

## Home School Visits



**There are three ways to visit the Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center and Lagoon.**

### **Option 1- When the center is closed**

The Center is currently open from 10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays-Sundays. However, even during those hours, there are times when hosts are not available. Your group is welcome to walk on the trail around the lagoon. There is a kiosk with information and self-guided pamphlets to assist you.

### **Option 2- Hosted Visits**

Home School groups are welcome on a space-available, first come-first served basis. Please follow the guidelines below.

#### **Choose an age-appropriate topic:**

- Five Senses (ages 5 – 7)
- Animals at the Lagoon (ages 6 – 8)
- Birds and Their Adaptations (ages 8 – 11)
- Insects at the Lagoon (ages 8 – 10)
- Native Americans at the Lagoon (ages 8 – 10)
- Watersheds (ages 9 – 11)

**Program:** The 90-minute visit takes place from 10-11:30 a.m. Weather permitting, the experience includes a brief indoor presentation, a nature walk on the lagoon trail, and a chance to visit the museum displays.

**Dates are limited** due to the availability of Audubon volunteers and must be reserved at least a month in advance. (Reservation requests are on our website [bvaudubon.org](http://bvaudubon.org))

#### **Group size and ages:**

- minimum of 12 children and a maximum of 20 children, ages 5 – 11
- maximum of 10 adults and older children acting as chaperones
- total group size = maximum of 25.
- This trip is **not** designed for children younger than 5 years old. (See self-guided tour.)

#### **Making and confirming reservations:**

- After reviewing your request, our scheduler will put a temporary hold on your choice of date and notify you of the details.
- Buena Vista's Nature Guides will review your request at their monthly meeting, held on the first Friday of the month. The scheduler will contact you to let you know whether volunteers are available for your date.
- A few days before your visit, you will be contacted to confirm your reservation and details. If the number of children drops below the minimum, you'll need to switch to a self-guided tour.

## Preparing for your visit:

- Carefully review the rules for the Nature Center and trail with the entire group. (See the lists at the bottom.)
- If children under the age of five will be at the center, ensure that they have supervision and planned activities apart from the Hosted Visit. We ask that any children who have trouble sitting quietly or still during the opening 15-minute program be taken out of the auditorium so others can focus.
- Equipment such as binoculars, the microscope, and water table need to be used only with adult supervision.
- Consider offering activities and related reading to the children before the day of the visit.
- In respect for our volunteers, visits begin promptly at 10 a.m. Allow enough time for parking and getting the children to their seats. Guided tours begin with a short introduction to your chosen topic. Touring the museum and lagoon trail will follow.
- The session will end at 11:30. While the Nature Guides will be leaving, there will be a volunteer Host at the desk to answer questions. Make sure that parents and other supervising adults know that they are responsible for closely supervising children who might remain in the center after 11:30.

## Option 3- Self-guided Tour

- Come explore the museum and trail on your own.
- Because we rely on volunteer hosts to open the Center, call a week before to confirm that the Center will be available. Hosts open the center and answer general questions, but they are not tour guides. Their job is to remain close to the phone, sell items from the gift shop, and welcome visitors.
- Please do not bring more than 15 people at a time for your self-guided tour. If you intend to tour the museum with more than 15 people, you'll need to schedule on a day when 2 hosts can be there.
- On arriving at the Center, you might consider splitting into two groups to visit the museum and the trail.
- We would appreciate if the adults would please check the bathrooms before leaving to make sure they are left in the manner in which they were found.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. *Is there a cost?*

There is no cost for the visit. Our volunteers offer their time to tap into the natural curiosity of our youngest naturalists and BVAAS uses donations to cover related expenses.

### 2. *How can we help?*

You already are! Keep your children close to Nature. They are our best stewards.

Buena Vista Audubon relies on its members, volunteers, and donations. Join, help, or contribute—it all makes a difference.

## **Buena Vista Audubon**

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society  
2202 S. Coast Highway Oceanside, CA 92054  
760-439-BIRD = (760-439-2473)  
website: [www.bvaudubon.org](http://www.bvaudubon.org)

# Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center and Lagoon Home School Visitation Guidelines

## For Option 2 – Hosted Visits



### Before You Arrive:

1. Send an email request to the program coordinator: Margie Ellsworth at [education2202@yahoo.com](mailto:education2202@yahoo.com). Trip request forms are on our website.
2. Review the rules with children and chaperones. (\*See the lists below.)
3. One chaperone per group of 6 children is recommended. The chaperones should not bring children outside the program age with them.
4. It's helpful to the Nature Guides if the children wear a legibly printed nametag with their first name.
5. The lagoon trail can be muddy regardless of the weather. Please advise everyone to wear closed-toed shoes.
6. You may also want to advise your group to wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
7. Children always learn more if they are prepared. You may want to review the content and appropriate vocabulary for students. See lists online at [bvaudubon.org](http://bvaudubon.org). (Look under Education; Nature Guides Program)

### When You Arrive:

1. Have children line up outside the front door and check in with a Nature Guide before entering.
2. When you enter, fill in the seats from front to back as quietly and quickly as possible.
3. Backpacks and lunch boxes should place them under the chairs.

### When You Leave:

1. The Nature Guides leave at the end of the program (11:30). If you're going to stay longer to have lunch or snacks, there are 2 picnic tables outside. Please let one of us know if you need a large plastic bag for trash.
2. Please check the bathrooms before you leave to make sure the children have left them in good shape.



### **\* Rules for Nature Center and Trail:**

1. Food (including gum) cannot be eaten inside the center.
2. Snacks and lunches may be eaten on the benches outside. Please be sure ALL trash is deposited in the outside trash can.
3. Cell phones should be turned off or should only be used for photos.
4. Stay behind your leader. Stay together and walk only on the trail.
5. Use soft voices and listen to your leader.
6. This is an ecological preserve. Objects (such as flowers, pine cones, rocks, etc.) may not be collected.
7. Refrain from putting hands on the glass cases or indoor specimens.
8. Walk, don't run.
9. If you need to use the restroom, notify your group leader.

### **\*\* Rules for Chaperones:**

1. Please be sure you have read the rules for the children.
2. Stay with your group.
3. You may be asked to walk at the back of the group to help keep kids from straying.
4. This is intended to be an educational trip. Please help keep the children focused. Refrain from side conversations.
5. Cell phones should be turned off or used for photos only.