Observing birds in the open ocean represents the last frontier to many local birders. How does one go about pelagic birding anyway? What are we looking for, and how can we improve our odds of success? Our January general meeting program promises to be a simple primer on all we need to know about pelagic birding. Please come and see what all the fuss is about!

Terry Hunefeld was bitten with the pelagic birding bug about six years ago when he did the San Diego Christmas Bird Count at sea with Dave Povey. Since then, Terry has been to sea at every opportunity on private boats, charter boats and even NOAA research ships.

At the January 22 meeting, Terry will talk us through a virtual pelagic birding trip, showing us birds we expect to see on the BVAS Pelagic Birding Trip scheduled for January 31. (See Page 2 for trip details.) We’ll get some special tips and hints, and learn some subtle clues for identification. Also covered will be what to wear, what to bring, and where to position ourselves on the boat.

The evening promises to be an informative and inspirational look at the challenges, joys, and rewards that await the San Diego birder who is willing to cast off in search of new birds and new adventures. Please join us, even if you’re just curious. You never know, that pelagic bug just might sneak up and bite you, too!

Paul Grigsby passed away on December 5, 2008. Paul was a member of BVAS longer than anyone else, having joined us over 50 years ago in 1955 or ‘56 when he moved here to teach shop in Oceanside junior high schools. I last saw Paul at our September General Meeting on the restoration of Buena Vista Lagoon. Over the years Paul did just about everything at BVAS, including a stint as president, but our debt to Paul is mainly for his unofficial contributions. In anticipation of the Nature Center, Paul in 1986 planted many of the California natives that grace our Nature Trail today, and nurtured them for many years thereafter. He chaired the committee of three (Cora Wilson and Dave Rorick were the others) who designed the Nature Center. For years, whenever an odd job or repair was needed in or around the Center it was always “call Paul”. Paul did so much to plan, build, landscape, maintain, and repair our Nature Center and its surroundings. At the end, he also left a generous bequest to Buena Vista Audubon Society, ensuring that his wonderful legacy will remain intact for many future generations. We will miss you, Paul.

—Dennis Huckabay
Saturday, January 31, Oceanside Harbor
Buena Vista Audubon’s 3rd Annual
Seabirds, Dolphins & Whales Trip

Few sights are more breathtaking than a breaching whale, a cavalry of hundreds of dolphin leaping all around the boat, or a feeding frenzy of thousands of seabirds brawling over bait fish. These are all sights seen regularly by ocean-loving birders and nature enthusiasts just a few miles off shore.

Please join us on the Third Annual Buena Vista Audubon Seabird, Dolphin & Whale Trip out of Oceanside Harbor. We’ll spend a fun morning at sea in search of jaegers, shearwater, other seabirds, sea lions, dolphin and whales.

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, January 31, 2009 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

ARRIVAL TIME: Please arrive at Helgren’s between 7:15 and 7:30 a.m. for an on-time departure at 8 a.m. Time and tide waits for no late arrivals.

QUESTIONS: All questions about the boat, parking, reservations, or the weather should be directed to Helgren’s Whale Watching and Sportfishing at (760) 722-2133.

EXPERTS will be on board to help you find and identify seabirds, whales and other marine mammals. The BVAS meeting on January 22 at 7 p.m. is open to all and will offer a seabird ID class. (See Page 1 for more info).

WHAT TO BRING: Binoculars, camera, favorite field guide, sunblock, lip protection, sunglasses, pen, notebook, hat, water, non-greasy snacks like saltines, pretzels, granola bars, etc. Our boat will have a full galley.

MARINE MAMMALS: 2008 marine mammals included a pod of common dolphin, a pod of bottlenose dolphin and a spouting gray whale that surfaced within several hundred feet of the boat to the delight of all aboard. In short, we had a fun morning of birds, marine mammals, and friends.

2007 TRIP REPORT: Two years ago participants were treated to a tremendous feeding frenzy of dolphin, gulls, shearwater and jaegers. Thousands of birds were soaring, diving, screaming, brawling and gorging themselves on bait fish chased to the surface by dolphin.

2008 TRIP REPORT: One of the highlights last year was great views of a Short-tailed Shearwater, a "lifer" for many on board. Among other species, we saw northern fulmars, Bonaparte’s gulls, rhinoceros and Cassin’s auklets, at least two species of jaegers, and common murre.

Pelagic Birding Website
Tips, Pics, and Trips
www.socalbirding.com
Sponsored by BVAS

WHALES: Gray whale migration runs from mid-December to mid-March. Over 15,000 peaceful "giants of the sea" make the trek from the chilly Alaskan seas to the warm-water breeding lagoons of Baja California. During mid-January, as many as 200 whales have been seen off the San Diego coast.

—Terry Hunefeld
Upcoming Trips—January

Sat.—Jan. 3—8 a.m.—Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count. Whelan Lake is a bird sanctuary, with a freshwater lake and riparian edge habitat. Directions: 1-5 to Hwy. 76. East on Hwy. 76. Turn left at Douglas and continue to light at North River Rd. Turn left and meet at the cul-de-sac at the end of the road by the entrance gate. Leader: John Haddock, 760-941-7824.

Sat.—Jan. 10—9 a.m.—San Elijo Lagoon. Join BVAS members and San Elijo Lagoon docents on the regular monthly nature hike at this ecological reserve featuring tidal mudflats, coastal wetlands, and five other distinct plant and animal communities. Directions: I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe. West to N. Rios Ave. Right to cul-de-sac at end of road. No facilities.

Sun.—Jan. 11—8 a.m.—Santee Lakes. The Santee Lakes offers a series of freshwater recreational lakes and landscaped parkland, with adjacent chaparral. The mixed habitat is dependable for many ducks and other wetland species, and often attracts a variety of interesting wintering birds. Those interested in carpooling meet at 7:30 a.m. at the 1-5/La Costa Ave. Park and Ride. Directions to Santee Lakes: From I-5 southbound, take I-805 to Hwy. 52. Head east on Hwy. 52 about 10 miles to Mast Blvd. exit. Go left on Mast Blvd. to Fanita Pky. Turn right on Fanita Pky. Proceed to the entrance to Santee Lakes (on the right). Meet in parking lot just past entrance. Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639.

Sat.—Jan. 31—8 a.m.—Noon—Oceanside Pelagic Birding Trip. Join BVAS and our team of expert pelagic birders for our Third Annual “Seabirds, Dolphins, and Whales Trip” out of Oceanside Harbor. See Page 2 for details.

Sat.—Jan. 31—8 a.m.—Buena Vista Lagoon Monthly Bird Count. Freshwater wetland. Directions: I-5 to 78 East. Exit Jefferson. Turn right and take another immediate right on Lagoon View Dr. Go to end of road. Leader: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379.

Sat.—Jan. 31—8:30-10:30 a.m.—Basic Birding Class at the Buena Vista Lagoon Landing. Directions: I-5 to Hwy. 78. Exit Jefferson. Turn right and go to stoplight. Turn right and park in Landing parking lot on the right hand side of road. Leader: Tom Troy, 760-967-6915.

Birders of all skill levels are always welcome to join us!

Coming in February

Ramona Hawkwatch
Join BVAS on its annual trip to the Ramona grasslands on February 21. We’ll join the Ramona Hawkwatch tour, visit the Wildlife Research Institute facility, and then finish off our outing with picnic lunches and some birding in the oak woodlands of nearby Dos Picos County Park. The Ramona Grasslands is “raptor central” at this time of year, with as many as nineteen species of wintering and resident owls and hawks present. The Wildlife Research Institute has a wonderful interpretative center and offers special raptor programs. Check the February Lagoon Flyer for details.

Last Chance—Just Three Spots Still Available!

Birding Jalisco, Mexico—April 1-7, 2009
Join Buena Vista Audubon's trip to Western Mexico, an area of exceptional bird diversity including many endemic species. We’ll be staying at a guest ranch 30 miles south of Puerto Vallarta for the 6-night/7-day trip. Each day we’ll venture out to diverse habitats, including coast, mangrove, lowland thorn scrub, deciduous forests, and pine-oak woodland. Cost for the trip is $1,500 (single occupancy add $150). The trip includes professional guide service, six nights’ lodging, all meals and snacks, and local transportation. Airfare to Puerto Vallarta extra. A $500 deposit locks in your reservation.

A complete description is posted on the BVAS web-site: www.bvaudubon.org. For further info, a bird list from previous trips, or to sign up for the trip, contact Andy Brumbaugh at 760-434-3334 or by e-mail: andybbirder@yahoo.com.
Preschool Nature Storytime

Here’s to a new year of fun learning about our natural world! Although we don’t find these creatures in our lagoon or in our country, I thought it would be fun to explore some creatures in the wintery clime of Antartica. Our waddling black-and-white friend will be one of them. Can you guess who? Come join us on Monday, Jan.26, at 10 a.m. to find out. Please call if you have questions or a playgroup planning to attend. —Mary Ellen—760-918-6622

Ruddy Duck Club

Your business can show its commitment to the ever-growing “Green Revolution” in North County by going “Ruddy” in 2009. Embrace nature and become a Ruddy Duck Club member. Join our special group of local companies who sponsor Buena Vista Audubon programs at the Nature Center with an annual donation of $100 or more—it’s the natural thing to do! For more information, please contact Tom Troy at 760-967-6915.

BVAS OFFICERS, BOARD* AND CHAIRS

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Dennis Huckabay*</td>
<td>757-6437</td>
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<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Bill Jones*</td>
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<td>Audubon Adventures</td>
<td>Ruth Gransbery</td>
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<td>Christmas Bird Count</td>
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<td>Andy Brumbaugh*</td>
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<td>Steve Brad*</td>
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<td>918-6622</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>Larry Spann*</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:larry@spannweb.net">larry@spannweb.net</a></td>
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Volunteer News

Audubon Adventures.

We’re pleased to announce that long-time member and volunteer Ruth Gransbury will be taking over responsibility for overseeing the distribution of Audubon Adventures nature education program kits to area classrooms. It’s a big program—BVAS currently provides nature education kits to 50 local classrooms each month at an annual cost of $2,500.

Wanted: Novice Nature Guides! Over 3,000 students visit the Nature Center each year to view the exhibits and learn a little more about the plants and animals of our community. Would you like to help our young visitors learn a little more about the natural world around us? Become a BVAS Nature Guide! You don’t need a lot of prior nature knowledge or experience to become a good Nature Guide. We offer a simple training program, experienced mentors, prepared scripts, and a wealth of nature exhibits to make it easy and rewarding to join our ranks. Call Renee Racine at 760-635-0867 for more info.

Welcome New Volunteer Receptionists. Sue Scott and Stephanie Pineo have joined Bob Crowell as our newest receptionists. As 2009 dawns on us, we have 22 dedicated people working each month. It takes two receptionists a day, each working a three-hour shift, to keep our wonderful Nature Center open. The friendships we make and the people we greet from in and out of state are only a couple of the perks of the job. If you are interested in beginning the new year by volunteering, either as a receptionist, a nature guide, or in any of the many other volunteer positions we have available, contact the Nature Center at 760-439-2473 or Mary Ellen at 760-918-6622.

Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center

Tue.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  Sun. 1 p.m.-4 p.m.  Closed Mon.

760-439-2473  2202 South Coast Hwy., Oceanside, CA  East side of street just north of lagoon crossing

Mailing Address:  P.O. Box 480  Oceanside, CA  92049-0480

Website: www.bvaudubon.org

E-mail: 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. 100% of my contribution will go to support the BVAS Nature Center and its educational programs. Minimum donation required: $25.

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

Name____________________________
Address__________________________
City, State, Zip ___________________
Phone___________________________
E-mail___________________________

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

Thank You!

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**Buena Vista Native Plant Club**

January 18
2 p.m.—Nature Center

The Native Plant Club meets on the third Sunday of every month. It’s January, and some of our natives are already looking good. Everyone is welcome, whether or not you have a green thumb. For more information about native plant gardening visit: www.bvaudubon.org.

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**Memorial Gifts**

**Remembering Dave and Petey**—BVAS has recently received financial donations in memory of two of our chapter’s most passionate founding members, David Rorick and Petey Tade. We think back on these two BVAS stalwarts with special fondness and appreciation for their many years of friendship and service.

**Hafslund Geological Collection**—BVAS gratefully thanks Carmelita Hafslund for her donation of geological specimens collected by her late husband Robert H. Hafslund. Robert Hafslund was father to Nature Center volunteers Emmy and Steve Scarano. He was a rock hound, explorer and jewelry maker. His lifetime collection will significantly enhance our upcoming geological exhibit at the Center.

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**Nature Art and Garden Sale A Big Success**

If you missed last month’s BVAS Nature Art and Garden Sale, you missed some great bargains on lots of neat stuff. A big “Thank You” to our sale coordinators, Doug and Annette, the many members who brought in their donations for the sale, our hard-working volunteers who made the signs and manned the tables, the artists from Preserve Calavara, and a host of enthusiastic buyers. Over $1,000 was raised to support the Nature Center.

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**Audubon’s Starr Ranch Spring Workshops**

March 7-8

Participate in our spring workshop at Audubon California’s 4,000-acre Starr Ranch Sanctuary in southeast Orange County. We’ll use a variety of survey techniques to compare bird species and diversity found in upland oak woodlands to those found in riparian woodlands. Learn about the importance of riparian woodlands for rare breeding birds and neotropical migrants.

**Saturday, March 7: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.**

**Bird Monitoring** – After an intro on identifying woodland birds by sound and sight, we’ll learn how to conduct point count surveys, playback surveys, and evening owl surveys. We’ll visit many beautiful sites within oak and riparian woodlands throughout Starr Ranch. BYO lunch, dinner provided. ($80 for day only, $85 if camping).

**Sunday, March 8: 7 a.m.—noon**

**Bird Banding** – After an intro to bird banding, we’ll use mist nets to survey for woodland birds. At the end of the morning we’ll compile and analyze our data. ($37.50).

For reservations & questions please contact: Stephan Lorenz 949-858-0309, slorenz@mail.com
QUICK CALENDAR

Sat. Jan. 3—Whelan Lake—8 a.m.
Mon. Jan. 5—Nature Guides—10 a.m.
Fri. Jan. 9—Board Meeting—9 a.m.
Sat. Jan. 10—San Elijo Lagoon—9 a.m.
Sun. Jan. 11—Santee Lakes Bird Trip—8 a.m.
Sun. Jan. 18—Native Plant Club—2 p.m.
Thurs. Jan. 22—Pelagic Birding Program—7 p.m.
Sat. Jan. 31—B.V. Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. Jan. 31—Basic Birding—8:30 a.m.
Sat. Jan. 31—BVAS Pelagic Birding Boat Trip—8 a.m.

Interesting Birds in San Diego

Worm-eating Warbler

San Diego County birders are blessed to be able to pursue their passion in perhaps the best birding county in the United States. Our weather is typically so mild that birds literally flock to San Diego to spend their winters. Many wintering species show up in great numbers, but a few fall into the rare or unusual category. Back in October, Steve Brad was birding in San Dieguito Park with his dog, Rock, when he heard a bird call that sounded “different”. It turned out to be a worm-eating warbler, an eastern species considered rare in San Diego. Lots of birders were ultimately able to see Steve’s bird, and bird photographer Eric Kallen was able to capture the image. Congratulations, Steve, on your exciting find, and thank you, Eric, for sharing your photos.