Wednesday, May 22

The Common, and Not-So-Common, Birds of San Diego County with Gary Nunn

6:30 p.m. Social—7 p.m. Program

Local birder and San Diego Field Ornithologists Vice President Gary Nunn takes us on a birding journey examining rare birds and discussing how to identify them in San Diego County. Rare birds can be found by anyone, but the observer needs to be armed with the right information and be in the right place at the right time. Today, digital photography can be of critical importance to bird identification. We’ll see how photographic images, captured at the time of sighting, have changed the skills needed for being a successful field ornithologist, and what lays ahead for those interested in finding the very rarest vagrant birds. Join us for a lesson in improving your “rare birding” skills.

Celebrating Endangered Species Day

Spring Open House at the Nature Center

Saturday, May 18—10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Spring Open House at the Nature Center is our annual celebration of birdsong and wildflowers. The free activities we have planned for the day are all designed with family fun in mind, and our playmate will be Mother Nature herself. We’ll even supply the refreshments!

Fun Activities—We’ll have stories, nature crafts, and other special activities, many geared toward the younger crowd. There will be a session of Nature Storytime, an animal tracking workshop, and our popular Nature Treasure Hunt, with prizes for participants. Everyone will be fascinated with the “Lagoon Discovery Dip.” While we all gather around, a big scoop of lagoon critters will be emptied into a large tub for everyone to see up close. Last year we had lots of different things to discover and talk about, including baby bass and bluegill, dragonfly nymphs, midges, tiny little crawfish, diving beetles, and, of course, mosquito larvae.

Endangered Species Day—This year’s Open House coincides with National Endangered Species Day. Teaming up with our friends from Preserve Calavera, we’ll have student-built displays highlighting a number of endangered plant and animal species that can still be found within the lagoon and other nearby reserves. Everyone will learn a little more about these special plants and animals.

Wildflowers—The timing will be just right this year to showcase the native plant gardens around the Nature Center and the plants along the lagoon trail. Aromatic scents and colorful flowers will be in abundance.

Everyone’s Welcome!
**Conservation Matters**

*Coast Highway Improvement Project—* Carlsbad is planning a number of changes to the stretch of Pacific Coast Highway that runs across the Buena Vista Lagoon just south of the Nature Center. While the need for improvement to the road is real, several of the proposed changes could cause problems for the community. The idea of adding a cement sidewalk with raised curb and eliminating all street-side parking causes us some concern. While a pedestrian-safe walk connecting the Nature Center to the park on the south side of the lagoon is a worthy goal, we’re concerned that the elimination of street parking would result in frequent overcrowding of the Nature Center parking lot, making it difficult for visitors and BVAS members to access the facility. We prefer the plan proposed and preliminarily designed by the Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation—building a boardwalk along the east side of the road that crosses the Buena Vista Lagoon. The boardwalk might partially extend over the edge of the water and would include several wider sections designed to accommodate fishermen and those wishing to observe wildlife. The design could also provide for a number of pull-off parking spaces. We do like the planners’ idea that a traffic circle be placed at the south end of this stretch of highway to facilitate the flow of traffic into Carlsbad. Of course, all of this will ultimately need to conform with design conditions imposed by a future lagoon restoration project.

**Designing a Nature Center**

*Celebrating Our Nature Center*  
  
In the early spring of 1986, everything was in place to finally begin drawing up plans for a new nature center at the Buena Vista Lagoon. Land had been secured by the City of Oceanside and money for design and construction of a nature center had been appropriated from California’s Environmental License Plate Fund. Oceanside and the California Department of Fish and Game had just entered into an agreement calling for the city to prepare construction bid plans for the nature center, obtain the necessary development permits, provide contract administration and construction engineering services, and furnish the final plans. CDF&G for its part would channel construction funds to the city in the amount of $165,000, and review and approve the plans.  

What an exciting time for the Chapter! BVAS members had been spearheading the drive for a nature center for years, all that time dreaming about how the center should be built. We’ve already written about Cora Wilson and David Rorick, two of our chapter’s most passionate advocates for a nature center. We regret not having space to mention the many others from our chapter’s early history who also participated in the effort with letters of support, appearances at public meetings, and other contributions to the cause. BVAS played a major role in the design of the nature center, meeting often with city engineers to present its ideas for every little detail, including the building’s orientation, its roofline, the size of the classroom, the built-in cabinetry of the Board Room, the need for a kitchen, etc. In June, the city and BVAS received a joint coastal permit for the nature center. It was to be a 1-story, 2,935 square-foot building, with display area, meeting room, kitchen, offices, and restrooms. There was to be an adjacent parking lot, and a 50-foot setback from the wetlands. In its final notice of approval, the Coastal Commission found that the proposed project would “provide an important visitor-serving resource where the natural qualities and resources of the coastal zone may be appreciated.”

---

**Sign Up Now!**

**Summer Nature Camp**

The very popular BVAS Summer Nature Camp is now accepting applications for its June sessions. We’ll learn all about the lagoon, from the days of its early inhabitants to the present day natural world of plants and animals. The camp will feature stories, songs, crafts, and walks along the lagoon trail. We’ll catch bugs, examine things with our magnifying glasses, and even have some live animals for the kids to visit up close. It’s all about exploration, discovery, and fun! Our first week (June 17-21) will be for children who are ready to enter grades 1 through 3. The next week (June 24-28) is designed to cover a wider age span, and will be for children ready to enter grades 4 through 5. We’re sorry, but the level of activities planned require that all campers will need to have already finished kindergarten. Each week-long session will run from Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon.  

The cost is $110 per camper per session. You do not need to be a member of BVAS to enroll your child in Summer Nature Camp. Camp applications can be picked up and turned in at the Nature Center. Forms are also available on the BVAS Facebook page and the BVAS website (www.bvaudubon.org).

*Get summer off to a great start!*
May Birthing and Upcoming Tours

Whelan Lake Bird Walk
with John Haddock
Saturday, May 4—8 a.m.
Whelan Lake is a protected 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 migrations.

Directions: 1-5 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. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy at the picnic tables after your walk.

Leader: John Haddock, 760-941-7824.

Oak Riparian Park
with Steve Brad
Sunday, May 12—8 a.m.
May is an excellent time to visit this lovely open space park, when a host of migrating warblers, tanagers, vireos, orioles, grosbeaks, and flycatchers can often be seen. The varied habitat is also home to many species that regularly nest in coastal North County. A nice assortment of wildflowers should also be in bloom. The trail follows a creek through oak and riparian woodlands before finally reaching open grassland and chaparral-covered hillsides. The trail is uneven in spots, so wear sturdy shoes. We’ll bird a mile or so along the trail and, depending on time and temperament, consider a caravan over to the adjacent Lake Calavera Preserve.

Directions: On the Oceanside/Carlsbad border. From I-5, take Hwy. 78 East to College Blvd. Turn south on College Blvd. to Lake Blvd. Turn east on Lake Blvd. to Oak Riparian Park. Restrooms and water available in the parking lot.

Leader: Steve Brad, stevebrad1@earthlink.net; 760-633-1639; cell phone (on day of trip): 760-274-5256.

Woodpecker Wonderland

July 8-12

Birding in the Oregon Cascades
with woodpecker specialist Steve Shunk
Come with BVAS and Paradise Birding on this 5-day tour to the eastern slope of Oregon’s Cascade Mountains. We’ll experience as many as 11 species of nesting woodpeckers, 175 other breeding bird species, and some of the most spectacular scenery in the U.S.

The tour fee of $1,100/person ($200 single supplement) includes four nights of lodging, all meals, snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, ground transportation in a comfortable van, and the services of our expert guide. Participants are responsible for air transportation to and from Redmond, Oregon.

Reserve Your Spot! Limited to nine participants. Contact Steve Shunk at 541-408-1753, or steve@paradisebiriding.com.

May Pelagic Birding with BVAS

*Sat., May 4—12-Hour Pelagic Bird Trip
Join BVAS and a crew of expert pelagic birding guides on a 12-hour cruise out to the 9-Mile and 30-Mile Banks, staying mostly within San Diego County waters. This is the near peak of spring migration for ocean birds. We’ll have good chances for black-footed albatross and ash storm-petrel, with possibilities for red-billed tropicbird and south polar skua. We’re likely to see Scripps’ murrelet, Cassin’s and rhinoceros auklets, and a variety of regularly-occurring shearwaters, storm-petrels, phalaropes, and jaegers. As usual, we’ll also expect to encounter a number of marine mammals on the trip.

Departure: 5:30 a.m. Trip fee ranges from $60-85, depending on time of reservation. Early Bird registrants get significant discounts on all BVAS pelagic trips on the Grande. For reservations, call Point Loma Sportfishing Landing at 619-223-1627.

Red-billed Tropicbird  —S. Streit

Nature Center Beehive Gets Bugged

You may recall our January story about the beautiful natural beehive that had been donated to the Nature Center. Hopefully, some of you got a chance to view it while it was briefly on display. Having previous experience with the fragile nature of an abandoned beehive, we planned to quickly have an acrylic case made to enclose the hive and keep it safe for years to come.

Unfortunately, we weren’t fast enough. Early last month we noticed some suspicious insect activity on the hive. Despite attempts to stem the tide, the hive was quickly overrun with the larvae of some as yet undetermined species of beetle. As we watched in dismay, the hive began to disintegrate before our eyes. Our Nature Center manager was finally forced to dispose of the hive before the larvae could mature and spread to some of the Center’s other natural exhibits. Next time we’ll just have to do a better job of minding our own beeswax.

Preschool Nature Storytime

Monday, May 20—10 a.m.

What is that creature sunning on the rock? What was that scurrying across the trail? Leaping lizards! Come to our May Storytime and learn about these wonderful reptiles. Did you know that some can even change their colors? We’ll have songs, games, a story, and a special craft for the children. Please gather with us!

Any questions? Please call Mary Ellen at 760-918-6622.

NOTE: Our May Storytime is a week earlier this month because of the Memorial Day holiday.

Conservation Matters (continued from P. 2)

Quarry Creek—In April, Carlsbad voted to allow full density development on the old quarry site adjacent to the Buena Vista Creek Ecological Reserve. The decision was made despite the site’s previous designation as a top-priority for conservation, plus significant public sentiment against the project. Development will be clustered to allow preservation of portions of the land.

Coastal Appointment Recommendation—BVAS is submitting a letter to the Speaker of the Assembly supporting the reappointment of Oceanside councilperson Esther Sanchez to another term on the California Coastal Commission. Sanchez has won recognition by several conservation organizations for her strong advocacy for the environment while on the Coastal Commission.
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: ___

Name_______________________________________
Address_____________________________________
City, State, Zip  ______________________________
Phone______________  E-mail__________________

*I choose to receive the digital edition of the Lagoon Flyer by e-mail each month. It’s a week earlier, in full color, has extra features, and saves BVAS and the environment the cost of printing and postage. Sign me up!
*Please send me my newsletter by e-mail. 

Native Plant Club
Sunday, May 19—2 p.m.
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 old style grass lawns—how much is enough and what are the alternatives? For more info, follow the Native Plant Club link at www.bvaudubon.org.

Monday Morning with the Natives
Interested gardeners are invited to the Nature Center on Monday mornings at 9 a.m. for some casual gardening and friendly chatter.

We Need Your E-Mail Address!
A big “Thank you” to the many members who have signed up to have their BVAS newsletters delivered directly to their home computers each month. Nearly 200 members now receive a full-color edition of the newsletter as an e-mail attachment, saving the chapter a little over $2,000 each year in the cost of printing and mailing the old black and white newsletter. If you’d like to join the gang and sign up for the digital edition, please send your e-mail address to our circulation chairperson, Harvey Hart, at: harvey_hart@msn.com. We think you’ll enjoy the full-color photos and extra features each month, and we know the chapter will enjoy the savings in its operating budget.

Kids’ Corner at the Nature Center
Joey’s and Johnny’s Clubhouse
Kids and parents are invited to stop by the Nature Center for some informal nature fun.
Sunday, May 19, 1-4 p.m.

The BVAS Spring Fundraiser
Dear BVAS Members—Your BVAS Spring Appeal letter should be arriving in your mailboxes soon. We hope you’ll take a moment to send in a donation to help maintain the Nature Center and allow us to continue to offer bird walks, class visits, evening programs, our newsletter, and special nature-oriented events throughout the year. Your donation also supports our conservation advocacy and outreach efforts to preserve natural open space in North County.
If you are a National Audubon Society member, you may not realize that BVAS only receives about $4 a year from your NAS dues. That’s why having our NAS members also become a “BVAS Friend” with a direct contribution to BVAS is so critically important to the chapter. We know you receive solicitations from many other worthy causes, perhaps as often as every day. We try not to add to that overload, and only send out two fundraising appeals each year. We also work hard to raise funds other than by direct solicitation. We truly appreciate your help.
BVAS May Calendar

Fri., May 3—Board Meeting—9 a.m.
Sat., May 4—BVAS 12-Hour Pelagic Birding Trip
Sat., May 4—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Fri., May 10—Nature Guides Meeting—10 a.m.
Sun., May 12—Oak Riparian Park Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Sat. May 18—Spring Open House—10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sun., May 19—Joey’s & Johnny’s Clubhouse—1 p.m.
Sun., May 19—Native Plant Club—2 p.m.
Mon., May 20—Preschool Nature Storytime—10 a.m.
Wed., May 22—General Meeting—6:30 p.m.

“Common and Not-So-Common Birds of S.D.”

Sat., May 25—Basic Birding/Lagoon Bird Count—8 a.m.

Coming in June:

BVAS Annual Meeting/Election of Directors and Officers
Interested or know someone who might be a perfect fit?
Please call the Nature Center and leave your name. We’ll
give you a call to get your feedback and answer any questions.

A Fledgling Tries Out Its Wings

This fledgling vermillion flycatcher is testing its wings,
about to take that first big flight toward adulthood. If
it’s a male, in another year it will sport the flashy red
and black plumage of its father. Vermillion flycatchers
were once extremely rare in the county, and are still a
notable sighting. This recent confirmation of breeding
at Mission Trails Park was a significant new record.

Vermillion Flycatcher, Fledgling (15 April, 2013) —Jay Keller