WILD PARROTS IN SAN DIEGO
“CHALLENGES AND HOPES FOR THE LOCAL FLOCK” WITH AMANDA PLANTE

Wednesday, March 18
6:30 p.m. Social—7 p.m. Program

Have you seen or heard them in your neighborhood? Parrots are not native to San Diego, but thousands of wild parrots are flying free around the county. According to SoCal Parrot, an organization that rescues and rehabilitates parrots, as many as 13 different parrot species can be seen throughout Southern California. Normally, these birds would be at home in Mexico, Central America, and South America, but they’ve been forced to adapt to life in San Diego. At least two parrot species flying wild in San Diego are known to be endangered in their native homeland. How did these parrots get here, and why are they flying free? San Diego’s naturalized wild parrots face a number of threats in our urban environment, including some posed by ill-spirited humans. Some people may discount parrots as just another non-native species that is causing harm to our natural ecosystem. Should we be concerned about their well-being?

Amanda Plante is the education and development director of SoCal Parrot. SoCal Parrot is a non-profit organization based in Jamul that was founded to bridge the gap of care and consideration for wild, naturalized parrots. It serves as a resource for wild parrot rehabilitation, education, and protection. Among its activities, the organization takes in parrots that have been injured in the wild by whatever causes, with a goal of providing needed medical attention in preparation for re-release back into the wild. Amanda will discuss the status of parrots in San Diego, the role of SoCal Parrot in helping rescue and rehabilitate wild parrots, and what we can all do to help. Amanda plans to bring several live parrot “ambassadors” with her for the March program. For more info on SoCal Parrot, visit its website: socalparrot.org.

Photo credit: SoCal Parrot
FINDING A GUIDED BIRD/NATURE WALK IN NORTH COUNTY
Spring is just around the corner—the perfect time to get out and reconnect with nature. The sun is shining, birds are singing, and wild flowers are bursting into bloom. Those interested in joining a guided bird walk in North County have plenty of options to consider. BVAS conducts five regularly scheduled bird walks spread throughout the month at various locations. A number of other groups also schedule guided bird and nature walks at their favorite lagoons or parks each month. Most of our parks and open space reserves also offer trail maps and bird lists for those looking for a self-guided adventure. If you’re looking for some help, drop by the Nature Center and pick up “Birding Hotspots—North County San Diego.” This full-color, BVAS brochure provides a map, photos, descriptions, and directions for 14 different local birding sites. It’s just what you need to help plan your North County birding adventure on a sunny day this spring.

BVAS BIRDHOUSE AUCTION
SATURDAY, MARCH 21—5-8 P.M.
Are you ready for some fun? This is the fifth year for the BVAS Birdhouse Auction, and we think we know how to throw this party! Live music, cold beer, fine wine, and a bountiful food buffet of assorted salty, savory, and sweet goodies. Of course, the stars of the show are the wonderful, hand-crafted, birdhouses and feeders. If the early entries in this year’s auction are any indication, the level of creativity and craftsmanship on display this year will set a new standard. All of this for only a $10 admission charge at the door. Did we mention that all proceeds go to help support the Nature Center and its many programs? See you there!

CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER
Conservation Chair Joan Herskowitz has sent a BVAS comment letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in opposition to a developer-backed petition to remove the Coastal California Gnatcatcher from protections it currently enjoys as a distinct subspecies under the Endangered Species Act. The letter cites overwhelming scientific evidence to support continuing protection of the Coastal California Gnatcatcher. In addition, Joan writes:

“The California Gnatcatcher has special importance to our members because we live and operate a nature center in the San Diego north county coastal zone, and have observed the loss of coastal sage scrub habitat over the years. The Coastal California Gnatcatcher is an essential part of a southern California ecology that is rapidly diminishing. Not only is the California Gnatcatcher a magnificent bird worthy of protection, it is also emblematic of the rich coastal sage scrub of southern California, an enduring remnant of our wild coast that is now the most endangered habitat type in North America.”

Well said!

BIRDING IN MARCH
March is when the bird breeding season begins to take off, especially in the warmer micro-habitats. Male breeders begin staking out their territories and attempting to attract mates with loud singing from conspicuous perches. Listen for the California thrashers especially. Spring migration picks up steam by late March, with warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, and orioles stopping by in riparian and oak woodlands for resting and refueling. Migrating thrushes and sparrows are evident in the brushy chaparral and grassland. Ducks and shorebirds begin leaving for northern climes. Individuals of certain species will sometimes sport their emerging breeding plumage just before departing.

SAN DIEGO BIRD FESTIVAL
MARCH 5-8
For info and registration call 858-273-7800.

BIRD NEWS

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WHELAN LAKE BIRD SANCTUARY WALK
*Saturday, March 7—8 a.m.*
Participants on the February bird walk at Whelan Lake recorded 75 species, most notably the returning horned owl. The new owl nest was found along the riparian woodland on the south side of the lake. When discovered, the female owl was on her nest and looking relatively unconcerned as she stared down at the birding group from her lofty perch. If we’re lucky, baby owlets just might be peeking out at us on the March walk.

*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.

BASIC BIRDING WORKSHOP AND BUENA VISTA LAGOON BIRD COUNT
*Saturday, March 28—8 a.m.*
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.

SECOND THURSDAY SURPRISE WALK
*Thursday, March 12—8 a.m.*
Join our weekday surprise-location bird walk on the second Thursday of each month. Where we go is based on recent reports and Steve’s personal surveying. If you’d like to get on the Second Thursday Walk notification list, please send an e-mail with your name, phone number and e-mail address to: stevebrad1@earthlink.net.


SAN DIEGUito RIVER PARK BIRD WALK
*Saturday, March 21—8 a.m.*
The March walk will meet at the Crest Canyon lower trailhead at the San Dieguito Lagoon overlook on San Dieguito Rd. (west of I-5). The coastal sage scrub habitat of the trail and the overlook of the lagoon provide opportunity for an interesting bird list.

*Crest Canyon Trailhead—*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.

*LEADER:* John Haddock, 760-941-7824.

SAN ELIJO LAGOON BIRD WALK
*Sunday, March 8—8 a.m.*
The Rios Trail at the San Elijo Lagoon is one of the most popular and productive birding sites in North County. The trail provides expansive overlooks of the lagoon’s central basin, takes us down to the edge of the water for close-up looks at wintering ducks and shorebirds, and then meanders through the coastal sage scrub and soft chaparral habitat for upland species like gnatchasers, towhees, thrushes, and thrashers. There’s an amazing amount of species diversity within the span of a 2-hour walk.

*DIRECTIONS:* From I-5, go west on Lomas Santa Fe Ave.; turn right (north) on Rios Ave. and proceed several blocks until it ends at the Rios Ave. Trailhead. No facilities.


BVAS MIGRATING BIRDERS
**Canada trip in late June:** 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 group will be on the hunt for more than 20 species of “eastern” warblers and up to 20 different sparrows. This tour will also be a full-service package led by Steve Shunk.

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

BVAS SPRING PELAGIC BIRDING TRIP
*Saturday, April 25—6 a.m.-4:30 p.m.*
The BVAS pelagic birding season will kick off with a 10-hour trip on Saturday, April 25. The boat will tour coastal San Diego County waters, the 9-Mile Bank, and the San Diego Trench. This is a great introductory trip, with a mix of spring migrants and lingering winter birds expected. This will be peak season for Scripps’s murrelet, and a good time to pick up regularly occurring shearwaters, phalaropes, jaegers, and alcids. We’ll also have decent chances to spot the black-footed albatross.

Call Point Loma Sportfishing (619-223-1627) to reserve your spot.

**BVAS 2015 Pelagic Birding Schedule:** BVAS will be sponsoring six pelagic birding trips spread throughout the year. Other trips will be on May 16, June 14, September 20, October 11, and November 7. See the BVAS pelagic website for details. As in recent years, all trips will be on board the Grande, operating out of Point Loma Sportfishing. Birders are encouraged to call and sign up early for the trips to take advantage of significant early bird discount prices.

--Photos by Steve Brad.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR NEEDED
Harvey Hart took on the task of managing and maintaining the BVAS membership roster a number of years ago. A lot has changed since then, and the Membership Chair is now responsible for managing a multi-faceted membership database with numerous overlapping data points. Harvey has managed all these changes with remarkable aplomb and considerable skill. He’s earned a full measure of respect and appreciation from the rest of the Board who have seen firsthand the time and effort he’s brought to the job.

Are you ready for the bad news? At the February board meeting, Harvey announced he was stepping down from his position as Membership Chair. He has other interests to pursue, and has certainly earned his retirement. The Board is now looking for a new volunteer to take over as Membership Chair. It promises to be an exciting and rewarding challenge for the right person. Please give BVAS Volunteer Coordinator Bob Crowell a call if you think you might be interested. He’ll arrange a no obligation “get acquainted” meeting for you to get a little more information about the job and its responsibilities.

NEW LAGOON FLYER LAYOUT
Judging from the positive comments received, readers of the February Lagoon Flyer noticed and appreciated the new look of the BVAS newsletter. It’s the work of J.J. Springer, the new BVAS Graphics Coordinator. In her professional life, J.J. is a freelance designer (jjspringer.com). The new layout is designed to be fresh, clean, uncluttered, and more easily read. Thank you, J.J.!

SUPPORTING THE NATURE CENTER IN 2015
Thank you to all who sent in donations to support the Nature Center and BVAS programs for 2015. Included in the totals were donations made by Cam Miller of Murrieta in memory of Mary Miller, and Dovie Christensen of Fallbrook in memory of Cora and Miles Carr.

Donations to the 2015 operating budget are down a little from last year’s totals at this time. This was somewhat expected, as members now have a choice of whether to allocate their donations to the Nature Center and its programs, to the Ridgway’s Rail Society land acquisition campaign, or to a combination of the two. Of course, BVAS still faces the annual cost of operating the Nature Center and its array of free programs and services, and is dependent upon the generosity of its members to raise the funds needed to meet the annual operating budget. We note with great appreciation that many of our members have supported both fundraising campaigns. The BVAS Board thanks all of its members for their generous support.

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 to save the environment and BVAS printing costs.
Please bill my credit card: Card Exp. Date ___________________________ CVR __________
Make Checks Payable to: Buena Vista Audubon, P.O. Box 480, Oceanside, CA 92049

BVAS RIDGWAY’S RAIL SOCIETY FUND
Name: ___________________________________________ Address: ___________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________
Amount $ ___________________ Check/Card # __________________ Exp. Date __________ CVR ________

Donations are fully tax-deductible and will be placed in the BVAS Ridgway’s Rail Society Fund to be used for future land acquisitions and related expenses, habitat restoration projects, and on-going habitat management costs.
___ I would like to discuss this further. Please contact me.
**BVAS NATIVE PLANT CLUB**

**GARDEN WORK PARTY**

*Morning with the Natives*

*Every Monday - 10 a.m.*

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

*Mark your calendar!*

**OCEANSIDE NATIVE GARDEN TOUR**

*April 19, 2 p.m.*

*St. Mary’s School; Oceanside*

**SCHOOL NATIVE PLANT GARDENS**

The Buena Vista Native Plant Club sponsors six school native plant gardens. If you are available on weekday mornings, please join us at one of these Oceanside schools as we help the students tend to their gardens. Here’s our schedule: Wed., 9 a.m.-- Mission Elementary; Wed., 10 a.m.-- Laurel Elementary; Fri., 9 a.m.-- Ditmar School. We also have periodic workdays at St. Mary’s Elementary in Oceanside, Vista High School, and The Winston School in Del Mar.

If you have questions about your natives, try to attend one of the workdays mentioned above. If you can’t do that, leave your name and question with the Nature Center desk and we will get back to you.

**FOLLOW BVAS ON FACEBOOK**

Join the BVAS Facebook group and receive regular posts about bird walks, local bird sightings, nature news, bird photos, and special Nature Center activities. And please don’t forget to “Like” us on Facebook, post your comments, and share our link with your Facebook friends—help spread the word!

**SEND US YOUR PHOTOS**

BVAS would like to feature more member photos on its Facebook page and in the Lagoon Flyer. Send your nature-related photo(s) as an e-mail jpg attachment to our newsletter editor: akamauro1@gmail.com.

**KIDS’ CORNER AT THE NATURE CENTER**

*Joey’s and Johnny’s Clubhouse*

*Third Sunday, February 15—1-4 p.m.*

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

**PRESCHOOL NATURE STORYTIME**

*Monday, March 23, 10 a.m.*

**What Makes Birds So Special?**

There are lots of ways that birds are different from us and other animals. Is that why we find them so interesting? Maybe it’s also because they can be just like us in other ways. Our Nature Storytime will explore the special love we have for birds. We’ll have a story, songs, a fun craft, and we’ll try to guess what is in our Surprise Box that morning.

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

**BVAS OFFICERS, BOARD*, AND CHAIRS**

*President* 
Dave Billings*  
760-753-7925

*Vice-President* 
Dennis Huckabay*  
760-757-6437

*Secretary* 
Kathy Billings*  
760-753-7925

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*Bird House Auction* 
Kelly Deveney  
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*Board Member* 
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760-583-1961

*Center Manager* 
Annette Schneider  
760-945-8891

*Christmas Bird Count* 
Andy Mauro*  
760-753-1266

*Conservation Co-Chair* 
Danny DiMento*  
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*Conservation Co-Chair* 
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760-942-5167

*Education Chair* 
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*Facilities/Exhibits* 
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858-688-6891

*Field Trip Leader* 
Steve Brad*  
760-633-1639

*Gift Shop* 
Susie Martin*  
760-580-9440

*Graphics Coordinator* 
J.J. Springer  
818-859-8244

*Library* 
C. J. DiMento  
760-231-9096

*Membership* 
Open Position  
Contact Bob Crowell

*Migrating Birders Trips* 
Janine Free*  
760-908-7334

*Native Plant Club & Native Plant Garden* 
Joan Bockman*  
760-433-9401

*Nature Storytime* 
Mary Ellen Marquand  
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*socialbirding.com*

*Pelagic Birding* 
Dennis Huckabay*  
760-757-6437

*Programs* 
Open Position  
Contact Bob Crowell

*Ridgway’s Rail Society* 
Andy Mauro*  
760-753-1266

*Ruddy Duck Club* 
Bob Crowell*  
760-207-3884

*Kbcrowell@cox.net*

*Webmaster* 
Larry Spann  
larry@spannweb.net

**BUENA VISTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER**

Tuesday—Saturday — 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday—1 p.m.-4 p.m.

**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

**BVAS Website:**

bvaudubon.org

We are also on Facebook!

**E-mail:**

bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net
**BVAS QUICK CALENDAR**

- **Fri. Mar. 6**  
  Board Meeting  
  9 a.m.
- **Sat. Mar. 7**  
  Whelan Lake Bird Walk  
  8 a.m.
- **Sun. Mar. 8**  
  San Elijo Lagoon Bird Walk  
  8 a.m.
- **Thurs. Mar. 12**  
  Second Thursday Surprise Bird Walk  
  8 a.m.
- **Fri. Mar. 13**  
  Nature Guides Meeting  
  9:30 a.m.
- **Sun. Mar. 15**  
  Joey’s and Johnny’s Clubhouse  
  1 p.m.
- **Sun. Mar. 15**  
  Native Plant Club  
  2 p.m.
- **Wed. Mar. 18**  
  General Meeting and Program  
  “Parrots in San Diego County”  
  6:30 p.m.
- **Sat. Mar. 21**  
  San Dieguito Bird Walk  
  8 a.m.
- **Mon. Mar. 23**  
  Preschool Nature Storytime  
  10 a.m.
- **Sat. Mar. 28**  
  Basic Birding and Lagoon Bird Count  
  8 a.m.

**“SURPRISE WALK” SCORES AGAIN**

As has become the norm, BVAS Second Thursday Surprise Walk participants were treated to another exciting bird sighting during their monthly walk. This time it was a boldly-plumaged male northern parula that stole the show during Steve’s mid-week walk in February. Only a few individuals of this species are typically seen in San Diego County during spring migration each year, making it a noteworthy find. After viewing the parula in a La Jolla residential neighborhood, the group went to nearby Kate Sessions Park, where they spotted a beautiful male summer tanager and a plumbeous vireo. Not a bad day!

Steve calls his second Thursday walk a “Surprise Walk” because he doesn’t announce the location of the walk until just a day or two in advance. This gives him a chance to scout out the latest bird reports in the county, allowing him to choose a spot that offers the best chance for an unusual bird sighting for the group. (See p. 3 to learn how to get an e-mail notification of the walk each month.)

**MARCH ATTRACTIONS**

*San Diego Bird Festival* - March 5-8, sandiegoaudubon.org  
*Fifth Annual BVAS Birdhouse Auction* - Sat. March 21
19TH ANNUAL
San Diego Bird Festival
Presented by the San Diego Audubon Society
March 5-8, 2015

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Bernd Heinrich
Author of
“The Homing Instinct”

SPECIAL FESTIVAL GUESTS:
Laurie Lewis
AND
Tom Rozum
Birdy Bluegrass Virtuosos

- Pelagic Birding
- Field Trips to Mountains, Desert, Shore and Wetlands
- Workshops
- Birding and Optics Expo
- Movies, Arts and Cultural Activities
- Free events for the Whole Family

...and some of the best birding in the USA!

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Info and Registration 858-273-7800