Tom Stephan of Ramona has practiced the ancient art of falconry for forty years and has successfully bred endangered falcons and hawks for sixteen years. Along with his success in breeding raptors he has developed an intimate knowledge of the nesting requirements of birds of prey. He has built and installed thousands of nesting boxes - each can be equipped with a miniature camera - for barn owls, kestrels, bluebirds and bats.

Come and hear Tom tell us about falconry - he will bring some of his falcons with him - and hear how you can bring barn owls and kestrels into your yard to nest. Did you know that one barn owl, whose favorite food is gophers, consumes 1000 rodents a year? Did you know that a pair of kestrels consumes up to 340 pounds of insects, mice, rats and gophers a year? Did you also know that many raptors, especially barn owls, are suffering from toxic levels of pesticides, such as Warfarin, by consuming poisoned rodents? Learn about falconry first-hand and how you can attract raptors to your property to achieve hands-off organic rodent control around the clock.

—Dennis Huckabay

“Turning and turning in the widening gyre, the falcon cannot hear the falconer.... Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world....”

—William Butler Yeats
**Conservation Corner**

There’s been a lot of action of late on the conservation front in North County. As is typical these days, we have some news, good and not-so-good, to report. Here’s an update on recent issues of interest to BVAS. Lots of local heroes pitched in to help on these issues.

**San Luis Rey River Flood Control Project**

The details have been hammered out on the plan to remove excess vegetation from the San Luis Rey River flood channel in Oceanside. In the end, BVAS favored the recommendations contained within the permit approved by the Coastal Commission in February. We trust the conditions included in the approved project will adequately protect endangered species, like the least Bell’s vireo, which depend upon this riparian habitat. Thank you to Fred Roberts for his well-written and passionate pleas for logic and common sense on this issue, and Diane Nygaard for her behind-the-scenes efforts.

**Orange County Toll Road Extension**

The rejection of this project by the Coastal Commission in February was all about protecting California’s state park system, ecological reserves, and other protected wildlands from the encroachment of development-inducing capital projects. Audubon was involved in this fight at every level. This was a huge win for the environment, but one which still may face a future fight at the federal level.

**Robertson Concrete Batch Plant**

The Oceanside community came out in force to protest this proposed heavy industrial use on floodplain land along the wildlife corridor of Loma Alta Creek. The Planning Commission rejected the project, but four of the city council members have already suggested the possibility of approval when the project reaches them on appeal. BVAS testified against this project, following the lead of Nadine Scott, who helped guide community opposition.

**Ban of Noxious Exotic Plants in Oceanside**

City Council member Esther Sanchez has proposed a ban on the sale of three problem plants in the City of Oceanside. Giant reed, pampas grass, and tamarisk, are non-native plants which spread rapidly to choke out native vegetation and increase flooding danger in our riparian corridors. BV Native Plant Club president Joan Bockman was instrumental in bringing this issue to the attention of city officials.

**Lagoon Hotel Update**

The lagoon hotel project is presently on hold as the owner explores the possibility of selling this property for conservation use. BVAS has encouraged this course and hopes to celebrate a happy end to this story in the months ahead.

—Compiled by Andy Mauro

---

**BVAS Goes to Sea**

**January Pelagic Trip Report**

Mother Nature decided to part the late January rain clouds and cast her warm smile down on nearly 100 birders as we sailed out of Oceanside Harbor into calm waters for this year’s BVAS pelagic birding cruise. Almost immediately the call rang out: "Pom jaeger!". Thus began a morning filled with the exciting interaction of jaegers, terns, shearwaters and gulls. The shearwaters, terns and gulls were busy catching fish, and the jaegers were equally engaged in chasing after the birds to steal their bounty.

This season's "invasion" of rhinoceros auklets was much in evidence as we totaled 45 "rhinos", in stark contrast with some years when none of this species was seen all season. Other alcids spotted included two close-in Cassin’s auklets, with another six Cassin’s and one common murre too distant for many to see. Three "dark" shearwaters were sighted (i.e., either sooty or short-tailed). One was positively identified as a short-tailed by its uniform medium-grey underwings and a soaring, banking, erratic, non-sooty flight style; it banked within 100 feet of the boat. Other tubenoses included three northern fulmar (two dark and one light plumage morph) that came by to dine on the popcorn we were throwing out for chum.

During the course of the morning we saw several small flocks of six to ten Bonaparte’s gulls, and eight red phalarope. Jaegers were seen well by all, including six pomarine and six parasitic, pretty much all engaged in chasing prey or finding prey to chase. A surprise was seeing only one individual loon, a pacific loon, period. Mammals included a pod of 20 common dolphin, a pod six bottlenose dolphin and a spouting gray whale that surfaced five or six times within several hundred feet of the boat for great looks by all aboard.

In short, a fun morning of birds, marine mammals, beautiful weather, clear skies, old friends and new.

—Trip report by Terry Hunefeld
Upcoming Field Trips

Sat.—Mar. 1—8 a.m.—Julian Woodpeckers. Join woodpecker expert Steve Shunk on a special trip to the Julian/Cuyamaca area in search of woodpeckers. We’ll meet at Dudley’s Bakery parking lot in Santa Ysabel at 8 a.m., and then car caravan our way to key woodpecker haunts in the area. We’ll see how many different species of woodpeckers we can find, while entertaining ourselves with all the other mountain species we seldom see down here on the coast. Bring a picnic lunch, or plan on buying lunch in Julian or Santa Ysabel. Those interested in carpooling should meet at the Nature Center at 7 a.m. BVAS leader: Steve Brad, 760-0633-1639.

Sat.—Mar. 8—8 a.m.—Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count. Freshwater lake and riparian edge habitat. Directions: I-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.—Mar. 8—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.

Sat.—Mar. 15—8 a.m.—Mission Trails Regional Park. Riparian woods, chaparral, grasslands and plenty of water should make for some interesting birding. We will meet at the Old Mission Dam parking lot. Directions: East on Rte. 52 to Mast Blvd. Turn left at the stop and then right on West Hills Pkwy. Go to Mission Gorge Rd. and turn right. Immediately bear right on Father Junipero Serra Trail. Go a short distance to the dam parking lot. For carpooling meet at the Park & Ride at La Costa Ave. and I-5 Fwy. at 7 a.m. Leader: Andy Brumbaugh, 760-434-3334.

Sat.—Mar. 29—8 a.m.—Buena Vista Lagoon Monthly Bird Count. Freshwater coastal lagoon. Directions: I-5 to Hwy. 78. Exit Jefferson. Turn right and take another immediate right onto Lagoon View Dr. Go to end of road. Leader: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379.

Sat.—Mar. 29—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. Contact person: Tom Troy, 760-967-6915.

Join us on a bird walk one of these Saturdays.
You’ll have much more fun than cleaning out that garage!
Birders of all skill levels are always welcome.

May Birding Trip to Baja

May 16-19—Birding in Baja. There’s still room for a few more on this special four-day trip to condor country in Baja California, Mexico. We’ll be spending three nights at the historic Meling Ranch, conveniently located near the condor release site established within the boundaries of a large Mexican national park. We’ll be looking for free-flying condors and enjoying relaxed birding at the ranch and nearby locales. Cost of the trip is $300/person, which includes lodging and meals. Call Andy Brumbaugh, 760-434-3334, for more information and reservations. This trip was profiled in the January Lagoon Flyer, available on our website at: www.bvaudubon.org.

Hip, hip, hooray!

Cheers to our Volunteers!

Our volunteers are such a vital part of the Nature Center. Our nature guides, receptionists, mailing volunteers, gardening crew, special committee members, birding survey participants, and the many others who help out on special events throughout the year all make our center a valuable part of our community. Thank you so much! For others who might like to become part of this wonderful group, please contact the Nature Center at 760-439-2473.

Great Backyard Bird Count — Update

The Great Backyard Bird Count was a great success across the country on President’s Day weekend last month, with thousands of people participating. Early results from BVAS were less resounding! The best backyard count total reported to us was Joni Cialletta’s 15 species, including an Allen’s hummingbird. Most distressing report, perhaps, was Judi Wilson’s 36 crows! (Although a Wilson’s warbler helped salve her wounds.)

Coming in April

Grunion Greeters Workshop

The Grunion Greeters Project will hold its 2008 volunteer’s training workshop at the BVAS Nature Center on April 9th, from 6:30-8 p.m. Sign up and learn how to help monitor the grunion runs on local beaches this spring. Visit: www.Grunion.org for more information.

GRUNION GREETERS WANTED!
Ruddy Duck Club Celebrates Third Birthday!

The Ruddy Duck Club celebrates its third year of operation this month as we launch our spring membership campaign. The spring campaign will run from March 1st to April 30th. An updated list of all current Ruddy Duckers will be published in our June newsletter.

With over 35 members to date the club has been a fun way for BVAS to reach out to local businesses and invite them to support our important work at the Nature Center. Some members donate cash to help with Nature Center operations. Others donate significant time and services to help us keep the doors open.

Ruddy Duck Club members are representative of the entire local businesses community. Seeing people from many different walks of life coming together to support our cause is truly gratifying. We recently received a generous gift from Mr. Hoehn of Hoehn Motors of Carlsbad, who proudly pointed out to us that Honda was committed to energy-efficient vehicles way before going green was fashionable and trendy. He said his donation is his small way of saying thanks to all of our members who drive Hondas.

Thank you, Mr. Hoehn, and many thanks to all of our other Ruddy Duck Club members. For more information about becoming a Ruddy Duck Club member, contact Tom Troy at 967-6915.

———

“for, lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come...” —Solomon

BVAS OFFICERS, BOARD* AND CHAIRS

President
Dennis Huckabay* 757-6437
Vice-President
Bill Jones* 944-1775
Secretary
Mary Jane Roberts* 231-8148
Treasurer
Douglas Schanzenbach* 390-8494

Audubon Adventures
JoAnne Schontzler 431-0953
Center Manager
Annette Schneider 945-8891
Christmas Bird Count
Terry Hunefeld* 942-5388
Conservation Co-Chair
Danny DiMento* 858-688-6891
Conservation Co-Chair
Andy Mauro* 753-1266
Circulation
Mary Jane Roberts* 231-8148
Education Co-Chair
Renee Racine 635-0867
Education Co-Chair
Nancy Miller 929-2869
Field Trips
Andy Brumbaugh* 434-3334
Field Trip Leader
Steve Brad* 633-1639
Gift Shop
Rosalyn Dong* 806-1430
Library
Norma Handy 634-2120
Membership
Sandy McMullen 944-5690
Native Plant Club
Joan Bockman* 433-9401
Native Plant Garden
Joan Bockman* 433-9401
Newsletter
Andy Mauro* 753-1266

E-mail: akamauro@cox.net

Programs
Dennis Huckabay* 757-6437
Publicity
Judi Wilson* 439-3649
Ruddy Duck Club
Tom Troy* 967-6915
Taxidermy
Joyce Anderson 746-3995
Volunteers
Mary Ellen Marquand* 918-6622
Webmaster
Larry Spann

E-mail: larry@spannweb.net

Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center

Tue.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Closed Monday
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
March 16, 2 p.m., at the Nature Center

Weeds can simply be defined as unwanted plants or plants growing out-of-place. Before our enlightenment, most San Diego gardeners put native plants in that category. Wiser now, we know the joys of native plant gardening, and our definition of “weeds” has changed. Learn the difference between native plants and real weeds. This will be a hands-on meeting as we become experts on certain invaders. Bring gloves and weeding tools.

The Buena Vista Native Plant Club meets on the 3rd Sunday of the month at the Nature Center. For more info, e-mail Joan Bockman at: BVNPC@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: $20.

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

Friends Membership: New ____ Renewal ____

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City, State, Zip ______________________
Phone _____________________________
Please bill my VISA or MC
Card # ______________________ CRN # _____

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

Thank You!

Friends Remembered

Buena Vista Audubon has recently received donations in memory of Betty Dyer, Dave Rorick, and Ken Bruggeman. Betty, Dave, and Ken each contributed to BVAS, but in very different ways. Betty Dyer was that friendly presence at Nature Center events, always supporting her loving husband, Dave, as he went about on his bug walks. Dave Rorick, of course, is recognized as the godfather of BVAS, the guiding spirit who energized and led this organization for many years. We remembered our friend, Ken Bruggeman, in last month’s newsletter, and wish he were with us today to see the fresh growth on the native plants he lovingly tended along our nature trail. We thank our donors for their kind remembrances of our dear friends.

California Native Plant Sale
Saturday, March 1, 2008
9 a.m.—4 p.m.
Tree of Life Nursery
33201 Ortega Hwy.
San Juan Capistrano

Free talk: “Backyard Habitats with Native Plants”—11 a.m.

A portion of the proceeds will help support the San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

For more info: www.treeoflifenursery.com, or (949) 728-0686

Russian thistle

Rare Plants of Western San Diego County
A Three-day Workshop
Presented by the California Native Plant Society
March 4-6, 2008
Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center
Cost: $440 CNPS members; $450 non-members

This three-day workshop includes field trips to local rare plant populations in San Diego County. It is designed for professional and student botanists, ecologists, land managers, resource specialists, and conservationists. For full details and registration go to the state website at http://cnps.org/ and follow the links for workshops. While at the website, check out the new CNPS “Work Exchange Program” for reduced or waived workshop fees. —Instructors: Fred Roberts and Michelle Balk

Monthly Nature Center Grounds Cleanup
Join us on the first Saturday of the month from 8-10 a.m. as we tend the gardens at the Nature Center. Bring work gloves and gardening tools.

Saturday, March 1st
QUICK CALENDAR

Sat. Mar. 1—Julian Woodpecker Trip—8 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 1—Nature Center Garden Clean-up—8 a.m.
Mon. Mar. 3—Nature Guides—10 a.m.
Fri. Mar. 7—Board Meeting—9 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 8—Whelan Lake Count—8 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 8—San Elijo Walk—9 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 15—Mission Trails Walk—8 a.m.
Sun. Mar. 16—Native Plant Club—2 p.m.
Mon. Mar. 24—Preschool Nature Storytime—10 a.m.
Thur. Mar. 27—General Meeting—7 p.m.
Sat. Mar. 29—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 29—Basic Birding at BVL Landing—8:30 a.m.

Raptors and Falconry
March 27
See p. 1

Preschool Nature Storytime
March 24
See p. 4

“What’s a ‘Weed’?”
Native Plant Club Meeting
March 16
See p. 5