Saving Jemima:
Life and Love with a Hard-Luck Jay
with author Julie Zickefoose

Naturalist/artist/writer Julie Zickefoose thinks of herself as an unsung, minor, rather dirty superhero. Her superpower—saving small, economically worthless wildlife that would otherwise perish. An orphaned jay named Jemima was one such foundling. Spending nearly a year studying and raising the young Blue Jay for release opened the door to its world for Julie. She began writing and illustrating Saving Jemima: Life and Love With a Hard-Luck Jay immediately upon becoming her foster mother. More than a wildlife rehab story, it’s the story of life, love, and dealing with great loss; of finding grace and redemption in bonding with a wild bird.

Julie Zickefoose lives and works at Indigo Hill, her 80-acre wildlife sanctuary in the Appalachian foothills of Ohio. There, she documents the lives of birds, bobcats, coyote, deer, and other wildlife. She is a prolific writer and painter, contributing to The Birds of the World, Bird Watcher’s Digest, The NewYorker, Smithsonian magazine, and educational material by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

Join Julie as she brings Jemima’s story to life through both her poetic prose and her captivating illustrations.

Julie will be showing a video that lasts just over an hour. For the best audio experience, be sure you have Zoom downloaded to your computer or laptop.
Metallica—
The Allen’s Hummingbird

Flashing hot copper tempered by a cool green mantle, crown, and back, an adult male Allen’s Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) gleams like few other birds. His stunning, orange-red gorget (throat feathers) sometimes shines green or gold. Females and immatures are greenish above, paler below, and conspicuously washed with buffy orange on the sides, tail, and undertail. Their paler gorgets often show a smattering of bright reddish orange feathers.

Nesting can stretch from late October through mid-July, producing as many as four broods in a single season. The female almost invariably lays two eggs, as do other hummer species. Nest-building typically takes 7–11 days; incubation, 16–20 days. She perches on the edge of the nest, inserts her bill vertically into the open mouth of the nestling, and regurgitates a slurry of food into the nestling's mouth with a rapid pumping motion. (Males have no involvement in raising the young.) Leaving the nest 21–30 days after hatching, the youngsters continue to be fed by the female for another 10 days. Fledglings can be comical, frequently probing objects with no hope of nectar (e.g., brightly colored hats, yard decorations) while they figure out the world of nectar tubes.

The male Allen's differs from his congener, the Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*), only by feather-splitting degrees—so much so that they often can’t be confidently differentiated in the field. A hummer with a solid rufous back and head is an adult male Rufous. However, a small percentage of Rufouses can have green on their backs, including some with entirely green backs. Thus a green-backed adult male could be either an Allen's or a Rufous. Some solid clues do exist, though. At close range, look for a flared tail. Count one feather over from the middle pair of tail feathers (*retrices*)—known as R2—and check for a notch or indentation. See one? It’s a Rufous. Female and immature Allen's are, in most circumstances, pretty much impossible to distinguish in the field from their Rufous counterparts.

Rather than sweat the details, though, how about just chalking the birds up to "*Selasphorus sp."* (birder jargon for “undetermined *Selasphorus* species”)? Simply savor the beauty.

To learn more about this species and some other tips for differentiating it from Rufous Hummingbird, go to [https://bvaudubon.org/news/](https://bvaudubon.org/news/).

Classification Update

Every July, the American Ornithological Society publishes revisions to names and classification of North and Middle American bird species. This year several changes affect species near us.

- Mew Gull has been split; the species most likely in North America is now Short-billed Gull.
- Southern Caracara (found in South America) has been lumped back into Crested Caracara, with a new scientific name of *Caracara plancus*.
- Sedge Wren has been split into Sedge Wren (in North America) and Grass Wren (in Mexico and South America). Sedge Wren is now *Cistothorus stellaris*.

A number of other species have been assigned new genus names, including the cormorants, Spruce Grouse, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Five-striped Sparrow. See [https://www.aba.org/the-2021-aos-supplement-is-out/](https://www.aba.org/the-2021-aos-supplement-is-out/) for more information.
RANCHO CARRILLO TRAIL (Carlsbad)
Friday, Sep 3 — 8:00 a.m.
Note: There are a few changes. We will meet on the first Friday of the month and remain along the Rancho Carrillo Trail (not venture into Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park). We say a fond farewell to Patti Koger and welcome Kathy Aldern to the list of co-leaders!
Location: Park along the trailhead near 2955 Via Conquistador.
Leaders: Eve Martin, Kathy Aldern, and Jane Mygatt (jane.mygatt@gmail.com)

COASTAL 101 BIRDING (Oceanside)
2202 S Coast Highway
Saturday, Sep 25 — 9 a.m.
We start along the Buena Vista Lagoon, visit Maxton Brown Park, travel to the ocean and weir, and return to the Nature Center along Coast Highway.
Location: Buena Vista Nature Center, 2202 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside. Meet in the parking lot.
Leader: Tom Troy (760-420-7328)

SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK (Del Mar)
Note: September is canceled.

WHELAN LAKE BIRD SANCTUARY (Oceanside)
Saturday, Sep 4 — 8 a.m.
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 John for directions.
Leaders: John Haddock (760-941-7824) and Denise Riddle (driddle1855@att.net)

SAN DIEGO COUNTY AVIAN RECORDS
Paul Lehman’s extensive data file that includes avian records from late 2002 to mid-July 2021 is now available on the BVAS website. The records continue the observations since publication of the San Diego County Bird Atlas by Philip Unitt (2004). The file is posted in a Word version to download, view, and search for ease of finding particular species, observers, locations, etc.
https://bvaudubon.org/birding-resources/

MIGRATING BIRDERS PROGRAM
Our international birding program is back! This October, we are Birding the Ruins of the Yucatán with Stan Walens and Holbrook Travel. Stay tuned as we offer more international birding opportunities.

SAN DIEGO PELAGIC BIRDING
Our trips have been selling out, but there may be availability in October. Visit the Pelagic Birding website for availability and details.
https://sandiegopelagics.com/

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

In addition to operating the Nature Center and a range of associated activities, the Buena Vista Audubon Society (BVAS) Board has always taken positions in support of both local and regional native habitat and wildlife conservation. Our primary focus is protection and enhancement of the lagoon and its watershed. But we also have advocated for conservation issues in the region, including participation in the Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Coalition, composed of 20 environmental organizations that collectively advocate for environmental protections in the County.

The following is an update on current environmental issues that are on our “radar.” *

• Cypress Point Residential Development: a proposed project adjacent to the San Luis Rey River in Oceanside, across the river from our Mauro Nature Preserve. BVAS submitted a letter during public comment on Notice of Preparation for the Environmental Impact Report, requesting that the report analyze potential impacts to surrounding riparian and upland habitats.

• Draft South Morro Hills Specific Plan: a plan for development of the agricultural area in the northeast part of Oceanside, to be processed along with current update to the City’s General Plan. BVAS has joined several North County environmental organizations in recommending improvements to the Plan to avoid sprawl development and to protect wildlife corridors.

• Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan Draft Subarea Plan for the City of Oceanside: the Plan prescribes important areas for habitat and wildlife preservation and also provides certainties to developers for where development can safely occur. The Draft Subarea Plan was prepared in 2010 but has never been approved. Buena Vista Audubon is working with other local environmental organizations and meeting with City planning staff to encourage the City to finally approve the Plan that protects critical wildlife habitat.

* We welcome any member interested in assisting with conservation advocacy, such as researching, outreach, strategizing, coordinating with other groups, etc., from time to time as issues arise. If you are interested, please contact Joan at jmherskowitz@yahoo.com to discuss further.

Honoring Local Indigenous Peoples

Everyone living in California resides on unceded territories of indigenous nations. You may have heard acknowledgments of this fact at openings of gatherings or meetings. Buena Vista Audubon Society (BVAS) has worked with members of the local indigenous tribes to formulate such a land acknowledgement. Adapted from the longer version, the spoken acknowledgement states that BVAS honors the Payómkawichum (also known as the Luiseños) who are of the land on which the Nature Center stands. San Diego County also remains the shared space of the Kumeyaay, Cupeño, and Cahuilla.

We are partnering with local Payómkawichum bands on land restoration projects and other activities. Our full statement and action steps can be found here: https://bvaudubon.org/post-8733/. Read more about land acknowledgements in the Summer 2021 issue of Audubon (pp. 58-59).
PRESCHOOL NATURE STORYTIME RETURNS!

We will resume meeting every fourth Monday of the month beginning in September. Bring your 2½ - 5-year olds to this outdoor storytime. Plan to gather in front of the Nature Center at 10:00 a.m.

Monday, September 27, 10:00-10:45 a.m.

This month’s theme is “Explore the Oak Grove.” We will sit under the oaks for stories, games, and more. Bring a towel or blanket to sit on. Masks are required if you use the indoor facilities.

Please share this with your friends and families with preschoolers.

We look forward to seeing you.

Questions? Call Sally Bickerton, 760-525-2351.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S CORNER

Happy fall! As of this writing, our Nature Center is almost fully open and an Eagle Scout candidate from Scouts BSA Troop 752 is busy building Buena Vista Audubon a new Nature Center monument sign. Long-time volunteer Kevin Bockman is mentoring the Scout and assisting with the sign construction. Featuring re-purposed old growth redwood with routered lettering, the sign will sit on a concrete base with rocks embedded on the sides. These rocks have been sourced locally and encompass six different geologic themes to showcase our fascinating local geological history. Meanwhile, inside the Nature Center, our volunteers have created a new look as we explore new ways of showing our exhibits and the story of the Lagoon and its fauna and flora. Thank you, Troop 752 and our volunteers. Please come visit us and enjoy the fresh new look.

SoCal “Winter”

January is the dormant season in the rest of the country but Southern California dormancy occurs during the driest time of the year. Coastal Sage Scrub habitats survive with almost no water from May to November, since the rain in July usually falls over the mountains and deserts. Continuous garden watering actually keeps the insect population up when it would normally decrease. One of the plants that blooms during this time is the bright yellow goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*). Cut it back to the ground in March and the reward is a mass of blooms in the fall.

The Garden Crew meets at the Center every Monday from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Join us and learn more about native landscapes.

Photo of goldenbush at Preserve Calavera by Joan Bockman.
BVAS QUICK CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri. Sept. 3</td>
<td>Rancho Carrillo Trail</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. Sept. 3</td>
<td>Nature Guide Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat. Sept. 4</td>
<td>Whelan Lake Bird Sanct.</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Mon. Sept. 6</td>
<td>Garden Crew</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Wed. Sept. 8</td>
<td>El Corazon Garrison Crk.</td>
<td>7:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Mon. Sept. 13</td>
<td>Garden Crew</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. Sept. 15</td>
<td>Program on Zoom</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Saving Jemima” with Julie Zickefoose on Zoom</td>
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<td>Fri. Sept. 17</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. Sept. 20</td>
<td>Garden Crew</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat. Sept. 25</td>
<td>Coastal 101 Birding</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. Sept. 27</td>
<td>Preschool Nature Storytime</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Garden Crew</td>
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For **Steve Brad’s Twice-Monthly Bird Outings**, join his notification list by emailing stevanbrad@gmail.com.

At the time of this writing, masks have been reinstated in all indoor, public places. Please visit responsibly.

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

Allen’s Hummingbird by Dean LaTray. Learn about Allen’s on page 2.

Nature Center Hours:
Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.