From Coast to Desert

Life As A Wild Bird Photographer

Follow local legend Ernie Cowan as he examines the opportunities, challenges, humor, and rewards of chasing wild birds for that perfect image in the birdiest county in America. His talk will include a look at the various bird types to be found from our coastal waters to inland lakes and oak woodlands, higher elevation mountains, and deserts. A special segment will include a photo essay on some of the strange things overheard in nature. Ernie will bring both wit and insight to the investigation of the many bird species we enjoy here in San Diego County. (Ernie apologizes in advance if you were the one he nearly scared to death when he emerged from a bush in full camouflage while birding on Palomar Mountain.)

Ernie Cowen has been the author of “Backyard Bird Watching” in the San Diego Union Tribune since 2013, and he also writes a weekly “Outdoors” column for the UT that focuses on places, animals, and experiences in the natural world. He presents a seminar and field trip on photographing wild birds at the annual San Diego Bird Festival has been a frequent speaker at various Audubon and photography groups throughout Southern California, and has led photography tours around the southwest and around the world.

Join Buena Vista Audubon on a backyard tour through a whole different lens. Home will never seem quite the same.

Follow Ernie Cowan’s nature, wild bird, and outdoors blog at http://erniesoutdoors.blogspot.com/.

Lewis’s Woodpecker

Verdin by Cowan

BUENA VISTA AUDUBON SOCIETY
LAGOON
FLYER
VOLUME 47 / NUMBER 9 / NOV. - DEC. 2018

Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, December 29

Wednesday, November 14, 2018
Social: 6:30 p.m.  Program: 7:00 p.m.
Note that this is the 2nd Wednesday, due to Thanksgiving.
There will be no speaker in December.
In the late 19th century, the Christmas “Side Hunt” served as a festive holiday tradition. People chose teams and ventured out to shoot (read to kill) as many creatures as they could. The side with the largest pile of fur and feathers at the end of the day claimed victory. Frank Chapman, from the newly formed Audubon Society, wanted to provide an alternative activity to highlight the importance of conservation and threats to bird populations. So on Christmas Day, 1900, 27 hardy volunteers at 25 sites across North America ventured forth to count all of the birds they could find—alive. The tradition of the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) had arrived.

Held annually between mid-December and the first week of January, the CBC now sends out tens of thousands of volunteers across the Western Hemisphere to take a census of each bird they see or hear, within a 15-mile-diameter “count circle,” during one 24-hour period. Last year, 115 generous volunteers participated in the Oceanside/Vista/Carslbad CBC. The group’s final total came to 193 species—good enough to come in 2nd among the 6 CBCs in San Diego County, behind San Diego (217). Ranch Santa Fe came in a close 3rd (190). Not too shabby for lil ol’ North County.

This year’s event happens on Saturday, December 29. You might think that you need to be an amazing birder to help out in this effort, but you really don’t. REALLY! If you’d enjoy a group of enthusiastic but less experienced birders, join the folks surveying Buena Vista Lagoon and the vicinity around the Nature Center. Honestly—if you can spot a bird and point at it, you can help! A bit more experience and confidence? A group elsewhere in the count circle can use you. Contact Jane Mygatt (janemmygatt@me.com) by December 12, to find a group that needs your help and fits your interests. Come start a new holiday tradition. We’ll see you there!

To read one person’s account of last year’s CBC, go to bvaudubon.org.

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It Takes Just a Minute to Make a Difference for Years

Inboxes and mailboxes get overrun with appeals this time of year. Here’s an easy way to support Buena Vista for free! Sign up at smile.amazon.com and designate Buena Vista Audubon as your favorite charity. It’s like Amazon.com in every way, except that a half percent of most purchases is donated to BVAS and its work. It may be just pennies per purchase, but a mountain of pennies really adds up.

“An evolved way to give!”
- from The Lost Quotes of Charles Darwin
**Oceanside-Vista-Carlsbad Christmas Bird Count (CBC)— December 29th**

Join us for our favorite event in the birding community! Everyone is welcome! If you are new to birding, join the CBC at Buena Vista Lagoon, which is shorter and less strenuous. (See Coastal 101 Birding entry for December.) Birders with basic experience can join one of our teams. Note: this is a rain-or-shine event. Seems it never rains in Southern California. But folks, let me warn ya—it pours. Man it pours!

**Contact Oceanside CBC coordinator Jane Mygatt (janemygatt@me.com)** if you want to join a team. Please include your name, phone number, and a sentence or two to indicate your general level of birding experience. If possible, please let Jane know by December 10th.

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**BIRDING LEO CARRILLO**

**Thursday, November 1 — 8 a.m.**

**Thursday, December 6 — 8 a.m.**

We will be walking the trails and exploring inside Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park. Don’t miss this fun walk!

**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:** Eve Martin, Patti Koger, Chris K. Smith, and Jane Mygatt (janemygatt@me.com)

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**WHELAN LAKE BIRD SANCTUARY WALK**

**Saturday, November 3 — 8 a.m.**

**Saturday, December 1 — 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)

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**STEVE’S SURPRISE THURSDAY WALK**

**Thursday, November 8**

This is Steve’s regularly scheduled 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 Thursday Walk in December.

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**EL CORAZON GARRISON CREEK BIRD WALK**

**Wednesday, November 14 — 7:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday, December 12 — 7:30 a.m.**

Join Denise for a walk along El Corazon’s Garrison Creek Trail. In addition, Joan Bockman will share her knowledge of the local flora and the history of El Corazon.

**Directions:** From the intersection of El Camino Real and Oceanside Blvd., go east on Oceanside Blvd., turn left (north) into the first gate. Veer to the left and park.

**Leader:** Denise Riddle (driddle1855@att.net)

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**STEVE’S IMPROMPTU WALK**

You won’t want to miss Steve’s impromptu walk, which will not follow any particular schedule. Where and when will we go? Join Steve’s email list to find out. It certainly will be spontaneous and a great opportunity to chase local rarities together! Contact Steve if you’d like to be included on his email list.

**Leader:** Steve Brad, stevanbrad@gmail.com

**Note:** There will be no Impromptu Walk in December.

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**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK BIRD WALK**

**Saturday, November 17 — 8:30 a.m. (Lower Crest Canyon)**

**Saturday, December 15 — 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 Valle 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 Valle east; go right on San Andres Drive to end of road.

**Leader:** John Haddock (760-941-7824)

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**COASTAL 101 BIRDING**

**Saturday, November 24 — 9 a.m. (Regular walk)**

**Saturday, December 29 — 9 a.m. Oceanside Christmas Bird Count (CBC).** Join Tom on both dates and hone your skills for the December 29th CBC! This is a great way for beginning birders and others who would like to be involved in a CBC without any pressure. We visit Maxton Brown Park, walk to the ocean and weir, and return to the nature center along Coast Highway. For the CBC, lunch is provided as we compile the number of birds everyone has seen. Just show up, no need to contact the CBC coordinator. Experience the excitement of the day!

**Location:** Buena Vista Nature Center, 2202 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside. Meet in the parking lot.

**Leader:** Tom Troy (760-420-7328)
**Yes on Y (Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources)**

SOAR, a proposition on the November City of Oceanside ballot, simply requires that before agricultural, open space, or parkland can be rezoned to other uses such as dense housing or commercial, the people of Oceanside have a right to vote on the change. We all pay the costs of sprawl development – traffic congestion, air pollution, and higher fees for infrastructure such as water, sewers, and roads. SOAR lets the people make these important decisions, rather than three council members, developers, or special interests.

SOAR does not take any property rights away. Agricultural lands, such as Morro Hills, are zoned with the option for the land owners to subdivide into smaller parcels with a minimum size of 2 1/2 acres, if they choose to. No one is forcing them to build anything or divide up their land, and SOAR has no impact at all unless they decide to make the kind of major change that requires rezoning.

SOAR will ensure that the property remains zoned as it was when purchased, just as homeowners have to do in their residentially zoned districts. If farmers want to convert land to higher density residential or industrial uses, then the voters would be able to vote on that change. And SOAR specifically allows agri-tourism. SOAR will help keep farming viable and will slow down the loss of agricultural lands to more sprawl development.

Once our open space, parks, recreational areas, and farmland are paved over, they will be gone forever. Consider voting “Yes” on Proposition Y.

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**Because We’re Not Ducks...**

**Buena Vista’s Nature Trail Gets a Lift**

On Tuesday, Sept. 25, the Carlsbad City Council unanimously agreed to allocate $50,000 from the Agricultural Conversion Mitigation Fee (ACMF) program to Buena Vista Audubon Society (BVAS) to construct a boardwalk on the ¼-mile-long trail at the nature center.

With a duck pond and two viewing decks, the trail allows visitors to learn about native flora and fauna depicted in our nature center. During the summer and fall months, though, a stretch of approximately 350 feet of the trail becomes flooded when sand builds up at the mouth of the lagoon, in front of the weir, causing water to back up in the lagoon. The trail then becomes impassable, impacting the ability of families, tourists, and our nature education participants to use the trail.

The new boardwalk will be a wooden structure supported on metal posts—the same design as that of a small trail connector bridge that BVAS installed about eight years ago. It will allow visitors access to the full trail year-round, thus helping BVAS implement the California Coastal Act mandate to make coastal areas accessible to everyone.

The estimated cost of the project is $75,000. BVAS will supplement the ACMF funds with $25,000 from the Malk Nature Fund. And of course, all work on the boardwalk will be scheduled to avoid breeding season, so that nesting birds aren’t disturbed.

Stay tuned!
Our apologies. We accidentally cut off the link at the bottom of page 1 last month.

NPR featured Tri-colored black birds and their advocates in 2016:
http://www.npr.org/2016/08/07/489061743/saving-the-tricolored-blackbird

July 24-August 3, 2019
BVAS and Holbrook travel are going to explore the Galapagos Islands!
Experience the trip of a lifetime seeing birds, mammals, reptiles and more.
For complete details: Holbrook.travel/buenavista-gps19

TIPS FROM THE GARDEN CREW
Now is the time to curl up with The California Native Landscape or a copy of Fremontia and dream of your native garden in spring! An easy approach is to pick any of the native buckwheats, manzanitas, and sages and then group each species in threes all over your yard. These natives will provide the evergreen backbone, as well as spring and fall blooms. Our feathered friends and pollinators will be well fed.

Join us in the nature center garden on Mondays at 10 a.m to see these plants and learn more about bioswales and other garden techniques. As you learn more about native habitat, you can add other plants to your garden.

KIDS’ CORNER AT THE NATURE CENTER
Joey and Johnny’s Clubhouse will be on vacation until January.

Preschool Nature Storytime
Monday, Nov. 26 & Dec. 17, both at 10 a.m.
Bring your little ones to our monthly program that gently introduces them to the wonders of nature. The focus for November will be birds. In December we will learn about animals in winter. Questions?
Call Sally at 760-525-2351
(Note the Dec. meeting will be the third Monday of the month due to the holidays.)
**BVAS QUICK CALENDAR**

**NATURE CENTER:**
- Garden Crew: Every Monday (except 12/24) 10 a.m.
- * Free Art Workshop: Nov. 15 7 p.m.
- Preschool Nature Story: Nov. 26 & Dec. 17 10 a.m.

**MEETINGS:**
- Nature Guides: Nov. 2 & Dec. 7 10 a.m.
- Board Meetings: Nov. 16 & Dec. 21 9 a.m.
- General Mt./program: Nov. 14 6:30 p.m.

**WALKS:**
- Birding Leo Carrillo: Nov. 1 & Dec. 6 8 a.m.
- Whelan Lake Walk: Nov. 3 & Dec. 1 8 am.
- Steve’s Surprise Walk: Nov. 8 TBA
- El Corazon Garrison Crk.: Nov. 14 & Dec. 12 7:30 a.m.
- Steve’s Impromptu Walk: See p. 3 if interested
- San Dieguito River Park: Nov. 17 & Dec. 15 8:30 a.m.
- Coastal 101 Birding: Nov. 24 & Dec. 29 9 a.m.
- Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 29 See page 3

* Must sign up ahead of time.
** Notice, this is a week early.

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**Buena Vista Audubon**
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
2202 S. Coast Highway Oceanside, CA 92054
760-439-BIRD = (760-439-2473)
email: bvaudubon@sbcglobal.net
website: www.bvaudubon.org

**Election Day:**
November 6
Prioritizing conservation makes a difference!

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
DATES: Th. 7-8pm
1. Sept. 20
2. Oct. 18
3. Nov. 15
BRING:
Paper, pencils, color pencils, pastels, or watercolors.

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.

www.LindaLuisi.com

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
Visitors to the Galápagos Islands are intrigued by the endemic flora and fauna, geological activity, volcanic terrain, and unique human history. Accompanied by an onboard naturalist-guide, this 7-night small group cruise expedition offers a front-row seat for exploring the archipelago. Stunning formations like Kicker Rock, sandy beaches, teeming lagoons and volcanic craters play host to unique wildlife such as the blue-footed booby, white-tipped sharks, marine iguanas, sea turtles, yellow cow-nosed rays, and more. Plus spend time birding in mainland Ecuador exploring the Bellavista cloud forest, one of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

• Come face-to-face with iconic wildlife including Waved Albatross, Blue-footed Boobies, flamingos, sea lions, and Galápagos penguins.
• Explore diverse islands by boat and small panga craft, making wet and dry landings and stopping to hike, swim and snorkel.
• Sail around Kicker Rock, a massive tuff-rock that abruptly juts almost 500 feet straight out of the sea and is a nesting place for many species of sea birds.
• Discover the abundant flora and bird species that thrive in the cloud forest of Bellavista Reserve, one of the most unique ecosystems.

WHAT’S INCLUDED?

• Expert naturalist guides
• Accommodations
• Activities
• Entrance fees
• In-country transportation
• Meals & beverages
• Travel insurance