ICELAND AND ARCTIC NORWAY

A Springtime Journey to the Far North

As the long, dark days of winter give way to the seemingly endless daylight of the spring, birds arrive in their northern breeding grounds to begin their courtship rituals and nest building. From seabird colonies perched in towering cliffs to tundra leks to boreal forests, photographing these birds can be a 24/7 activity (if you’re not careful). The lands are vast but the birds are plentiful. Join March’s speaker, Neil Solomon, for stories and images of the many species observed during his journey to the north.

Like many, Neil’s interest in wildlife and photography started young and ripened over a lifetime: “At the age of ten I developed an interest in birding after watching Black-capped Chickadees feed on the seeds of giant sunflowers in a neighbor’s yard. Through the years I dabbled with photography, mostly landscapes. But in 2001, I purchased my first digital SLR, the Canon D30, and my interest in bird photography became more serious.”

Nineteen years, thousands of miles, and millions of birds later, Neil Solomon still travels the world in search of birds to photograph and images that tell a story.

Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Social: 6:30 p.m.
Walk & Trip Information: 6:45 p.m.
Program: 7:00 p.m.
The Greater Roadrunner

Beep! Beep!

A large, loping, ground-loving member of the cuckoo family, the streaky brown-gray Greater Roadrunner has a dark, shaggy crest that it raises and lowers; a heavy bill; and a long, animated tail that accounts for half of the bird’s two-foot length. And though males and females look the same, this bird cannot be mistaken for any other bird. Roadrunners are usually silent, although the male produces a series of low, descending cooing sounds rather like a Mourning Dove’s song during breeding season. Both sexes make a rattling, rapid bill snapping that sounds like playing cards being shuffled.

Roadrunners range across most of San Diego County in low density. On the coastal slope, they are most numerous in sage scrub with little development, among scattered rural homes, or on agricultural lands. They also inhabit open chaparral on the coastal slope but retreat from urban sprawl. Roadrunners have been disappearing rapidly from canyons that have become surrounded by developed areas.

Agile runners but reluctant flyers, roadrunners are voracious predators capable of running 15–20 m.p.h. in straight-line, open-area pursuit. They chase snakes, lizards, frogs, tarantulas, scorpions, rodents, butterflies, moths, and other flying insects, as well as far less fleet-of-foot prey such as snails, over the landscape. Even more impressive, though, during a pursuit they can turn, leap, and change direction like a champion cutting horse. They’ve even been known to grab low-flying bats and birds out of the air and to ambush hummingbirds at feeders for a meal.

While famous for outwitting Wile E. Coyote, this distinctive bird also appears in the stories of southwestern U.S. and Mexican tribes as a medicine bird, a shield against evil spirits, and a purveyor of good luck. Almost a caricature of itself and born to run, the Greater Roadrunner may make an appearance any time you’re walking along a trail in open country or driving along rural roads in San Diego County, so stay alert. To read more about this iconic bird, go to [https://bvaudubon.org/news/](https://bvaudubon.org/news/).
BIRDING WITH BVAS

BIRDING LEO CARRILLO
Thursday, March 5 — 8 a.m.
We will be walking the Rancho Carrillo trails and exploring inside Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park.
Location: Park along the trailhead near 2925 Via Conquistador.
Leaders: Eve Martin, Patti Koger, and Jane Mygatt (jane.mygatt@gmail.com)

WHELAN LAKE BIRD SANCTUARY WALK
Saturday, March 7 — 8 a.m.
Direction: Meet at the Whelan Lake trailhead. Take Saturday, San Diego, Blvd.; take Saturday, San Diego, Blvd. to Vista Highway. Continue on Vista Highway to Via Mygatt. Via Mygatt will take you to the Whelan Lake parking lot.

EL CORAZON GARRISON CREEK BIRD WALK
Wednesday, March 11 — 7:30 a.m.
Directions: From the intersection of El Camino Real and Oceanside Blvd., go east on Oceanside Blvd., turn left (north) into the first gate. Park to the left.
Leader: Denise Riddle (driddle1855@att.net)

STEVE BRAD’S TWO MONTHLY WALKS
(DATES AND TIMES WILL VARY)
Join Steve for these surprise-location walks. When and where we go is based on recent reports and Steve’s personal surveying. Starting times and days will vary, so send Steve an email if you are interested in being on his notification list.
Leader: Steve Brad (stevanbrad@gmail.com)

SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK BIRD WALK
Saturday, March 21 — 8:30 a.m.
Directions for Lower Crest Canyon— From I-5, take Via de la Valle west; left on Jimmy Durante Blvd.; left on San Dieguito Road. Drive east 1 mile to trailhead.
Leader: John Haddock (760-941-7824)

COASTAL 101 BIRDING
Saturday, March 28 — 9 a.m.
This walk goes along Buena Vista Lagoon, Maxton Brown Park, to the ocean and weir, and returns to the Nature Center along Coast Hwy.
Location: Buena Vista Nature Center, 2202 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside. Meet in the parking lot.
Leader: Tom Troy (760-420-7328)

ADAPTATIONS OF BIRDS — PLUMAGE
Perhaps no single feature sets birds apart from all other living animals as its feathers. A bird’s plumage (array of feathers) is one of the most intricate and complex body coverings in nature. It was once believed that feathers evolved from reptilian scales, but the chemical structure is so unique that this theory has been called into question. Feathers are made of a durable and flexible protein called beta-keratin. Feathers are structurally similar to claws, being tubular and produced by the follicles in the skin. Once a feather has fully grown from its follicle, the blood supply to the feather is cut off and the feather is a non-living structure.

Feathers are essential to avian flight, protect and insulate the fragile body, are used as an advertisement for mates, and can act as camouflage. In essence, a bird’s plumage functions as its moveable habitat. While some bird species inhabit cavities for shelter, most spend their lives in the open. One way birds are able to control their body temperature is by raising or lowering their feathers, and each feather has its own set of muscles and nerve endings. By raising and fluffing out their feathers, they can vary the relative thickness of their plumage to trap or release body heat.

Since feathers are exposed to the deteriorating effects of the sun’s UV radiation, they require constant care and need to be replaced on a regular basis. Birds spend considerable time and effort preening, which includes feather manipulation and conditioning. Feather manipulation returns feathers to their proper position and form. Conditioning involves the transfer of secretions, called sebum or Continued on page 4
Adaptation of Birds — Plumage

(Continued from page 3.)

Preen oil, using their bills and heads and rubbing the secretions over their bodies and wings. Birds have sensors lining the tip of the bill that may enable them to taste the amount of sebum present on their feathers and help determine which areas of the plumage need conditioning.

The renewal of plumage is accomplished through a process called molt. Although molting is extremely variable, it is a regular cyclical event controlled by hormones and tied to reproduction. Molts can be either complete, where all the feathers are replaced, or partial, where only some of the feathers are replaced. In general, feathers are molted after the breeding season so that a fresh insulating layer is complete for the winter. Changes in plumage color and patterning can help birds blend into their environment. By late winter, some birds undergo another partial molt into their breeding plumage.

Sources: *The Inner Bird: Anatomy and Evolution* and *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*
10th Annual Birdhouse and Nature Art Auction
Saturday, March 14 from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Come join us for this fun-filled fundraiser. Creations such as birdhouses, bee houses, quilts, sculptures, and other inventive nature-based art will be auctioned. You might even find a homemade beauty for a special person in your life!

The entrance fee of $15 will include music, hors d’oeuvres, wine, and craft beers. We hope you’ll join us for a great evening of community, camaraderie, and charity.

18th Annual Seaside Neighborhood California Native Plant Garden Tour
Sunday, March 29, at 2:00 p.m.

Come see over 18 native plant gardens in the historic, seaside neighborhood of downtown Oceanside. The Oceanside Coastal Neighborhood Association and Buena Vista Audubon Society are co-sponsoring the 18th Annual California Native Plant Garden Tour. Plant experts and neighborhood locals will lead a 1.5-mile walking tour to see wonderful front yard gardens. Meet in the St. Mary’s School parking lot at 515 Wisconsin Ave. in Oceanside. This guided walk is free. Kids will be selling lemonade and cookies along the route.

For more information, call 760-439-2473, or go online: www.bvaudubon.org or OCNA101.org.

KIDS’ CORNER AT THE NATURE CENTER

Come Get Dirty With the BVAS Garden Crew

Every Monday at 10:00, the garden crew gathers at the Nature Center to do a little maintenance work around the native plant garden and trails. Interested gardeners are invited to join. We can always use extra hands!

Joey and Johnny’s Clubhouse

Sunday, March 15, from 1-4 p.m.
Come make your own butterfly from leaves.

Preschool Nature Storytime

Monday, March 23, at 10 a.m.
Bring your little ones to our monthly program. This month our story and activities will revolve around frogs. Questions? Call Sally at 760-525-2351.
BVAS QUICK CALENDAR

Mon. Mar. 2    Garden Crew                10:00 a.m.
Thurs. Mar. 5  Birding Leo Carrillo       8:00 a.m.
Fri. Mar. 6    Nature Guides Meeting      10:00 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 7    Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary  8:00 a.m.
Mon. Mar. 9    Garden Crew                10:00 a.m.
Wed. Mar. 11   El Corazon Garrison Creek  7:30 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 14   Bird House Auction         5:00 p.m.
Sun. Mar. 15   Joey & Johnny’s Clubhouse  1:00 p.m.
Mon. Mar. 16   Garden Crew                10:00 a.m.
Wed. Mar. 18   Program: “Iceland and Arctic Norway” 6:30 p.m.
                  with Neil Solomon
Fri. Mar. 20   Board Meeting              9:00 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 21   San Dieguito River Park     8:30 a.m.
Mon. Mar. 23   Preschool Nature Storytime 10:00 a.m.
Mon. Mar. 23   Garden Crew                10:00 a.m.
Sat. Mar. 28   Coastal 101 Birding         9:00 a.m.
Mon. Mar. 30   Garden Crew                10:00 a.m.

For Steve Brad's two monthly walks, dates and times will vary. If interested, send Steve an email: stevanbrad@gmail.com.

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

Learn about Greater Roadrunners on page 2. Photo by Jane Mygatt.

Center Hours
Sunday: 1 - 4 p.m.
Monday: CLOSED
Tuesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Buena Vista Audubon Society

Fundraiser & Open House
bvlagoon@gmail.com
760-439-2473
www.bvaudubon.org

Tenth Annual Bird House & Nature-Themed Art Auction
MAR 14, 2020
5:00-8:00 PM

Buena Vista Audubon Society Nature Center 2202 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside

BVAS is soliciting donations of decorative or functional birdhouses, bat houses & feeders for the auction. A limited number of undecorated bird houses are available at the Nature Center for $8.00. Go to the www.bvaudubon.org for more information.

- Silent auction of unique, handcrafted birdhouses and nature art
- Special music by CJ the DJ
- Pizza and gourmet treats
- Hosted bar with specialty beers & wine

$15 Donation

All proceeds benefit the Buena Vista Audubon Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to fostering an appreciation for the plants and animals of our community.
18th Annual California Native Plant Garden Tour

Sunday March 29th, 2pm

Over 18 Native Plant Gardens in the Historic Seaside Neighborhood in Downtown Oceanside!

Free guided 1.5 mile walking tour. Donation requested for map.

Meet at St. Mary's School, 515 Wisconsin Avenue, (one block east of the 101 Café, Coast Highway and Wisconsin St).

Buena Vista Native Plant Club BVAudubon.org
Oceanside Coastal Neighborhood Association OCNA101.org