Volume 40 Number 6 Summer 2011

Lagoon Flyer

Jón Baldur Hlíðberg

Buena Vista Audubon Society

Annual Audubon Film Festival

Wednesday, June 15

The Ghost Bird

Exploring the Rediscovery of an Iconic Bird

A One-Hour Feature Documentary Film

7 p.m. Social—7:30 p.m. Program

Ivory-billed Woodpecker —*David Sibley*

In 2005, scientists announced that the ivory-billed woodpecker, a species thought to be extinct for 60 years, had been found in the swamps of Eastern Arkansas. Other creatures also had wrongly been presumed extinct, but the reappearance of the ivory-billed was celebrated around the world as the rediscovery of a lifetime, prompting the largest recovery effort ever undertaken for a lost species. Millions of dollars poured in from the government, while ornithologists and birders flooded the swamps to find the rare bird. Down the road, the struggling town of Brinkley, Arkansas was transformed by the hope, commerce and controversy surrounding its feathered friend. But continued searching by expert birders only highlighted the mysterious absence of scientific evidence. Now, six years later, the woodpecker remains as elusive as ever. *The Ghost Bird* brings the ivory-billed woodpecker's blurry rediscovery into focus, revealing our uneasy relationship with nature and the increasing uncertainty of our place within it.

The film features a frame-by-frame analysis of the actual footage of the 2005 sighting, as well as a dramatic re-creation of the event which rocked the birding world. Many key figures in the original discovery and the resultant search for confirmation participate in the film. This includes renowned bird illustrator, David Sibley, one of the first notable experts to raise questions about the validity of the sighting. The documentary includes historical film and photos of the ivory-billed, as well as visits to the ivory-billed specimen collections of several major natural history museums and interviews with their curators.

Which side of the ivory-billed woodpecker debate do you favor? Is the ivory-billed extinct as previously believed, or is there a small, isolated population of ghost birds still gliding through flooded swamplands somewhere in the South? We've arranged to provide you all the facts and commentary in an unbiased and fascinating format. Come to the BVAS Film Festival's free presentation of *The Ghost Bird*, and decide for yourself.

No controversy about this: free popcorn and drinks for all!

BVAS Annual Meeting and Election

The BVAS official Annual Meeting will take place at the June 15 meeting prior to the showing of *The Ghost Bird*. The short session involves the formal election of officers and directors for the coming fiscal year. Each of the four current officers, Dave Billings (President), Dennis Huckabay (Vice-President), Kathy Billings (Secretary), and Sandy McMullen (Treasurer) has informed the Board of their willingness to stay on for another term. The same is true of current Directors (listed with an * in the roster of volunteers on P. 4). Any member interested in serving on the Board or volunteering in any other capacity is invited to contact Bob Crowell at 760-207-3884 for more info.

Pacific Ridge School Students

Learning and Making a Difference at the Nature Center

By Joan Bockman

Pacific Ridge School is a private, not-for-profit institution located in Carlsbad. Its website lists a mission of preparing students for college and a purposeful life in a community that fosters academic excellence, ethical responsibility and global engagement. If the Pacific Ridge School students' involvement with BVAS and the Nature Center over the last few years is any indication, those lofty ideals are being well met. As part of the students' education in environmental awareness and civic responsibility, students have been visiting and volunteering at the Nature Center at least twice a year for the last several years.

Pictured l. to r., Pacific Ridge School students Mina Fardeen, Vincent Wang, Gabriel Piscitello, and Samuel Levin, sort acorns in preparation for potting. .

Typically, a bus pulls up at the Nature Center and 15 kids and two teachers pile out. The school usually coordinates their visits with me (in my role as president of the BVAS Native Plant Club), and I help line up tasks for the students and provide some guidance and direction. The students and their teachers put in a very productive hour or so of work around the Nature Center.

They have helped with weeding, pruning, propagating from cuttings and seed, planting, and watering new plants. They work well in groups, ask a lot of interesting questions, and exhibit a level of energy and enthusiasm that brings a smile to my face. One group used the dumpster as a giant vase and created a huge flower arrangement of the many invasive, non-native chrysanthemums they had been asked to remove. This year, one of the kids realized he was pulling up non-native wild radish plants, decided to try a bite, and got a fiery hot mouthful for his reward. Of course, everyone else quickly decided to have a taste of wild radish as well. One time, the kids were busy pruning a number of large lemonadeberry bushes to provide cuttings for propagation. They learned it was an awesome native plant when they took their shears to one of the bushes and tried some truly creative pruning. It ended up looking like a modern sculpture, and gave proof to my adage that everyone should have an indestructible lemonadeberry in their yard. Most recently, the kids showed their great work ethic when pulling a million grass seedlings out of the front garden.

As a sidelight to all their hard work, the students learn about the native plants and different habitats found around the Nature Center. They also learn to recognize the various invasive plants that still can be found trying to crowd out the natives along the trail. And then there are the bugs, those amazing wild creatures with the capacity to excite any teenager. We can't help ourselves. We divide the bugs into the few that creep us out and the many we learn to appreciate for being so beneficial to the gardens. A big thank you to all the good students and teachers at Pacific Ridge School!

Carlsbad Lagoon Day

Carlsbad enjoys the distinction of being blessed with three separate lagoons—Buena Vista in the north, Agua Hedionda in the middle, and Batiquitos in the south. This summer, on July 24, the non-profit organizations that support each of the three lagoons will jointly host a day of special festivities.

The day will feature a 5-K Fun Walk and Run, Hollywood celebrities, a California barbecue, live music, and a number of nature-themed family programs and activities. It's all designed to increase awareness of the lagoons and their nature centers, and raise funds to help support nature education programs in the community.

Participants in the 5-K will have their choice of three different starting points along the coast, including the BVAS Nature Center. The three courses will all end up at the Agua Hedionda Discovery Center on Canon Rd., where most of the activities will be centered. Volunteers from the various organizations, including BVAS and the Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation, will be helping with all the activities.

More information will be available soon on posters at each of the lagoon nature centers and throughout the community, as well as online at **www.aguahedionda.org**.

Become A BVAS Volunteer

Can you spare as few as three hours a month? If so, you can contribute greatly to the BVAS mission of nature education and conservation. Volunteer help is needed in such areas as Center hosting, Nature Guides, and newsletter mailing. No experience necessary!

If you are interested please call me at 760-207-3884, or e-mail me at kbcrowell@cox.net, and we'll get you trained and started!

Thank you to all our great volunteers. Those birds you hear are singing for you! *—Bob Crowell*

Summer Birding Schedule—Join Us!

Whelan Lake Monthly Bird Count

with John Haddock

First Saturdays of the Month—8 a.m.

June 4, July 2, and August 6

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, including nesting wood ducks during early summer.

Directions: I-5 to Hwy. 76 East, left at Douglas and continue to light at North River Rd., left on North River Rd. Meet at the cul-de-sac at the end of the road by the entrance gate.

Leader: John Haddock, 760-941-7824.

Birding Palomar Mountain

with Steve Brad

June 12—8:30 a.m.

June is a great time to visit the pines, cedars, and high country meadows at Palomar Mountain State Park. We'll see all of our mountain favorites, and have a good opportunity to improve our birding-by-ear skills. Pack a lunch for a post walk picnic. Easy walking on good trails. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the picnic area just inside the park entrance. Those interested in carpooling meet at the La Costa Ave./I-5 Park-and-Ride at 7 a.m.

Directions: From I-5 take I-76 East 38 miles, take a slight left turn onto South Grade Road and proceed up the mountain. Follow signs to Palomar Mountain State Park ($6 day fee/car). Once in the park follow signs to Doane Pond.

Leader: Steve Brad, 760-633-1639; stevebrad1@earthlink.net.

Mammoth Lakes Bird Trip

Special Excursion

with Steve Brad

July 13-17

Join BVAS on a 5-day birding trip to the Eastern High Sierras. The first four days we'll visit Bridgeport Reservoir, Crowley Lake, and the Mammoth Lakes area, On our last day we'll drive down past Bishop to join Sierra birder Mike Prather, who will lead us around newly restored Owens Lake or another of his favorite birding spots in the area. Expect many mountain species, waterfowl, shore birds, great vistas, granite walls, snow-covered peaks, rushing streams, and clean fresh air.

Mammoth Lakes has all the amenities of a mountain resort: restaurants, markets, lodging, and wonderful natural resources. Participants are responsible for travel, lodging, and food.

The fee of $100 is deemed a charitable donation to BVAS. Limited to 15 participants. Contact Steve Brad at **stevebrad1@earthlink.net** or 760-633-1639 for particulars and to reserve your spot.

Buena Vista Lagoon Bird Count

with Joan Fountain

Last Saturdays of the Month—8 a.m.

June 25, July 30, and August 27

Join the regular monthly bird survey team and get to know the Buena Vista Lagoon. Have the satisfaction of contributing to the ongoing bird database and gaining a better knowledge of the birds of our lagoon. We always record a nice assortment of freshwater wetland and marsh species on this easy-paced excursion. **Directions:** I-5 to I-78 East, take Jefferson St. exit, turn right and make another right turn onto Lagoon View Dr. Park along road at cul-de-sac.
Leader: Joan Fountain, 760-729-1379.

Basic Birding Class at the Buena Vista Lagoon Landing

with Tom Troy

Last Saturdays of the Month—8:30 a.m.

June 25, July 30, and August 27

Is this the summer that you become a birder? Novice birders are invited to join our monthly classes for some informal, no-pressure birding. We'll share friendly tips and help you build your bird identification skills.

Directions: I-5 to I-78 East. From I-78, take Jefferson St. exit and go right to the light on Jefferson St. Turn right again and make an immediate right turn into the BVL Landing parking lot. Leader: Tom Troy, 760-420-7328.

Mid-Week, 48-Hour Trip with BVAS

Pelagic Birding in August

BVAS is sponsoring a special 48-hour, pelagic birding trip on board the *Grande* out of San Diego in August. We'll depart on Monday, August 15, at 7 a.m., and return 7 a.m. on Wednesday, August 17. The trip is designed to get birders out to the most distant offshore waters that are still within U.S. jurisdiction. The trip promises a chance to sight rare pelagic vagrants from the southern hemisphere, along with the great variety of species typically expected in these waters at this time of year. Some of the birds we expect to see are a number of species of petrels, storm-petrels, and murrelets, plus tropicbirds, jaegers, boobies, and albatross. We also can expect encounters with a wide variety of marine mammals.

An early bird registration rate of $295 is available through July 20. For reservations, call Point Loma Sportfishing at 619-223-1627, and let them know you'd like a spot on the BVAS pelagic birding trip on board the *Grande*.

For more details about this and other pelagic birding trips in coming months, go to: www.socalbirding.com.

Our Librarian Extraordinaire

Norma Handy, among other admirable traits, has always been thoughtful, organized, and quite responsible, making her extremely well-suited to the task she set for herself nearly 10 years ago. Volunteering as BVAS librarian, she took over the large collection of natural history books, bird guides, native plant books, nature photo portfolios, nature literature, and reference materials that had accumulated at the Nature Center. She initially catalogued all of the collection and set up borrowing procedures for the membership. Over the years she sorted through the new donations and evaluated all the material for its reference value. She set up a used book table to sell duplicate or unwanted items and raised funds for new purchases. She started with a simple collection and turned it into a wonderful reference library.

Earlier this year, Norma decided it was finally time to take a well-deserved break from her position. C.J. DiMento, also a trained librarian, will be taking over her duties. Perhaps now Norma will be able to sit back and read a few more of the wonderful volumes she so lovingly tended at the Nature Center library for all those years. The Board wishes Norma well and would like to publically express its heartfelt appreciation for her many years of wonderful service to the chapter.

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
Education Co-Chair	Nancy Miller	760-704-6479
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	
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: akamauro@cox.net
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: larry@spannweb.net

It's Nesting Season. Do You Know Where Your Fledglings Are?

By Sandy McMullen

Those who love birds and other wildlife especially enjoy watching birds build nests and raise their young in our yards. We know not to trim the palm fronds when the orioles are here, and to let the bushes overgrow a bit in case a hummingbird has chosen the tip of one branch for its tiny nest. We even tolerate a little messiness when the swallows take over our eaves.

By the same token, it is dismaying to see trimmers at work on a tree where an active nest is located. Did you know that it is against state law to destroy the nest or eggs of any bird? It is also illegal to kill or disturb the nest of any migratory bird under federal law. Professional contractors should be aware of the laws protecting birds and the right way to approach a project that has the potential of harm.

If you know someone who is contemplating doing some trimming, ask them to carefully inspect the area for nests before beginning the operation; in some cases it might be best to hire a trained biologist or contact the Department of Fish and Game for help. Better yet, ask them to hold off on the work until fall. If you witness tree trimmers disturbing or destroying nests, ask them to stop, and make them aware of the laws regarding this. Then call the California Department of Fish and Game at 888-334-2258 and give them the exact location as well as the name of the company doing the work and vehicle license number.

Birds provide us with insect control, seed dispersal, and a great deal of esthetic enjoyment. With a little help from us, we can ensure that they continue this important role in our world for generations to come.

Location: 2202 South Coast Hwy. Oceanside, CA (East side of street on north shore of lagoon)	**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 480 Oceanside, CA 92049-0480 **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 **E-mail:** 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.** ☐

Create A Lasting Legacy

Join many of our founding members and make BVAS a part of your estate plan. Your legacy gift goes directly to the Endowment Fund, providing lasting support for our Nature Center. Please call Dennis Huckabay at 760-757-6437 for more info.

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
Summer Meetings

June 19 — See the Blooms!
Come view a show of native plant photos from our extensive collection, and we'll talk about your favorite plants.

July 17 — Fire Season Gardening.
We'll watch a video about our native chaparral plant community, and discuss Rick Halsey's book, *Fire, Chaparral, and Survival in Southern California*. Can native plants actually help protect us from wildfires?

August 21 — Winter in August?
It's well into summer now, and plants are going dormant. We'll discuss and practice techniques for pruning our various native plants. Bring gloves and tools.

The Buena Vista Native Plant Club meets at the Nature Center at 2 p.m. on the Third Sunday of the month.

Only A Few Spots Still Open

Buena Vista Lagoon Nature Camp

Camp Crawdad: ***Ages 7-8; June 20-24***
Camp Tadpole: ***Ages 5-6; June 27-July 1***
All sessions 9 a.m.—Noon
Camp fee: $85/child for each 5-day session

Drop by the Nature Center or visit the BVAS website (bvaudubon.org) for applications or more information.

Children Enjoying Nature

Summer Fun at the Center

Are you looking for some fun activities for your young children to enjoy this summer, maybe something that doesn't involve television, Facebook, video games, MP-3 players, and the like? How about bringing the family down to the Nature Center and spending a few hours with Mother Nature? Our Nature Storytime is on its summer break until September, but there are still plenty of things for you and your youngster to do at the Nature Center, and it's all free. Here are some ideas.

***Go on a nature treasure hunt**—Pick up a map and checklist at the front desk and see what you can find along the trail.

***Test your sense of smell**—Walk the trail and list the different smells you find, like pungent sage, almond-scented laurel sumac, musky marsh mud, savory wild celery, and many others.

***Try out some binoculars**—Borrow some loaner binoculars from our front desk and check out the sights in the big lagoon.

***Touch and feel**—Pick up and examine the many nature finds set out on the "hands-on" counter in the classroom.

***Color it green**—Sit down at the big round table with the BVAS Nature Activity Book and dig into our box of crayons.

***Read a children's nature book**—Have your child curl up on a bean bag chair while you read one of our children's nature books (or bring your own book and add to our collection!).

Have a Happy Summer!

Preschool Nature Storytime
Will Return in September.

"A Penny A Pelican"

(See Below)

Lagoon Flyer

BUENA VISTA AUDUBON SOCIETY
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OCEANSIDE, CA 92049-0480

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BVAS Summer Calendar

Fri. June 3 —Board Meeting—9 a.m.
Sat. June 4—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Mon. June 6—Nature Guides Meeting—10 a.m.
Sun. June 12—Birding Palomar Mountain—8:30 a.m.
Wed. June 15—Film Festival & Annual Meeting—7 p.m.
Sun. June 19—Native Plant Club Meeting—2 p.m.
M/F June 20-24—BV Lagoon Nature Camp (Crawdads)
Sat. June 25—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. June 25—Basic Birding at B.V. L. Landing—8:30 a.m.
M/F June 27-July 1—BV Lagoon Nature Camp (Tadpoles)

Sat. July 2—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Wed./Sun. July 13-17—Mammoth Lakes Bird Trip
Sun. July 17—Native Plant Club Meeting—2 p.m.
Sat. July 23—Carlsbad Lagoon Day—5-K Fun Run
Sat. July 30—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. July 30—Basic Birding at B.V. L. Landing—8:30 a.m.

Sat. Aug. 6—Whelan Lake Bird Walk—8 a.m.
Mon./Wed. Aug. 15-17—48-Hour Pelagic Birding Trip
Sun. Aug. 21—Native Plant Club Meeting—2 p.m.
Sat. Aug. 27—Buena Vista Lagoon Count—8 a.m.
Sat. Aug. 27—Basic Birding at B.V. L. Landing—8:30 a.m.

Printed on Recycled Paper

"A Penny A Pelican"

We've all been amazed and delighted by the numbers of brown pelicans flying up and down our coastline this spring. Loyal BVAS supporter and nature-lover Audrey Elliot recently sent us a special note along with her generous donation to help support the Nature Center.

"*My niece Audrey (age 10) and her brother Carson (age 12) counted pelicans flying overhead on Easter Sunday. The count was HUGE, as was my financial bet. (I had told the children I would pay them a penny a pelican.) But it is GREAT to have the kids understand how pelicans have rebounded from pesticide poisons that almost wiped the birds out a decade-plus ago. Hurrah for Rachel Carson! Hurrah for kids! Love those pelicans!! Hurrah! Hurrah!*"

After the count, the kids told Audrey they didn't want the money, but to send it where it would do some good, so she sent her donation to BVAS. What a wonderful story, and inspiration for us all. Hurrah! Hurrah!

North Coast Church Members Perform their "Weekend of Service" at BVAS Nature Center

On Saturday May 14, an energetic group of more than 20 members of North Coast Church came to the BVAS Nature Center as part of their "weekend of service" event. Kids and adults pitched in to prune and clean the paths to ensure wheelchair access to the gardens around the Nature Center. Removing invasive non-native grasses from the trail proved daunting but showcased the wonderful work ethic of the group as they spent four hours filling the dumpster and creating a large pile for the next load.

A few workers take a break as they stand next to a pile of trimmings taken from around the Nature Center and along the nature trail during the North Coast Church work party in May. The group produced so much green waste it took three weeks worth of trash service to haul it away. Now that's what we call a work party!

The workers saw plenty of bees and birds, as well as a garter snake. A videographer happened to be working on a project at the Nature Center that morning, and recorded the explanations of native flora and fauna the group received as they did their work. Lemonade made from the lemonade berry bush was enjoyed by all, and brave souls sampled the strong-tasting wild radish roots. Afterword, the kids got to wash up using suds from the wild lilacs.

Thank you, North Coast Church, for all the hard work. The trails look great! —Joan Bochman

Paul Ecke School Hikes to a Volcano

Joan Bockman recently led a large group of sixth grade students, their teachers, and parent chaperones from Paul Ecke School in Encinitas on a nature walk specially designed to meet California curriculum standards for science. Beginning at Oak Riparian Park in Oceanside, the group trekked through the oak woodland and streamside habitat along Calavera Creek, traversed mesa grassland and chaparral-covered hills, before finally arriving at the Calavera Volcano.

Highlights included many species of blooming wildflowers, aromatic sages and sagebrush, a rattlesnake and garter snake, a weasel, numerous lizards, and a pair of circling red-tailed hawks. Mineral specimens were collected for later identification. The students learned about invasive species and celebrated the dead palms and pampas grass that were eradicated as part of restoration efforts.

Following the hike, the school presented BVAS with a very generous and much appreciated $100 donation.