As primates, we humans are in fine company, sharing our great-ape status with six other species. Orangutans, gorillas, and chimpanzees have drawn our attention, admiration, and affection for decades. But less known, and perhaps more closely related, are the bonobos of the Congo. Bonobos were once considered pygmy chimpanzees, but emerging research is highlighting just how noteworthy our intelligent, peaceful, yet endangered cousins are.

The Bonobo Project founder Ashley Stone will introduce us to both the bonobo and its plight. Returning from a month-long adventure into the heart of the Congo rainforest, Ashley will take us on this seldom-trod journey. Discover what makes this fascinating primate familiar and yet unique, while learning what is being done to preserve the bonobos and support the communities surrounding them.

This may just be your most memorable family reunion.
You’ve Got Mail!

A Letter from the President

I was recently told that BVAS is “the little engine that could.” Our small organization continuously inspires and delights me with all that we do! The “fuel” that keeps us going is the dedication and involvement of our volunteers, members, and the community.

This year has been especially amazing as we purchased our second piece of conservation land, the now-officially-named "Andy Mauro Nature Preserve" near Whelan Lake. Our little engine continues at full speed ahead as we hire a part-time land manager (welcome, Megan Marshall!) and implement the restoration and long-term management plan for the Mauro Preserve.

In other areas, we are ecstatic to welcome a new treasurer to our Board; Margie Ellsworth is enthusiastically taking the helm of this crucial job. Our Nature Education Program continues to delight children of all ages as thousands of kids came through our nature center. Our gardening crew keeps the grounds and trail in great shape and has been establishing bioswales and gardens throughout Oceanside. Staffed with dedicated and knowledgeable hosts, our nature center stays open almost 365 days a year.

All of these activities have something in common. Because our programs and nature center are offered to the community free of charge, we depend on our volunteers and supporters to make this possible. And YOU are the reason our little engine keeps chugging.

-- Natalie Shapiro

Buena Vista’s Newest Guardian

This winter, Megan Marshall joins the Buena Vista team as Land Manager for the newly acquired parcels near the nature center and inland by Whelan Lake. The position is a vital one, overseeing both land restoration and management and working hand in hand with other environmental and government agencies.

Megan is uniquely qualified, holding degrees in Environmental Management and Protection and Biological Sciences, with an emphasis in Field and Wildlife Biology. Recent experiences in environmental education and interpretation demonstrate her dedication to Buena Vista's mission to embrace the community in every aspect of its work.

Spirited and personable, Megan says that she is excited to be a part of BVAS during this era of growth and conservation.

Welcome, Megan Marshall.
EL CORAZON GARRISON CREEK BIRD WALK  
Wednesday, November 8 — 7:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, December 13 — 7:30 a.m.  
Join Denise for a 2-mile walk along El Corazon’s Garrison Creek Trail. In addition, BVAS’s Joan Bockman will share her knowledge of the local flora and the history of El Corazon. Should be fun!  
**Directions:** Turn into the El Corazon gate east of El Camino Real on Oceanside Blvd. Veer to the left for ample parking.  
**Leader:** Denise Riddle (driddle1855@att.net)

STEVE’S SURPRISE THURSDAY WALK  
Thursday, November 9 — 8 a.m.  
Come along on 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. It is always great fun! Send Steve an email if you are interested in participating.  
**Leader:** Steve Brad (stevanbrad@gmail.com)  
**Note:** There will be no Second Thursday Walk for December.

MANCHESTER PRESERVE, ENCINITAS  
Sunday, November 12th — 7:30 a.m.  
Join Steve on his Second Sunday Bird Walk at Manchester Preserve. Manchester Preserve is a mix of coastal sage scrub and chaparral, so we should look out for gnatchasers and thrashers!  
**Directions:** From I-5, exit at Manchester Ave. heading east for about 2 miles until you get to the intersection of Manchester and Trabert Ranch Road. Turn left into the dirt parking lot that is on the northwest corner of Manchester and Trabert Ranch Road.  
**Leader:** Steve Brad (760-633-1639)  
**Note:** There will be no Second Sunday Bird Walk in December.

SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK BIRD WALK  
Saturday, November 18 — 8:30 a.m. (Lower Crest Canyon)  
**Saturday, December 16 — 8:30 a.m. (San Andres Drive)**  
We’ll be looking for various species of waterfowl and shorebirds that come to spend the winter at North County’s coastal wetlands.  
**Directions:** Lower Crest Canyon — From I-5, take Via de la Vallee west; left on Jimmy Durante Blvd.; left on San Dieguito Rd. Drive east 1 mile to trailhead.  
**San Andres Drive** — From I-5, take Via de la Vallee east; go right on San Andres Drive to end of road.  
**Leader:** John Haddock (760-941-7824)

COASTAL 101 BIRDING  
Saturday, November 25 — 9 a.m.  
Saturday, December 23 — 9 a.m. (Note the count is one week early due to Buena Vista Lagoon Christmas Bird Count!)  
Join Tom and Susie for a casual combination birding workshop and bird count around Buena Vista Lagoon. We visit Maxton Brown Park, walk to the ocean and weir, and return to the nature center along Coast Highway. We should see waders, songbirds, and shore birds. After the walk, we tally the birds and finish by 11:30 a.m.  
**Location:** Buena Vista Nature Center, 2202 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside. Meet in the parking lot.  
**Leaders:** Tom Troy (760-420-7328) and Susie Martin

BIRDING LEO CARRILLO  
**Thursday, November 2 — 8 a.m.**  
**Thursday, December 7 — 8 a.m.**  
Come along with us as we walk the trails and explore inside Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park. We will have special “expert” birders join us!  
**Location:** Meet at the trail head west of Carrillo Elementary School parking lot (off Poinsettia Lane, west of Melrose Ave. and turn south on Paseo Escuela). Trail parking is available in the lot to the right (west) of the school parking lot.  
**Leaders:** Joan Herskovitz, Eve Martin, Patti Koger, and Jane Mygatt (jmherskovitz@yahoo.com, jmygatt@unm.edu)

WHELAN LAKE BIRD SANCTUARY WALK  
**Saturday, November 4 — 8 a.m.**  
**Saturday, December 2 — 8 a.m.**  
Join John and friends for our regular monthly walk and bird survey at this beautiful sanctuary for resident and migratory waterfowl. Whelan Lake is always a favorite place to bird!  
**Directions:** From I-5, take Hwy 76 east; turn left at Douglas Drive; continue to the light at North River Road; go left on North River Road. Pass through entrance gate and follow signs to the lake. Feel free to contact the leader for directions.  
**Leader:** John Haddock (760-941-7824)

**2017 Oceanside-Vista-Carlsbad Christmas Bird Count (CBC)— December 23, 2017**  
This is a favorite event for the birding community! Everyone is welcome, from beginners to advanced birders. If you are new to birding, join the CBC at Buena Vista Lagoon. (See Coastal 101 Birding entry for December.)  
Birders with more experience are encouraged to join one of our many teams. **Contact Oceanside CBC coordinator Jane Mygatt (jmygatt@unm.edu)** to be assigned to a group leader who will fill you in on when and where to meet. Please include your name, phone number, and a sentence or two to indicate your general level of birding experience. Let Jane know by December 16!  
A hearty lunch is provided to all participants at the Buena Vista Nature Center. Join us for this fun holiday tradition!
Leaf It Where It Falls

On garden day, local first graders were introduced to the notion that trees drop their leaves where needed. One budding botanist responded, “So you just leaf it where it falls?”

The duff of trees and plants are important compost for both soil and insects. But for some reason, we have been trained to “clean up” nature. Every week, right before trash day, neighborhoods are buzzing with power tools and leaf blowers in an attempt to remove any speck of dust from nearby landscapes. Native yards meanwhile, are happily blooming, decaying, or going dormant, depending on the plant. No power tools; no weekly ritual.

Your yard is much more enjoyable when you can revel in the seasons and understand that plants are not about you. See flowers as food for pollinators and, more importantly, dead flowers as the indicator of seeds. There is so much to see when nature is center stage. Lesser goldfinches hang precariously on the long, brown, twisted stalks of spent Hooker’s evening primrose. Ladybugs regularly dot the late summer blooms of deer grass. Lizards dart about and whole flocks of birds settle into a seedy-looking saltbush.

Just leaf it where it falls.

Season’s Tweetings -
Nature’s Winter Serenade

In early to mid-November, a familiar song—a long, clear whistle followed by a jumble of quick buzzy notes—fills the air. The first scouts of this species begin to arrive in our area in mid-September. By November, though, they seem to be singing everywhere. The white-crowned sparrow has arrived in force!

A white-crowned sparrow at first appears to be a plain, pale-gray bird. But the small, pale pink or yellow bill and bold black and white stripes on its head quickly stand out. These two features combine with the crisp gray breast to make this bird one of the easiest sparrow identifications in North America. (And we need all of those we can get.) Immatures resemble adults, although the distinctive head pattern is a more muted one of brown and tan stripes.

You might hear an occasional song in early fall. But the singing builds as more sparrows arrive. By November white-crowned sparrows seem almost ubiquitous, being rare only at the county’s highest elevations. They often gather in large flocks, making them seem even more numerous. Some grass, weeds, or open ground for foraging, with shrubbery or trees nearby for predator protection, are the birds’ only requirements this time of year.

The waning daylight of late summer typically triggers decreased hormone levels among birds and most singing drops off. But white-crowned sparrows exhibit no such hormonal changes. Instead, males sing throughout the year, using their winter songs to establish and maintain the social structure of the large flocks that roam around in search of food.

With the influx of these sparrows, we get front-row seats to a quiet, off-season symphony. Come spring, these sprites will pack their bags and head back to their northern breeding grounds. By mid-April, the species becomes uncommon again. So tune up your ears and enjoy this winter songster while you can.

For more details see bvaudubon.org.
Young Artists Bring the Outdoors In

Thirty of our youngest naturalists joined Julia Fister of Studio ACE and artists Isaías Crow and Linda and Jim Kallas to bring the center’s hallway to life. The passage has been transformed into a trail through the wetlands, complete with local wildlife. Stop by and take a hike.

No Child Left Indoors

The Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians has generously donated $5,000 toward Buena Vista Audubon’s Nature Guide Program. The gift will allow more elementary children to experience the lagoon and center and learn of the history and traditions of local tribes.

In the words of our young visitors:

“I like how you let us smash some of the acorns.”

“My favorite part was when I used a magnifying glass to see closer.”

“Lemonade berries were so sour and slimy.”

“I had fun learning about Luiseños and what they eat. I hope to come back with my family one day.”

“Thank you for letting our class come to the lagoon. It was very fun!”

BVAS OFFICERS, BOARD*, AND CHAIRS

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KIDS’ CORNER AT THE NATURE CENTER

Joey and Johnny’s Clubhouse

Sunday, Nov. 19 & Dec. 17, both from 1-4 p.m.

In November we’ll be making pumpkin bird feeders. In December you will get your own glass ornament to fill with whatever beautiful objects you find in nature. Come join the fun!

Preschool Nature Storytime

Monday, Nov. 27 & Dec. 18, both at 10 a.m. (Note the Dec. meeting will be the third Monday of the month due to the holidays.) Bring your little ones to our monthly program that gently introduces them to the wonders of nature. The focus for November will be fall leaves. In December we will learn about winter animals. Questions? Call Sally at 760-525-2351
BVAS QUICK CALENDAR

NATURE CENTER:
Garden Club Every Monday 10 a.m.
Free Art Workshop Nov. 16 & Dec. 21 7 p.m.
Joey’s & Johnny’s Club Nov. 19 & Dec. 17 1 p.m.
Preschool Nature Story Nov. 27 & Dec. 18 10 a.m.

MEETINGS:
Board Meetings Nov. 17 & Dec. 15 9 a.m.
Nature Guide Meetings Nov. 3 & Dec. 1 10 a.m.
General Mtg./Program: Nov. 15 6:30 p.m.
“Plan the Bonobo Project” with Ashley Stone

WALKS:
Birding Leo Carrillo Nov. 2 & Dec. 7 8 a.m.
Whelan Lake Walk Nov. 4 & Dec. 2 8 a.m.
El Corazon Garrison Crk. Nov. 8 & Dec. 13 7:30 a.m.
Steve’s Surprise Walk Nov. 9 only 8 a.m.
Manchester Preserve Nov. 12 only 7:30 a.m.
San Dieguito River Walk Nov. 18 & Dec. 16 8:30 a.m.
Coastal 101 Birding Nov. 25 & *Dec. 23 9 a.m.
Christmas Bird Count Dec. 23 see page 3

* Note this is 1 week early due to Christmas Bird Count

Happy Holidays

Buena Vista Audubon
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
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760-439-BIRD (-2473)
email: bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net
website: www.bvaudubon.org

I’m back! See page 4 for details.

Center Hours
Sunday: 1 - 4 p.m.
Monday: CLOSED
Tuesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
FREE Art WORKSHOPS (ADULTS) ALL LEVELS: BEGINNERS WELCOME

with www.LindaLuisi.com MURALIST AND FINE ART INSTRUCTOR

No prior skills needed. Come and enjoy!

WHERE:
At the Buena Vista Audubon Society Nature Center

SIGN UP:
Thur. Oct. 19, 7-8pm
Thur. Nov. 16, 7-8pm
Thur. Dec. 21, 7-8pm

BRING:
Paper, pencils, color pencils, pastels, or watercolor pencils.

Linda Luisi is a muralist & fine art instructor. Her work is known for depth & dimension. She teaches with enthusiasm for all levels: beginners to advanced.

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Paintings and Murals by Linda

Space is limited. Sign up at the Nature Center or call: 760-439-2473

*Questions? Feel free to contact Linda: 760.944.8991 Linda@LindaLuisi.com www.LindaLuisi.com