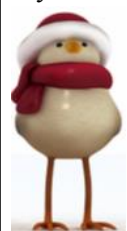


*Cassowaries are shy, flightless birds of the deep forest. Primarily fruit-eaters, they are the second-heaviest birds in the world, and can live to be 40-50 years old.*

*We're almost sure the Nature Center will be ready for the November program, but just to be sure, you might want to call first!*

## Happy Holidays!

BVAS wishes all the best to you during the upcoming holiday season.



**NOTE: As is the custom, there will be no BVAS general meeting or newsletter in December.**

## Vote for the Water Bond and the Environment

As a non-profit, 501 (C)3 organization, BVAS cannot endorse specific candidates for elected office, although we can weigh in on propositions placed before the voters. Audubon California strongly supports Proposition 1, Water Bond (2014), and so does BVAS. Among other things, Prop 1 would provide funds to be used for acquisition and conservation of wetlands in California. Future projects that mirror the current BVAS campaign to purchase and restore wetlands properties in Oceanside, could receive funding under the provisions of Prop 1.



We can also remind our members that not all candidates equally share our love of nature and a commitment to acquire, preserve, and protect the natural open space in our community that sustains native wildlife and plants. If those things are important to you, you might like to review the ballot recommendations of these two conservation-minded groups whose organizational structures do allow for endorsements:

San Diego Sierra Club: <http://sandiego.sierraclub.org/Vote/index.asp?content=2014N>

California League of Conservation Voters: <http://www.ecovote.org/page/endorsements>

# Ridgway's Rail Society News

By Andy Mauro

**Join the "Society"**—Did you receive your letter this month seeking support for the purchase of the last remaining undeveloped piece of property bordering the Buena Vista Lagoon? (You know, it's that lot across the street from the Nature Center!) The letter also identified the other target of the BVAS land acquisition campaign—31 acres of land next to the San Luis Rey River and just a short hop west of the Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary.

For those who haven't yet sent in a donation, we hope you'll take a moment to think about what's at stake.

**Lagoon parcel**—The lagoon parcel is the southern gateway to the City of Oceanside. It's a bit of grassy open space at the edge of the lagoon, a gentle transition in the landscape before reaching the busy commercial strip of southern Oceanside. For travelers heading south toward Carlsbad, the property affords a wonderful lagoon vista, the first glimpse of the precious wetland that separates the two cities and provides a respite from an otherwise unbroken span of urban development. This property represents a last chance to recapture a tiny bit of coastal wetlands, one of the most endangered habitats in Southern California. The waters of the lagoon lap up onto the property being

sought, and endangered species breed in the marsh reeds.

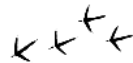
**River parcel**—The San Luis Rey River property is similarly unique and precious, while representing a completely different type of sensitive habitat. Here, the purchase and restoration would directly benefit a whole host of endangered riparian and chaparral plant and animal species. The Department of the Navy has already shown its support for this purchase by pledging to cover up to half of the total cost. Acquisition of this parcel would connect large swaths of open space, expand essential wildlife corridors, help buffer protected lands from encroaching development, and complement the important natural resources provided at nearby Whelan Lake.



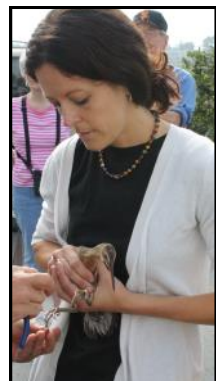
**Funds are accumulating**—Even before the October appeal letter was mailed, BVAS had received over 40 donations from people who had found out about the efforts to purchase these properties. In addition to the Navy's large commitment, pledges of over \$200,000 have been received from four different conservation groups. BVAS is in discussions with several other potential funding entities.

**Turning dreams into reality**—Opportunities to purchase and restore important conservation land like this are difficult to come by, and time is of the essence. BVAS is attempting to raise \$3.5 million of needed funds within the next 12 months. We hope you'll make a generous donation and help BVAS accomplish this wonderful dream.

## Tracks and Rails



Railroad tracks run along the western edge of the 3.5-acre parcel of land next to Buena Vista Lagoon which BVAS hopes to purchase and restore. The tracks continue south toward Carlsbad, crossing the trestle bridge that spans the western-most lagoon basin. The rumble of a train as it crosses the trestles, especially one in the early dawn hours, often elicits a rapid series of harsh, clacking calls from a male Ridgway's rail. The bird is jealously guarding territory he's staked out in the cattails and bulrushes growing along the lagoon's edge. Fighting off the regular intrusions of a 200-ton locomotive is a big job for a bird that barely tips the scales at 6 ounces, but the bravado demonstrated in his determined response gives one hope that he is up to the task. And BVAS wants to help him out.



*BVAS Librarian C.J. DiMento, carefully holds a rail prior to its release at the lagoon in 2011.*

BVAS has been asked to participate in a

special project now being planned for 2015/16. The project involves rails and tracking, but forget the railroad. In this case, it's the Ridgway's rail who will be the star.

Richard Zembal has been studying clapper rails throughout California for years. Clapper rails were reclassified as a new species in 2014, and are now known as Ridgway's rails. Zembal and his team perform annual surveys of the small population of rails in California, carefully recording their numbers and distribution throughout the state, noting behavioral characteristics, environmental threats, and other important details that might help in the campaign to preserve this endangered species. He has received a grant to release a number of captive-bred Ridgway's rails, each fitted with a tiny radio transmitter attached to its tail feathers. He's currently seeking approval to release the rails at Buena Vista Lagoon. If all goes as planned, BVAS volunteers will track the movement of each of the rails for 6-8 weeks or so, as they disperse and set up territories following their release. The information gathered could affect some of the specific design criteria now being considered as the lagoon restoration planning moves forward.

Insuring suitable rail habitat at the lagoon should be a key priority. Only 4 pairs of rails were counted there in 2014.

## Birding with BVAS

### Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk



Saturdays, Nov. 1 and Dec. 6—8 a.m.  
with John Haddock

**Wintering at Whelan**—We'll expect to see rafts of American widgeons and northern shovelers on the lake, and be on the lookout for a few overwintering surprises.

**Directions:** I-5 to Hwy. 76 East; turn left at Douglas Dr.; continue to the 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.

### San Dieguito River Park Bird Walk

Third Saturdays—Nov. 15 and Dec. 20—8 a.m.  
with John Haddock

**Directions:** The monthly walks alternate between the two locations, as listed below.

**Nov. 15—San Andres Dr. Trailhead**—From I-5, take Via de la Valle east; turn right on San Andres Dr. Go to end of road.

**Dec. 20—Crest Canyon Trail**—From I-5, take Via de la Valle west; left on Jimmy Durante Blvd., left on San Dieguito Rd. Drive east about 1 mile to trailhead.



### November/December Surprise Walks

Thursdays, Nov. 13 and Dec 11—8 a.m.  
with Steve Brad

Join our once-a-month weekday surprise-location bird walk. Where we go is based on recent reports and Steve's personal surveying. If you'd like to get on the monthly Surprise Walk notification list, please send an e-mail with your name, phone number and e-mail address to:

[stevebrad1@earthlink.net](mailto:stevebrad1@earthlink.net).

Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639.  
Day-of-trip cell phone, 760-274-5256.



### Upcoming Pelagic Bird Trips



**Saturday, Nov. 1**—An 8-hour boat trip on Nov. 1 will close out the BVAS pelagic birding calendar for 2014. This is a good trip for returning winter and late migrant seabirds.

**New Year's Day**—San Diego Field Ornithologists will ring in 2015 with its traditional New Year's Day pelagic trip. SDFO membership info: [www.sandiegofieldornithologists.org](http://www.sandiegofieldornithologists.org).

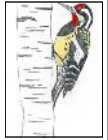
For schedules, fees, and all pelagic birding info, visit:

**[www.socalbirding.com](http://www.socalbirding.com)**.

Sign up at Pt. Loma Sportfishing: 619-223-1627.

Register early to insure your spot and get Early Bird pricing.

### November/December Birding



Lake Guajome—Sunday, Nov. 9—8 a.m.  
with Steve Brad

Guajome County Park, with its freshwater ponds, marsh, willows, towering eucalyptus, grassy fields, and landscaped park, provides one of the most productive urban birding spots in North County. The park is known for attracting sapsuckers, exciting warblers, sparrows, and other unusual overwintering species.

**Directions:** From I-5, take Hwy. 76 East 7.5 miles to Guajome Lake Rd. Turn right and proceed about a quarter mile to the overnight campers' entrance to the park. Park along Guajome Lake Rd. near the campers' entrance. We'll meet at the entrance at 8 a.m. Leader: Steve Brad, [stevebrad1@earthlink.net](mailto:stevebrad1@earthlink.net), 760-633-1639. Day-of-trip cell phone, 760-274-5256.

**NOTE:** The December lagoon count will be conducted as part of the Oceanside Christmas Bird Count.

### Buena Vista Lagoon Bird Count and

### Basic Birding Workshop

Saturday, Nov. 29 and Dec. 27—8 a.m.  
with Joan Fountain and Tom Troy

Join the BVAS birders for our basic birding workshop and bird count at Buena Vista Lagoon. No experience necessary. We meet at the Nature Center at 8 a.m. and then caravan around the lagoon to a series of selected stops for some friendly, informal, no-pressure birding.

**Directions:** Meet at the Nature Center parking lot, 2202 South Coast Hwy., Oceanside.

Leaders: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379;  
Tom Troy, 760-420-7328.



### 2014 Oceanside Christmas Bird Count

We know we're pretty lucky to be living in San Diego. One measure of our good fortune is the high number of species we're able to tally on our annual Christmas Bird Counts. The BVAS-sponsored Oceanside Christmas Bird Count generally ranks as one of the top 12 CBCs in the country in number of species. This year's count is scheduled for Sat., Dec. 27. If you didn't participate in last year's count but would like information on getting involved, please send an e-mail to the coordinator, Andy Mauro, at [akamauro@cox.net](mailto:akamauro@cox.net). Join us. You'll likely end up with bragging rights over all your birder friends up north and back east.





# BVAS Migrating Birders

**Florida trip sold out**—The BVAS Migrating Birders “Spring in Southern Florida” trip scheduled for next April 19-29 has already been fully booked. A group of birding buddies quickly snatched up the six spots as soon as the trip was announced in the October newsletter. Still interested? Sign up for the waiting list in case of cancellations.

**Canada trip still available**—If you were thinking of joining the Migrating Birders in 2015, there’s still room on the Canada trip in early summer. The “Summer in Northern Alberta” trip will go from June 24-July 5 and will highlight the breeding birds of Canada’s Rocky Mountains and boreal forest. The trip will be on the hunt for more than 20 species of “eastern” warblers and up to 20 different sparrows. The trip will be



a full-service package led by Steve Shunk of Paradise Birding.

**Driving birding trips for 2015**—BVAS is working on plans for some “drive to” birding adventures for 2015. By avoiding air travel, taking advantage of carpooling, and designing trips generally less than a week in length, these excursions can provide a more economical way to visit some of the best birding destinations in the west. Look for announcements of upcoming “short hop” migration trips beginning in the January newsletter.

**Design your own birding adventure**—It’s fun to go birding with your friends! If you’re thinking of getting a group together for a custom-designed birding adventure of your own, the BVAS Migrating Birders team would be happy to help with all the arrangements. Call Migrating Birders Coordinator Janine Free (760-908-7334) to discuss your interests.

**More information available**—Trip flyers for the Canada trip are at the Nature Center or on the Paradise Birding website ([www.paradisebirding.com](http://www.paradisebirding.com)). For questions, call Janine Free (760-908-7334), or Steve Shunk (541-408-1753).

## 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
Bird House Auction	Kelly Deveney	760-721-2441
Board Member	Jacques Domercq*	760-583-1961
Center Manager	Annette Schneider	760-945-8891
Christmas Bird Count	Andy Mauro*	760-753-1266
Conservation Co-Chair	Danny DiMento*	858-688-6891
Conservation Co-Chair	Joan Herskowitz*	760-942-5167
Circulation	Lisa Hart	760-945-9601
Education Chair	Fran MacNeel	760-929-9158
Facilities/Exhibits	Danny DiMento*	858-688-6891
Field Trips	Andy Brumbaugh	760-434-3334
Field Trip Leader	Steve Brad*	760-633-1639
Gift Shop	Susie Martin*	760-580-9440
Library	C. J. DiMento	760-231-9096
Membership	Harvey Hart*	760-945-9601
Migrating Birders Trips	Janine Free*	760-908-7334
Native Plant Club	Joan Bockman*	760-433-9401
Native Plant Garden	Joan Bockman*	760-433-9401
Nature Storytime	Mary Ellen Marquand	760-918-6622
Newsletter Editor	Andy Mauro*	760-753-1266
	E-mail: <a href="mailto:akamauro@cox.net">akamauro@cox.net</a>	
Outreach Booth	Susie Martin*	760-580-9440
Pelagic Birding	Website:	<a href="http://www.socalbirding.com">www.socalbirding.com</a>
Programs	Dennis Huckabay*	760-757-6437
Publicity	—Open Position— <b>Contact Bob Crowell</b>	
Ridgway’s Rail Society	Andy Mauro*	760-753-1266
Ruddy Duck Club	—Open Position— <b>Contact Bob Crowell</b>	
Volunteers	Bob Crowell*	760-207-3884
	E-mail: <a href="mailto:kbcrowell@cox.net">kbcrowell@cox.net</a>	
Webmaster	Larry Spann	E-mail: <a href="mailto:larry@spannweb.net">larry@spannweb.net</a>

## Fingers Still Crossed!

We know we’re getting close, but we’re still a bit unsure about the final completion date of the view deck remodeling project at the Nature Center. Our target date is now November 1, but we’ve been fooled before! We suggest you call first (760-439-2473) to check before attending a November event. We apologize for any inconvenience.



**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.

**BVAS Website:**  
[www.bvaudubon.org](http://www.bvaudubon.org)  
**Pelagic Birding Website:**  
[www.socalbirding.com](http://www.socalbirding.com)  
**E-mail:**  
[bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net)



### 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 programs will receive 100% of my contribution. Minimum donation suggested: \$25. My donation: \$ 25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$ 100 \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ \*E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please send me the digital edition of the Lagoon Flyer by e-mail each month. It's a week earlier, in full color, has extra features, and saves BVAS and the environment the cost of printing and postage. Sign me up!*

*\*Please send me my newsletter by e-mail. →*



*Uncle Scrooge is not generally known for his philanthropy, but even he is pleased to donate to BVAS during the holidays. Won't you join him?*

*\*\*I want to preserve sensitive habitat in North County. Please designate my contribution to the Ridgway's Rail Society.*

**Please bill my credit card:**

Card \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CRN \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable to:**

Buena Vista Audubon  
P.O. Box 480  
Oceanside, CA 92049



### BVAS Native Plant Club

**Monthly Meeting, Sunday, Nov. 16 and Dec. 21—2 p.m.**

The Buena Vista Native Plant Club support group meets at the Nature Center at 2 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. Everyone's welcome, regardless of native plant knowledge or gardening expertise. We'll answer questions and help solve gardening issues, as well as offer tips for native gardening activities appropriate for the season.



**Garden Work Party: Every Monday—10 a.m.**

Interested gardeners are invited to join the gardening group at the Nature Center for *Monday Morning with the Natives*. We meet every Monday at 10 a.m. for some casual gardening and friendly chatter.



**School Garden Days: Every Monday and Wednesday.**

Come volunteer and have some fun in the dirt at our BVAS-sponsored school native plant gardens. Garden times are 2 p.m. Mondays at South Oceanside, 9 a.m. Wednesdays at Mission, and 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays at Laurel. Joan Bockman and the kids find bugs and discuss important things like scat and decomposition. Cool!



### View Corridor Over the Lagoon Parcel

On an average day, 9,156 motorists drive south along So. Coast Hwy. past this spot, catching a first glimpse of the Buena Vista Lagoon and, just maybe, a hovering kestrel. Is this you? You can help BVAS preserve this precious view by donating to the Ridgway's Rail Society.



### Preschool Nature Storytime

**Monday, November 24, 10 a.m.**

Where do all the wonderful foods we eat come from? Many of them come from a tiny seed planted in the ground! At Thanksgiving dinner we often eat foods that grew just this way. We will be talking



about seeds and their "off-springs" at this month's Storytime. We hope to see you on Nov. 24 at 10 a.m. for fun with songs, a story and a take-home craft.

Questions? Call Mary Ellen: 760-918-6622.



**Oceanside Library Co-Hosts BVAS Meeting**—The Nature Center was unavailable for the BVAS General Meeting and program in October due to the remodeling project. Never fear, the Oceanside Library saved the day by providing the use of its Community Room for the evening. It's nice to have friends!

*Kids' Corner At the Nature Center*

### Joey's and Johnny's Clubhouse

**Third Sunday, November 16 and December 21—1-4 p.m.**

*Kids and parents are invited to stop by the Nature Center for some informal nature fun.*



# 2014 Oceanside Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 27

*An Oceanside Holiday Tradition Since 1946*



## Lagoon Flyer



BUENA VISTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 480

OCEANSIDE, CA 92049

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92056

## BVAS Quick Calendar



Sat. Nov. 1—8-hour BVAS Pelagic Birding Trip  
Sat. Nov. 1 & Dec. 6—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.  
Fri. Nov. 7 & Dec. 5—Board Meeting—9 a.m.  
Sun. Nov. 9—Guajome County Park Bird Walk—8 a.m.  
Thur. Nov. 13 & Dec. 11—Surprise Bird Walk—8 a.m.  
Fri. Nov. 14 & Dec. 12—Nature Guides Meeting—10 a.m.  
Sat. Nov. 15 & Dec. 20—San Dieguito River Bird Walk—8 a.m.  
Sun. Nov. 16 & Dec. 21—Joey's and Johnny's Clubhouse—1-4 p.m.  
Sun. Nov. 16 & Dec. 21—Native Plant Club—2 p.m.  
Wed. Nov. 19—General Meeting—6:30 p.m.

### ***"Australia—A Birding Experience"***

Mon. Nov. 24—Preschool Nature Storytime—10 a.m.  
Sat. Nov. 29 & Dec. 27—Basic Birding and  
B. V. Lagoon Bird Count—8 a.m.

*NOTE: The participants and results of the Dec. 27 Basic Birding and B.V. Lagoon Count will be a part of the Oceanside CBC.*

Sat. Dec. 27—Oceanside Christmas Bird Count

### **Additional Coming Attractions:**

Thur. Jan. 1, 2015—SDFO's New Year's Day Pelagic Bird Trip.  
TBA—Nature Center View Deck Dedication Celebration.

*First County Record!*

## Neotropic Cormorant

Birders in town for the Western Field Ornithologists' convention in October were excited to discover a rare neotropic cormorant while on their birding excursion to Camp Pendleton's Lake O'Neill. It was the first county record for this species, bringing the county's bird list total to 516 species.

The neotropic cormorant differs from its commonly encountered cousin, the double-crested cormorant, by its smaller body size and proportionally longer tail. As their name implies, neotropic cormorants are generally found further south, with only limited populations extending into a few southern and southwestern states.

—Photo by Trent Stanley

