

# Lagoon Flyer

B u e n a V i s t a A u d u b o n S o c i e t y



Jón Baldur Hlíðberg

May General Meeting

Wednesday, May 16

## The Owls of Starr Ranch

with Pete DeSimone

7 p.m. Social—7:30 p.m. Program

Owls are one of the oldest species of vertebrate animals in existence, with fossils dating back 60 million years. In San Diego County, nine different species of owls appear on the official bird list, with the great horned owl being the most widespread and numerous. In recent years, however, it's been the barn owl that has been the toast of the town. Barn owls have been quick to accept the owl boxes now being installed to help with rodent control, and webcams of the barn owls in their nest boxes have attracted large public followings.

Owls love Audubon's Starr Ranch Sanctuary, a 4,000-acre wildlife preserve in southeast Orange County. The Ranch's mosaic of habitat types attracts a broad diversity of wildlife and serves as a microcosm of what can be found



Great Horned Owl —W. Kaveney

*A wise old owl sat in an oak,  
The more he saw the less he spoke,  
The less he spoke the more he heard.  
Why can't we be like that wise old bird?*



Barn Owl —Titus Pullo

on the coastal slopes of San Diego County.

Pete DeSimone has been the manager of Starr Ranch for 25 years. In addition to dealing with the day-to-day operations and all the details of administration, he plays a direct role in the wildlife research and land conservation projects undertaken at the sanctuary. Pete's May program for BVAS will primarily focus on the owls

of Starr Ranch, with insights based on years of nest monitoring and owl banding. Those interested in a preview of some of the owls to be featured in our May program are invited to log on to the barn owl nest webcam at Starr Ranch: <http://www.starranch.org/blog/barn-owl>.

Please join us in May for an exciting and informative look at one of nature's most charismatic characters.



Western Screech Owl —Peter Wey

## Conservation Matters

**SOS for Open Space.** The campaign to encourage the Carlsbad City Council to purchase open space that was approved by the voters in 2002 is just past the halfway point. The goal is more open space acquisition in Carlsbad, with a current focus on saving as much of the Buena Vista Creek Valley/Quarry Creek site as possible. Volunteers continue to get resident and business support on petitions that will be presented to the City Council prior to budget hearings in June. Letters to the editor supporting the campaign, describing the value of open space, and giving personal reasons why more open space needs to be secured, have been appearing regularly in local newspapers. If you would like to help out in this effort, please contact Joan Herskowitz at [jmherskowitz@yahoo.com](mailto:jmherskowitz@yahoo.com).

**Proposed Projects in the Lagoon Watershed.** The City of Carlsbad recently held EIR scoping meetings for two projects which have potential impacts on the Buena Vista Lagoon. The first is the Quarry Creek Master Plan which is a residential development proposed on the closed quarry site by the McMillin Company. The second project is the proposed maintenance/clearance of Buena Vista Creek between Jefferson Street and South Vista Way bridges for flood control, to be carried out by the City. Buena Vista Audubon Society submitted letters to the City on these projects to ensure that all environmental issues are addressed in the EIR and that alternatives with less impact are examined, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. When the EIRs are completed, they will be made available for public review and comment.

## Peter Douglas,

**Coastal Commission Executive Director.**

It is with great sadness that we learned of the recent death of Peter Douglas who was the executive director of the California Coastal Commission for the last 26 years. He has been called the "Sentry of California's Coast". As a young lawyer working for a state assemblyman in the 1970s, he drafted legislation to protect the coastline and



was the principal author of Prop. 20, the 1972 referendum that established the commission. He helped write the Coastal Act of 1976 which gave the commission a mandate to protect coastal resources and to ensure public access, a standard that was later used by other coastal states. During his tenure, the agency helped create thousands of acres of parklands and public trails, and secured more than 1,300 easements for paths to the shore. Although often faced with opposition from development interests, he exhibited leadership in the preservation of the natural resources in the coastal zone, including our beaches, native habitats and wetlands. We hope that the State will continue to provide the commission with able successors to Douglas and the financial resources to continue the important mission that Douglas made his life's work.

—Joan Herskowitz

## Palomar Mountain State Park Reopens

Doane Pond and the campgrounds and trails of Palomar Mountain State Park are once again fully open to the public. The popular campground had been shut down last October as a result of State budget cuts, but a local nonprofit group was formed and was able to raise the funds necessary to staff and maintain the park under terms of a tentative 3-year agreement reached with the State.



*Doane Pond*

Palomar Mountain State Park is often compared with recreational spots in the Sierra Nevada, with its more than 11 miles of hiking trails, a fishing pond, meadows and coniferous forests spanning 1,862 acres. BVAS regularly sponsors a summer trip to Palomar Mountain to look for birds that frequent San Diego County's mountain habitat.

More information about the fundraising campaign, including how to make a donation, can be found at [www.savepalomar.org](http://www.savepalomar.org).

## Oceanside Parks Benefit

Oceanside Parks and Recreation Community Foundation, a civic-driven volunteer group helping to raise money for parks and recreation events and programs in Oceanside, is having a "FUN"draiser on Saturday, May 12 from noon to 4 p.m. at Heritage Park, 220 Peyri Road (behind San Luis Rey Mission). There will be a car show, live music, dance performances, and food vendors. Bring a blanket or beach chair and join the fun!

Tickets, \$5 for adults or \$1 for children, can be purchased at the BVAS Nature Center.



*The Gazebo at Heritage Park.*

## May Birding and Special Events

### Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count

with John Haddock  
 Saturday, May 5—8 a.m.

Whelan Lake is a bird reserve with a freshwater lake, riparian-edge habitat, grass-covered hillsides, and an oak grove. The varied habitat results in a nice assortment of bird species in all seasons. It is especially noted for its wintering duck populations and interesting sightings during fall and spring migration.

**Directions:** I-5 to Hwy. 76 East, left at Douglas, continue to 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.



### 2012 Birdathon and Bloomathon Basic Birding Class and Buena Vista Lagoon Bird Count

with Joan Fountain  
 Saturday, May 19—8 a.m.

*NOTE: Beginning in May, BVAS will be combining the Basic Birding Class and the Buena Vista Lagoon Bird Count. We'll meet at the Nature Center at 8 a.m. and then caravan around the lagoon to a series of selected stops to observe birds, discuss bird behavior, and record the number of species we see. We'll conduct our count a week earlier this month to participate in the Birdathon and Bloomathon on May 19. (See P. 5 for more details.)*



Are you interested in learning a little more about the birds of our lagoon? Join the friendly group of fledgling birders that regularly turn out for our basic birding class at Buena Vista Lagoon each month. Everyone is invited to join the class for some informal, no-pressure birding and lots of friendly tips. The class will also officially record the different bird species seen at the lagoon. This monthly bird survey has been conducted by BVAS for many years, and our extensive database of bird sightings will be a factor for consideration as officials continue to study the best approach for managing, maintaining, and restoring this ecological reserve.

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

Leader: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379.

### 2012 Birdathon and Bloomathon

#### Early Bird Edition

with Steve Brad  
 Saturday, May 19—6:30 a.m.



Those wishing to get an earlier start on our 2012 Birdathon and Bloomathon are invited to join Steve Brad's early morning group. Steve will lead a caravan to several nearby locations in an attempt to spot some of those early birds that supposedly get all the worms. Steve's group will then return to the Nature Center in time to join one of the regular (i.e. later-rising) Birdathon and Bloomathon groups assembling at 8 a.m. (See P. 5 for details.) Meet Steve at 6:30 a.m. at the BVAS Nature Center (2202 South Coast Hwy., Oceanside).

Contact: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639; [stevebrad1@earthlink.net](mailto:stevebrad1@earthlink.net).  
 (Cell phone will also be turned on May 19: 760-274-5256.)

### El Corazon Bird and Bloom Walk

Join Joan Bockman and Diane Nygaard for a special guided walk along the new El Corazon Park trails as part of the 2012 Birdathon and Bloomathon. (See P. 5 for more details.)

### April Bird Trip to Camp Pendleton



We suspect this photo was staged. How often can you get everyone in a large group focused on the same bird? But still, lots of people saw lots of great birds on our "Birding on the Base" trip to Camp Pendleton in April. We thank the Marine Corps for their fine environmental stewardship, and our enthusiastic participants for their cooperative pose.

### May Pelagic Birding Trips

**Spring Migration—Sat., May 19**

Join BVAS for a 13-hour pelagic birding trip to the furthest reaches of San Diego County waters. We'll search for deep-water species including several species of albatross, and expect to see lots of marine mammals. Cost is \$75-\$115 depending on date of reservation. Call Point Loma Fisherman's Landing at 619-223-0627 and tell them you'd like a spot on the May 19 birding trip on board the *Grande*. Boat leaves at 6 a.m.



**Whales and Seabirds—Sat.-Sun., May 26-28**

This multi-day Memorial Day Weekend pelagic birding trip on board the *Searcher* always turns up some rare and exciting species. Call Celia at Searcher Natural History Tours for reservations. Cost of trip: \$450.

For more info visit the BVAS pelagic birding website at: [www.socalbirding.com](http://www.socalbirding.com).

## Preschool Nature Storytime

Monday, May 28, 10 a.m.

Flutter by butterfly. You are so beautiful! What an amazing journey this lovely creature has taken to bring us such joy in watching her flit from flower to flower. I hope you will come to our last Nature Storytime until September. We will not be able to have a June gathering as we will be having Nature Camp at the Nature Center during that week. Looking forward to seeing you May 28 at 10 a.m. for songs, story, and a craft. If you have any questions please call Mary Ellen at 760-918-6622.



## Follow BVAS on Facebook and Twitter



## 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
Audubon Adventures	Ruth Gransbery	760-729-2240
Center Manager	Annette Schneider	760-945-8891
Christmas Bird Count	Terry Hunefeld*	760-908-3453
Conservation Co-Chair	Danny DiMento*	858-688-6891
Conservation Co-Chair	Joan Herskowitz*	760-942-5167
Circulation	Lisa Hart	760-945-9601
Education Co-Chair	Ellen Kindsvater	760-433-8097
	E-mail: <a href="mailto:ekindsvater1@gmail.com">ekindsvater1@gmail.com</a>	
Education Co-Chair	Carol Riker	760-599-0868
Facilities/Exhibits	Danny DiMento*	858-688-6891
Field Trips	Andy Brumbaugh	760-434-3334
Field Trip Leader	Steve Brad*	760-633-1639
Gift Shop	Rosalyn Dong	760-806-1430
Library	C. J. DiMento	760-231-9096
Membership	Harvey Hart*	760-945-9601
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* E-mail: <a href="mailto:akamauro@cox.net">akamauro@cox.net</a>	
Pelagic Birding	Terry Hunefeld*	760-908-3453
Programs	Dennis Huckabay*	760-757-6437
Publicity	Kelly Deveney*	760-721-2441
Ruddy Duck Club	Kelly Deveney*	760-721-2441
Volunteers	Bob Crowell*	760-207-3884
Webmaster	Larry Spann: E-mail: <a href="mailto:larry@spannweb.net">larry@spannweb.net</a>	

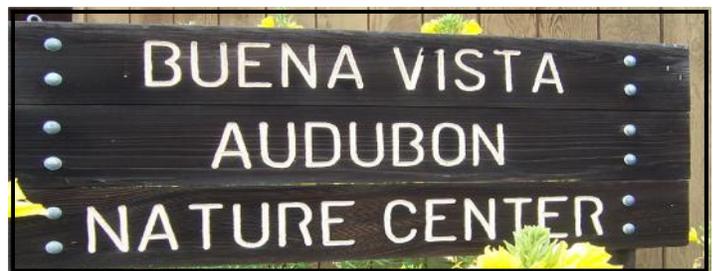
Sign Up Now!

## Summer Nature Camp

It's time to start thinking about the summer! BVAS is now accepting applications for its Summer Nature Camp. We'll be learning all about our Buena Vista Lagoon, from the days of its early inhabitants to the present day natural world of plants and animals. Camp leaders and Nature Guides will provide lessons, stories, songs, crafts, and walks around our lagoon trail. We'll catch bugs, examine things with our magnifying glasses, and even have some live animals for the children to visit up close.



The first week of camp will be June 18-22, and is geared for children from kindergarten through fourth grade. The second week of camp will run from June 25-29, and will be just for the younger children from kindergarten through second grade. Each week-long session will run from Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon. Call or stop by the Nature Center to make your reservation and insure your space. *NOTE: An incorrect tuition fee per student was listed in the April newsletter. The correct fee is \$90 per child per week.*



### 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.  
**Closed Monday**

### Website:

[www.bvaudubon.org](http://www.bvaudubon.org)

### E-mail:

[bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net)

### Field Trip Hotline:

760-688-0660

## 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 educational programs will receive 100% of my contribution. Minimum donation suggested: \$25.

I would like to donate \$ 25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$ 100 \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_

Send me info about the BVAS Legacy program.: \_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\*Send me my newsletter by e-mail.

### Support Your Birdathon!

Even if you can't join us on one of our Birdathon and Bloomathon walks on May 19, please consider making a generous contribution in support of the BVAS Nature Center and our many programs.

*Thank You!*

**Please bill my credit card:**

Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
CRN \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Buena Vista Native Plant Club

**Sunday, May 20**—The Buena Vista Native Plant Club regularly meets at the Nature Center at 2 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. Everyone's welcome, regardless of their native plant knowledge or gardening expertise. Club members answer your questions and help solve your gardening issues, as well as offer tips for native gardening activities appropriate for the season. We always spend time among the native plants in the demonstration gardens or along the Nature Center trails. Our May meeting focuses on the issue of grass lawns—how much is enough and what are the alternatives? For more info, follow the Native Plant Club link at [www.bvaudubon.org](http://www.bvaudubon.org).



## Volunteers

Some much appreciated help around the Nature Center has come from teams from Goodwill Industries and Easter Seals lately. Spring has brought about a spurt of new growth in the gardens, and generated a backlog of garden jobs.



*The Goodwill Industries team—Victoria (left), Sean, Letticia, and Dina—pause for a photo.*

If you think you might be interested in volunteering at BVAS, talk to Bob Crowell. Bob can often be found at the Nature Center, or contacted at home at 760-207-3884.



*Saturday, May 19*

## 2012 Spring Birdathon and Bloomathon?

For as long as we can remember, BVAS has held a Spring Birdathon. Each year we gather at the Nature Center on a Saturday morning to go out into the community and count the number of different bird species we can find. This also serves as our Spring fundraiser, helping raise the funds needed to support the Nature Center throughout the summer. This year we've decided to add a little twist—along with the birds, we're going to tally the number of different species of flowering plants we can identify. Of course, most of us don't qualify as expert ornithologists or botanists, but who cares. This is a no-pressure, all in fun event, with a primary purpose of getting us all outside and into nature. We'll distribute checklists of common bird and plant species we hope to encounter, and we'll have some knowledgeable plant and bird people on hand to help with the more troublesome IDs. For the novices among us, it'll be a chance to learn a little more about our local flora and fauna. Come help us settle the debate between our plant and bird people. What do you think? Will it be the birds or the blooms that win the count?



**Details:** We'll all meet at the Nature Center on May 19. **Early Birders** will meet at 6:30 a.m. to go off with Steve Brad to look for early-rising birds. They'll join the rest of the flock back at the Nature Center at 8 a.m., where everyone will be able to choose the group they'd like to join to go out looking for birds and wildflowers. Leaders will be on hand to escort us to various local birding and wildflower sites. Among the choices will be a walk along the new nature trails at Oceanside's **El Corazon Park**, a special edition of the **Beginning Birding Class** doing a loop caravan around Buena Vista Lagoon, as well as walks at several other local parks. We hope you'll all join us for a fun morning of bird songs and wildflowers. If you can't join us on one of our walks, please help support the Birdathon and Bloomathon with your generous donation. Look for your letter and contribution envelope in the mail, or use the cut-out coupon on this page.



# BVAS Spring Birdathon and Bloomathon!

Saturday, May 19

(See. P. 5)



## Lagoon Flyer



BUENA VISTA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P. O. BOX 480  
OCEANSIDE, CA 92049-0480

DATED MATERIAL  
Please Deliver Promptly

**Change Service Requested**

NON-PROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #193  
OCEANSIDE, CA

## BVAS Quick Event Calendar

### May

- Fri. May 4 —Board Meeting—9 a.m.
- Sat. May 5—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
- Fri. May 11—Nature Guides Meeting—10 a.m.
- Wed. May 16 —General Meeting (Owls of Starr Ranch)—7 p.m.
- Sat. May 19—"Spring Migration" Pelagic Bird Trip—6 a.m.
- Sat. May 19—Birdathon and Bloomathon (Meet at Nature Center)
  - 6:30 a.m. —Early Birds
  - 8 a.m. —Everyone Else

*Note: "Everyone Else" includes those interested in joining the Beginning Birders walk, Buena Vista Lagoon Count group, El Corazon Bird and Wildflower Walk, or groups taking bird and wildflower walks at several other local parks.*

- Sun. May 20—Native Plant Club Meeting—2 p.m.
- Mon. May 28—Preschool Nature Storytime—10 a.m.



Printed on Recycled Paper

## Least Terns Back in Town

California Least Terns began returning to San Diego County in mid-April, just in time for the breeding season. This endangered species typically nests on open sandy beaches, making it especially vulnerable to human disturbance. Among the more successful colonies in Southern California are those located on protected sanctuaries at Camp Pendleton and Batiquitos Lagoon.



California Least Tern and Chick

—C. Mayne