General Meeting—Thursday, May 29th

Birding Camp Pendleton
Featuring Eric Kershner, Ph.D.
7:30 p.m. Program

The rugged terrain of Camp Pendleton covers 195 square miles and serves as both a buffer against rampant sprawl along our coast, and a magnet for wildlife. Still largely undeveloped with large swaths of pristine habitat, the base is actively managed to protect and preserve its natural resources while not compromising its military mission.

Eric Kershner is the wildlife management branch head for Camp Pendleton. His presentation will focus on the Bird Conservation Program being implemented on base, including programs for threatened and endangered species and migratory birds. Come learn about the nearly 300 bird species living in the various habitats found on base.

Field Trip to the Base—Eric will lead a special BVAS field trip to Camp Pendleton on Saturday, May 31st. Among the birds we’ll seek will be breeding populations of sensitive species like least tern, Bell’s vireo, willow flycatcher, and cactus wren. Come view coastal Southern California the way it was fifty years ago. See page 3 for details.

Honoring Jane Alexander

Mountain Lion Sculpture Dedication
Thurs., May 29th, 7 p.m. (Prior to May Meeting)

The children’s corner at the Nature Center is now graced with the stately presence of a bronze sculpture of a mother mountain lion and her cub. The lioness and cub statue honors the late Jane Alexander, and was commissioned for BVAS by Jane’s family. Jane was an Audubon stalwart and wonderful friend. Please join us at 7 p.m. for this special ceremony and cake in Jane’s memory.

The Beauty and Wonder of Migratory Birds, and a Cause for Conservation

International Migratory Bird Day

Each year on the second Saturday in May, nature lovers across the Western Hemisphere are invited to gather at various locations to celebrate and support migratory bird conservation. This year, International Migratory Bird Day falls on May 10th. Migratory birds are some of the most observable, beautiful, and remarkable wildlife that share our world. These birds are the symbolic harbingers of spring. They are also an essential economic resource, controlling insect pests and generating billions in recreational dollars. Unfortunately, research has shown that many migratory bird species are in decline, facing a growing number of threats on their migration routes and in both their summer and winter habitats. San Diego represents an important way station on the Pacific Flyway, one of the four major bird migration routes through North America. Over 300 bird species visit San Diego on their annual migration, including 40 species deemed seriously declining or rare on the recently-released the Audubon Watch List of threatened or endangered birds. For a local perspective on the joys and wonders of watching migratory birds, see Terry Hunefeld’s “Spring Migration in San Diego” on page 2.

BVAS members are invited to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day on May 10th by participating in the special activities planned for the 2008 San Elijo Lagoon Day. See the announcement on page 4 for more details.
Birding At Its Best

Spring Migration in San Diego

When you get to know and love the birds of San Diego, spring migration is like the return of dear old friends who departed last September on a six-month vacation.

The change can be abrupt: One morning the trees in your yard might contain singing birds that were not there just the day before. They have arrived during the night, following a combination of celestial and magnetic cues that are part of their genetic heritage. The most amazing piece of the story is that these tiny birds often have flown thousands of miles to reach San Diego after wintering in Mexico, Central America, or even as far away as South America.

San Diego is one of the "birdiest" areas in the country because we lie directly in the Pacific Flyway. Millions of birds – more than 300 species - follow the Pacific Flyway. They travel this great avian highway each year, stopping along the way for rest and refreshment, much as we humans do while traveling the freeway.

Last May I was birding the south side of San Elijo Lagoon on the trail heading east from the Rios cul-de-sac. Walking east towards the I-5 freeway I noted more migrating birds than usual along the trail. As I approached the eucalyptus groves near the freeway, the trees came alive with yellow. At least ten to fifteen warblers were foraging in every tree. I've never seen anything like it at San Elijo. There were at least 250 warblers, including Nashville, Townsend's, orange-crowned, and black-throated grays. But the vast majority of the birds were tiny, colorful Wilson's warblers. Almost all of these birds were on their way to the northern mountains, but taking a short break to spend the day at San Elijo to rest and refuel before continuing on their journey after sunset. Migrating flycatchers, especially western wood-pewees, were also numerous that day. In an open field with tall dead tree snags, six olive-sided flycatchers commanded the most prominent perches, with western wood pewees relegated to the lower tiers in the trees.

Another memorable May morning in 2006 found me in Point Loma, where hermit warblers abounded. At the Nazarene University alone I counted 25. More were foraging near the intersection of Dupont and Silvergate, and another 25 were at Fort Rosecrans Cemetery, plus 20 Townsend's, a half dozen rufous/Allen's hummingbirds. Finally, the prize of the day appeared—a male calliope hummingbird. With all the warblers and hummingbirds added together with numerous grosbeaks, tanagers, kingbirds and orioles, it seemed as if all of Point Loma was alive that morning with yellow and orange.

We truly live in paradise. We're blessed with lagoons, estuaries, beaches, foothills and mountains – all within a half-hour drive. There is nothing quite so glorious as a spring San Diego morning, enjoying the fresh breezes, the warm sun and the colorful birds. I hope to see you on the trail. Life is short. Bird often!

—Terry Hunefeld

May 17th Point Loma Birding Trip (See page 3.)

Fort Rosecrans and Cabrillo Monument

Birders in the know flock to the tip of Point Loma during the peak of spring and fall bird migration. This peninsula is a well-known “migrant trap” for birds. The geography concentrates the flow of migrating birds through this area, and the open habitat offers them food and a safe rest stop.
May Field Trips/Events

Sat.—May 3—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.—May 10—9 a.m.—San Elijo Lagoon Day. The San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy is sponsoring a day of birding, nature hikes, and other special activities in celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. The regular monthly nature walk will take place as usual at 9 a.m. at the Rios Avenue trailhead. Other activities will be featured at both the Rios Avenue and Santa Carina trailheads. See notice below for more information. The San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve features tidal mudflats, coastal wetlands, and five other distinct plant and animal communities.

May 16-19—Biriding in Baja. SOLD OUT! To inquire about any late cancellations, call Andy Brumbaugh, 760-434-3334. Our four-day trip to condor country in Baja California will feature three nights at the historic Meling Ranch looking for free-flying condors and enjoying relaxed birding at the ranch and nearby locales. Cost of trip is $300/person, including lodging and meals.

Sat.—May 17—8 a.m.—Point Loma Bird Walk. Meet at the west end of Garden Lane. Garden Lane is a right (west) turn off Catalina Blvd. We will bird the neighborhood adjacent to Point Loma Nazarene University, the campus itself, Fort Rosecrans Cemetery (depending on current access policy at the cemetery), and Cabrillo National Monument ($5/car entrance fee). For carpooling meet at the La Costa Ave. Park & Ride at 7 a.m. Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639.

Sat.—May 31—8 a.m.—Camp Pendleton Bird Walk. Meet at the Camp Pendleton main gate, off of I-5. Eric Kershner, wildlife biologist at Camp Pendleton, will lead us to various birding sites on the base featuring different habitats. We’ll organize some carpooling at the parking lot just inside the main gate to reduce the number of vehicles in our caravan on base. BVAS Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639.

Sat.—May 31—8 a.m.—Buena Vista Lagoon Monthly Bird Count. Freshwater coastal lagoon. Directions: I-5 to 78 East. 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.—May 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. Contact person: Tom Troy, 760-967-6915.

Register Now for Summer Fun—July 14-18
Kids Art & Nature Camp 2008

Camp Ruddy Duck: Ages 5-6: July 14-18, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Camp Crawdad: Ages 7-9: July 14-18, 12:30-3:00 p.m.
All camps are taught at the BVAS Nature Center.

Neat stuff to do, like cork snakes, nature weavings, leather nature journals, animal masks, docent-led nature walks....

For fees and more info, call the Nature Center, 439-2473, or e-mail: kids.art.nature.camp@gmail.com

A Family Outing on International Migratory Bird Day
San Elijo Lagoon Day
Celebrate With Mother Nature
Sat., May 10, 9 a.m.—3 p.m.

Lots of Ways to Enjoy Nature:
Informal 5-K Fun Run
Guided Nature Walk
Birding Station
Spring Wildflowers
Children’s Storytime
Migrating and Nesting Birds
Special Trailhead Exhibits and Displays

Directions:
Lagoon Day activities will take place at the Rios Ave. and Santa Carina Ave. trailheads. Both trailheads are in Solana Beach, and can be reached by taking the Lomas Santa Fe exit from I-5. Rios Ave. is west of the freeway, and the Sta. Carina trailhead is east. Please call 760/436-3944 or visit www.sanelijo.org, for directions or more information.

Lagoon Day is hosted by San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy and the County of San Diego Parks & Recreation, and it’s FREE!
Preschool Nature Storytime

This is the time of year that our creeping, crawling creatures abound. We will be learning about caterpillars and their amazing journey to the “Butterfly Kingdom.” Do you remember the word for this incredible change from caterpillar to butterfly? Come to our storytime on Monday, May 19th at 10 a.m. and find out. Please note the change this month only from our usual fourth Monday of the month.

Volunteer Receptionists

Webster’s defines the word “volunteer” as: (n) A person who chooses freely to do or offer to do something; (adj) offering services, usually without compensation; and (v) to freely give without being asked or obliged. At BVAS we tend to add a bunch more adjectives when we define our volunteers: Wonderful, talented, hard-working, fun-loving, friendly, beautiful, etc., etc., etc.! We know you fit that description, so perhaps you should contact Mary Ellen at 760-918-6622 to get all set up and officially recognized.

Ruddy Duck Club News

The Karma of Giving

Sometimes it is hard to figure out how very busy people find the time to still give so much to causes they care about. This month the Ruddy Duck Club would like to honor the McStein Team--Stephan McLaughlin and Donna Steinbrenner of Seagaze Realty and All in 1 Loans--for their recent Ruddy Duck Club renewal. The McStein Team was a charter member of the RDC, but Donna Steinbrenner has been a familiar face at the Nature Center for years. Donna is a valuable member of our newsletter circulation team. She may have personally folded and sealed the newsletter you are reading right now! This can be tedious work but it is one of the important tasks that must be done for BVAS to remain functional. We recently spoke with Donna about her involvement with Audubon. She said that giving back to the community just feels so good. She realizes a positive karma from her volunteer work at BVAS. She recently had her best year ever and can directly link at least one sale to her involvement with Audubon. Thank you, Donna, for all of your hard work on our behalf.

May is a perfect time to make a springtime contribution to the Nature Center. Don’t forget to send in your Birdathon donation or call Tom Troy at 760-967-6915 for information on becoming a Ruddy Duck Club member.

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
**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 # ___________

**Memorial Donations**

I would like to honor the memory of a special person.
Name:_________________________________________________________
Amount:  $________

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

There's still time to send in your Birdathon donation!

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**BUENA VISTA NATIVE PLANT CLUB**

*May 18th, 2 p.m. at the Nature Center*

**Get Over that Old Love Affair!**

Are you still pining for that perfect lawn you thought you were hooking up with all those years ago? After all this time of carefully tending to its many needs, is it finally dawning on you that this relationship is draining you of all your time, energy, and hard-earned money? Face it—some relationships are doomed to fail. Maybe it’s time for a clean break.

Our May meeting is all about getting over that misguided love affair with your lawn. Get some good hints on how to replace that old sod. There are lots of wonderful native plants out there just dying to meet you. Come and learn how to find Mr. Right!

*For more information regarding the Native Plant Club e-mail Joan Bockman at: BVNPC@sbcglobal.net, or call the Nature Center at 760-439-2473.*

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**Thursday Mornings with the Natives**

Joan Bockman and Debra Barrows invite any gardeners interested to join them on Thursday mornings at 9 a.m. for some casual gardening and friendly chatter at the Center.

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**Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration Update**

Finally! Just one more study is needed before the lagoon restoration project EIR can be initiated. A proposal to have this final study funded by the municipalities responsible for the 2007 lagoon sewage spill will be considered by the Regional Water Quality Control Board on June 11th. BVAS strongly supports having all sewage spill assessments directed toward projects, like the lagoon restoration, within the local watershed. More information is available on the BVL Foundation website at www.BVLF.info.

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**BVAS Goes Batty!**

The BVAS Nature Center now has a beautiful new bat house hanging on the east side of the building under the apex of the roof. The new addition is courtesy of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society of MiraCosta College. Everyone hopes the fancy accommodation will soon attract a few bats in need of a friendly roost. We recently learned that one bat can consume up to 3,000 mosquitoes in a single night! Phi Theta Kappa faculty advisor Jane Mushinsky summed up the general sentiment as BVAS expressed its appreciation for the gift. “We are delighted to encourage our fuzzy neighbors,” said Jane. “May they eat lots of mosquitoes for you!”

We thank the members of Phi Theta Kappa for their thoughtful gift. And in the spirit of true nature lovers, we also apologize to any mosquitoes who may have reason to take offense.

**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, May 3rd*
**QUICK CALENDAR**

Fri. May 2—Board Meeting—9 a.m.
Sat. May 3—Whelan Lake Count—8 a.m.
Sat. May 3—Nature Center Garden Clean-up—8 a.m.
Mon. May 5—Nature Guides—10 a.m.
Sat. May 10—San Elijo Lagoon Day Walk—9 a.m.
Fri.-Mon. May 16-19—Birding Baja Trip
Sat. May 17—Point Loma Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Sun. May 18—Native Plant Club—2 p.m.
Mon. May 19—Preschool Nature Storytime—10 a.m.
Thur. May 29—General Meeting—7 p.m.
Sat. May 31—Camp Pendleton Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Sat. May 31—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. May 31—Basic Birding at BVL Landing—8:30 a.m.

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**Now Showing**

at the

**Audubon Nature Center**

**Mastadon Skull**
Model
San Diego Rocks and Fossils Display

**Mountain Lion and Cub**
Bronze Sculpture
Children’s Corner
Honoring Jane Alexander