Indigenous Cultural Practices and Modern-Day Pesticide Use

with Diania Caudell, Wednesday, May 15
Social: 6:45 p.m., Program: 7:00 p.m.

This talk will be in person at the BVAS Nature Center and will include our annual meeting.

Basketweaving has been an integral part of Native American culture for thousands of years. The practice dates back to ancient times, with evidence of Native American basketry dating as far back as 8000 BCE. Different tribes and communities across North America developed distinct styles, techniques, and patterns in their basketweaving, showcasing the rich diversity of Indigenous artistic traditions. The art of basketweaving has been a vital aspect of Native American cultural heritage, serving both utilitarian and ceremonial purposes throughout history.

Native Americans continue in this practice, even today. Embracing the wisdom of their forebears, they embark on a quest for native plants, the sacred ingredients that breathe life into their woven masterpieces. Yet, this sacred connection faces a modern adversary, as the native plants they gather are tainted with modern-day pesticides.

Diania Caudell, a member of the San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians, passionately immerses herself in the rich cultural history of the Luiseños, the first peoples of Oceanside. With an enchanting blend of expertise and enthusiasm, she captivates audiences by showcasing the ancient art of basketweaving and unveiling the secrets of the Indigenous plants integral to the process. Beyond her captivating demonstrations and educational workshops, Diania holds a pivotal role as the treasurer on the Board of the California Indian Basketweavers’ Association, contributing significantly to the preservation and promotion of this traditional craft.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Nature Center!
Hutton’s Vireo...on repeat
by Tina Mitchell

We had just moved to San Diego County when I went on a birding outing with a group. As we walked, I heard a very loud, repetitive, upward-moving bird song. I do a lot of birding by ear. But when you’re new to an area, you have to learn A LOT! So I asked one of the leaders what bird was vocalizing. She listened briefly, kind of shrugged, and said “I’m not sure—maybe a vireo?” I only knew one vireo species well from my many previous years in Colorado—Plumbeous Vireos nested on our property—and occasionally a Warbling Vireo would float through and sing a bit. But neither of those was the bird I was hearing. Listening to bird songs online later, I decided the bird had probably been a Hutton’s Vireo. (This is what we used to do in the olden days, before the Merlin app’s Sound ID.) But for the first time I realized (not meaning to throw any shade here) that even some really good birders seemed to be missing out on important, easy-to-use clues to birds’ identities. I guess we build on our strengths and my aging eyes are most definitely not my strongest aspect. But my ears just might be. Thank you, Hutton’s Vireo.

A small, plain songbird that passes easily for a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, a Hutton’s Vireo is a chickadee-sized bird of the Pacific Coast, with a big (relatively speaking) round head; a small, dark, pointy bill; a plump body; and a short, narrow tail. Overall brownish gray or dingy green-gray with paler underparts, this vireo’s whitish off-center eye ring and lores are obvious, although not crisply defined. Two light wing-bars on slightly darker wings are evident as well. (Males and females look similar.) Note that the twinning Ruby-crowned Kinglet moves around at a much more frenetic pace, with frequent wing-flicking rarely seen in a Hutton’s Vireo.

Unobtrusive, easily overlooked, and rarely studied, the Hutton’s Vireo is identified most easily by that persistent but slightly insipid, uninspired song—a voluminous, monotonous repetition of the same simple slightly upward, whistled phrase. After a lengthy period, the bird may switch to a variation of that simple phrase, which he again runs into the ground. This repetition, seemingly ad infinitum, offers one big advantage, though.

If you use the Merlin app, you should have plenty of time to rummage around for your phone, open the app, and start recording for Sound ID. What Hutton’s Vireos lack in tonal quality and variety, they make up for in persistence.

As a characteristic bird of oak woodlands, the Hutton’s Vireo most frequently inhabits oak-dominated woodlands in the foothills. But it can also be common in riparian woodlands where oaks rank in the minority. Furthermore, the vireo approaches the coast rather closely in many places, following strips of riparian woodland with few or no oaks. Hutton’s Vireos are unusual among North American vireos in that they don’t migrate. In winter, San Diego County sees only a slight spread of Hutton’s Vireos away from their breeding localities. Throughout most of their breeding range, though, Hutton’s Vireos occur during every month of the year.

They forage in dense foliage, fairly high in trees, and also investigate the tips of branches. Their known prey items embrace spiders, stinkbugs, leafhoppers, scale insects, ladybugs, and caterpillars. Occasional plant matter in their diet includes berries (e.g., buckthorn, poison

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oak, elderberry) as well as sap from sapsucker wells. They like to work trees methodically, with calculated hops between branches. They take prey from branches, hover, or hang upside-down to glean morsels from the tips of leaves or needle clusters. They can even chase and fly after flying insects. Spot a bug, grab a bug, pretty much anyway you can.

In San Diego County, Hutton’s Vireos’ breeding season stretches from late March into early July; individuals begin singing in earnest in late winter. Pairs are at least seasonally monogamous; and both adults participate in nest-building, incubation, and caring for the young. Clutches include between one and five eggs (mode, four). Incubation lasts 14–16 days; nestlings fledge about 14 days after hatching. Although Hutton’s Vireos could host eggs of the brood-parasite Brown-headed Cowbird, aspects of this species’ breeding phenology buffer them from the cowbirds’ parasitism that can plague other vireo species. Probably most important is that, as a resident species, Hutton’s Vireos lay eggs before the cowbirds arrive and are ready to start laying. Since these vireos generally raise just one brood a season, the cowbirds miss the appropriate window and look elsewhere.

This species’ names—Vireo huttoni and Hutton’s Vireo—couldn’t possibly be more redundant. (Note that “vireo” derives from Latin for “to be green.”) And for those who staunchly support honorific (“eponymous”) names such as this one because they convey significant information about a bird or about the history of ornithology or whatever—consider this. John Cassin, the researcher working to identify this vireo species, reluctantly agreed to name this species—following persistent pestering by his colleague, Spencer Baird—after William Hutton, a young surveyor and civil engineer whom Cassin didn’t know but who had happened to find the original specimen in 1847 in Monterey, California. So the name doesn’t convey any information about the species itself or about critical ornithology history. Just a rather random name likely to make learning and remembering this species a bit more challenging than it needs to be. If you were to change the Hutton’s Vireo’s name, what might you call it? I might focus on his song, since it can be heard nearly year-round. Maybe “Persistently Vociferous Vireo?” “Loud, Johnny-one-note Vireo?” Or if you’re a Rudyard Kipling/Michael Caine/Sean Connery/old-film buff, how about “Bird-Who-Would-Be-King[let] Vireo?”

### Hutton’s Vireo or Ruby-crowned Kinglet?

Tina mentions the Hutton’s Vireo look-alike, the Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Here’s a side-by-side comparison of the two. Behavior is also key. If you get a photo in focus, it’s a Hutton’s; if difficult to follow and photograph, no doubt it’s a Ruby-crowned Kinglet!

#### Hutton’s Vireo
- Thicker, pointed bill with slight hook
- Light lores (faint spectacles)
- Darkest feathers between white wingbars
- Tarsus “leg” thicker and uniformly dark legs and toes

#### Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Thin, pointed bill
- Darkest feathers more prominent below lower white wingbar.
- Tarsus toothpick-like, toes orangish
Grab your binoculars and join one or more of our free guided birding tours. New birders are always welcome!

Wood Duck at Santee Lakes, March 16. (Barbara Swanson)

EL CORAZON GARRISON CREEK (Oceanside)
Wednesday, May 8 — 7:30 a.m.
Easy flat trail, ~1+ mile.
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 BIRDING TRIPS
Join Steve for these surprise-location offerings that include a good dose of education on bird identification. When and where we go is Steve’s choice! Starting times and days vary, so send Steve an email if you are interested in being on his notification list.
Leader: Steve Brad
stevanbrad@gmail.com

BIRDING WITH BARBARA
Saturday, May 18 — 8:00 a.m.
Every third Saturday Barbara will guide us to a new area around San Diego County. This month we will explore Torrey Pines State Reserve-Flintkote Avenue in Sorrento Valley.
Location: Meet by the corner of Flintkote Avenue and Estuary Way. Total distance on an easy trail will be less than 2 miles.
Leader: Barbara Swanson
baswanson100@hotmail.com

SEEKING NEW BIRDERS!
Saturday, May 4 — 8:00 a.m.
Eve Martin is hosting a small, friendly group to introduce newcomers to the world’s best hobby—birding! The class is designed for first-time birders. Binoculars will be available for your use.
To join Eve’s First-time Birders event, sign up on Meetup.com for The San Diego Beginning Birders group.
Location: Varies.
Leader: Eve Martin (message via Meetup.com)

COASTAL 101 BIRDING (Oceanside)
2202 S Coast Highway
Saturday, May 25 — 9:00 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 Hwy. Easy 1.5 miles.
Location: Buena Vista Nature Center, 2202 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot.
Leader: Tom Troy (760-420-7328)
Preschool Storytime at the Nature Center
Monday, May 27, 10:00 a.m.

Join us for a nature-themed Storytime for preschoolers. We will read, sing, and explore the world of **BEES**, then walk the lagoon trail in search of bees and other insects. We look forward to seeing you!

Sally and Jo, Storytime Leaders
(760-525-2351)

Nature Craft Clubhouse
Sunday, May 12, 10:00 a.m.

Bring your school-aged children to the Nature Center to create a nature sun print!

Check it Out

Celebrate Mom this Mother’s Day with a BVAS membership. Then bring her to the Nature Center for a lovely spring walk and introduce her to the members’ library, where she can check out a huge variety of nature-related books.

*Jean Booth, BVAS Librarian*

Nature Center Garden Crew

Join the Garden Crew every **Monday 9-11 a.m.** to help out and learn about native plants.

Hopefully it is May Gray because the plants need the water. Torrey Pine needles are specifically adapted to capture the moisture of the fog. Look for plants that have hair on leaves and stems where droplets can form.

*Joan Bockman, BVAS Garden Crew*
Nature Journaling

Sunday, May 19, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
at Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park

Location: (6200 Flying Leo Carrillo Lane, Carlsbad).
We will meet by the south end of the parking lot. The ranch features peacocks and other birds, gardens, and historic buildings. Please bring your own supplies.

Contacts: Barbara (baswanson100@hotmail.com) and Patti (patti.langenzoo@gmail.com).

Volunteers Needed for Continuing Community Science Bird Monitoring Project in Del Mar, CA

by Joni Ciarletta

Are you ready to spread your wings and be part of something more meaningful? Join the community science project at the San Dieguito River Park as we conduct bird surveys around the enchanting San Dieguito Lagoon in Del Mar, CA. Since January 2010, our dedicated team has been conducting bird observations on the first Sunday of each month. We've spotted 269 cumulative species, and now we're calling on nature enthusiasts like you to become the next champions of this noble cause!

Explore picturesque locations including San Dieguito Lagoon, Del Mar Dog Beach, Dust Devil Trail, Crest Canyon, Fairbanks Ranch, and more. As restoration efforts continue, your involvement becomes crucial in tracking the progress of this thriving ecosystem. Surveys are conducted on mostly flat, dirt trails, taking about 2-5 hours.

Ready to bird with a purpose? If you're a birder wanting to make a positive impact, check out https://sandieguitolagoon.org/#/activities/birdcount for more details or reach out to our count leader, Jayne Lesley, at 858-663-6568. All levels of experience are welcome!
Many lupines are annuals, sprouting from a seed in spring and quickly growing, blooming, and setting seed that year before dying. However, a few local species are perennials or shrubs and live for a number of years. Lupine in Latin means “wolflike.” This plant got its name because it is often found in poor soil, where few other plants grow. It was thought that lupine was robbing the soil of nutrients, like a wolf taking livestock. Studies, however, have shown that the opposite is true. Lupines attract nitrogen-fixing bacteria to their roots, providing a nitrogen fertilizer that improves the soil. Lupines have showy, colorful flowers clustered on a flower spike. The leaves are green and palmate, growing out from a center and vaguely resembling the shape of a hand. After rain, sometimes one drop of water is caught in the center of this leaf structure.

Many species of lupine are found in San Diego County. Succulent lupine (Lupinus succulentus) grows from the coast to the mountains. It is an annual that can grow 2 to 4 feet tall, has blue flowers, and prefers full sun. Since this species can tolerate watering, it is a good choice for planting in a garden. Miniature lupine (Lupinus bicolor) also occurs from the coast to our mountains and grows from just a few inches to over a foot tall. The flowers are often deep blue and white and, in the wild, whole areas can be covered with these plants in springtime. Arizona lupine (Lupinus arizonicus) is found in the desert. It can grow up to 1.5 feet tall, with the flowers ranging in color from blue to pink.

Lupine are good plants for supporting our local wildlife. The flowers provide nectar for pollinators. Interestingly, flowers from some species change color after pollination, turning a red-purple that might signal to pollinators to not waste time with that flower. Many native butterflies and moths lay their eggs on lupine and the growing caterpillars eat the leaves. While some of these caterpillars provide food for birds to feed their nestlings, others produce the next generation of beautiful butterflies and moths.
Averting a Cat-astrophe
by Patti Langen

I feel like I am about to start one of those uncomfortable conversations. One that evokes strong feelings and puts people on the defensive. I am for the most part a non-confrontational person, so this article is rather difficult for me to write. But this is a huge life-and-death issue to the birds that we, as BVAS members, care about. It is important that we understand the impact of outdoor cats on our feathered friends. For the sake of the birds that we care about, please be open to ideas that can keep your cat safe and happy and can save birds at the same time.

It is a fact that cat owners love their feline fur babies. They want their cats to be happy, cared for, and safe. It is also a fact that domestic cats are the #1 direct, human-caused killer of birds in the U.S. and Canada, according to a study by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In the U.S. alone, there are over 100 million feral and outdoor pet cats. The combined impact of each outdoor cat on bird mortality is staggering. Researchers estimate that domestic cats kill between 1.3 to 4 BILLION wild birds each year. No matter how we justify our love of cats, this huge number of avian deaths significantly impacts bird populations. It’s an avian catastrophe.

Outdoor cats face dangers as well. Diseases like toxoplasmosis (which is transmissible to humans) and Feline Leukemia Virus, poisoning, and getting hit by cars are common threats. Any reader of nextdoor.com knows that coyotes are a constant part of the urban landscape and also pose a clear danger to cats.

Even if cats are well fed by their owners, the predatory instinct to hunt and kill is typically alive and well in these pets. Cat owners see this in the play behavior of their pets, stalking and pouncing on unsuspecting toys. Some cat owners believe that their cat would not be happy living inside of their home. They would get bored and fat. Other cat owners argue that their cat is just doing what is in its nature, and it would be cruel to keep it indoors. However, over 100 million outdoor domestic cats in the U.S. is not a natural situation. It is an imbalanced, human-made disaster for birds, which are suffering staggering losses as a result.

One solution to keep our feline friends safe and happy is a structure called a catio. This Continued on page 9
Thank you for taking the time to consider these challenges and solutions. The problems facing birds are significant and daunting. But we can take concrete steps to give them a better chance to live, thrive, and produce the next generation of feathered wonders.

Note: The photo shown on the left is old. The owner no longer adds red food dye to the feeder because it is not necessary.
Buena Vista Audubon Society and Preserve Calavera are hosting our 10th

Endangered Species Day
Spring Open House

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

When: Saturday, May 18, 2024
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

FREE!
¡Gracias!

- dissect an owl pellet
- view organisms in lagoon water
- go birding with an expert birder
- live native animals
- create your own nature journal
- be a bee and pollinate flowers
- create a mini watershed
- learn about animal tracking
- make a snowy plover nest

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!
¡Diversión para toda la familia!

**Parking is Limited. Please walk, bike or carpool and use nearby street parking.**
Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Summer 2024 BVAS Nature Center Camp Sign Up Season. We look forward to having your child attend the Summer Camp. The camp will be held at the BVAS Nature Center.

Please provide your child with the following every day at camp:

- Healthy snack with child’s name on the lunch box or bag
- Clothes appropriate for trail walks and craft activities
- Shoes or sandals with straps (please no flip-flops)
- Hat and sunscreen (bug repellent optional)

Every day, a parent or guardian must sign in or out, the camp leaders must be notified in advance.

When: Monday through Friday
July 15-19, 2024

Where: Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center,
2202 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside

Time: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Ages: 6-10, enrollment limited to 25

Contact Audubon Nature Guides:
Dovie Christensen (760) 419-9239
Howie Wilcox (415) 743-0540

Cost: $150

Sign-up on Eventbrite
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/837711346187?aff=odttitcreator
Our Mission: Conservation through education, advocacy, land management, and monitoring.

Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center
2202 S. Coast Highway
Oceanside, CA 92054  (760-439-2473)

Nature Center Hours
Tuesday-Sunday: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Monday: Closed

BVAS honors and respectfully acknowledges the Payómkawichum (also known as the Luiseños), who are of the land on which the BVAS Nature Center stands. The Tribal Nations of San Diego County are the Payómkawichum, the Kumeyaay, the Cupeño, and the Cahuilla.

Become a Member!

Help support our work and become a member of BVAS. All donations of $25/year or more qualify as membership dues. As a BVAS member, you will receive the chapter newsletter, have voting privileges at our Annual Meeting and other member meetings, and enjoy the satisfaction of belonging to a group that supports nature in North County. All donations are tax-deductible. BVAS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and will receive 100% of your contribution.

https://bvaudubon.org/donate/
An extraordinary abundance of bird life inhabits the forests of northern Ecuador and the Ecuadorian Amazon. Amid cloud forest, rainforest, páramo, and the eastern slopes of the Andes Mountains, you’ll seek out as many of the country’s 1,640-plus species as possible with assistance from your expert guide. Explore the eastern foothills of the Andes Mountains, before descending into the primary forests of a private ecological reserve in the heart of the Amazon Basin. Seek out a variety of neotropical resident and migrant avian species, plus mammals, amphibians, insects, and more.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
- Explore northern Ecuador across a variety of protected areas, including Antisana Ecological Reserve, San Isidro Lodge and lush cloud reserve, Sacha Lodge’s 5,000-acre private ecological reserve, and others.
- Search for a mix of high- and low-elevation species in Sumaco, including the Blue-browed Tanager, Yellow-breasted Antwren, Coppery-chested Jacamar, and over 30 species of hummingbirds.
- Take a canopy walk high in the treetops and observe birds such as Scarlet and Red-bellied Macaws, Many-banded Aracari, Magpie Tanager, Gilded Barbet, and Yellow-rumped Cacique.
- Canoe through the flooded Amazon forest while watching for birds, monkeys, sloths, caimans, river otters, and other wildlife.
- Trek through trails of pristine terra firme forest, orchids, bromeliads, palm trees, and 150-foot kapok trees.

WHAT’S INCLUDED?
- Bilingual local birding expert
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL
Visit http://holbrook.travel/bvas-ec24 or contact Stan Walens at stanwalens@gmail.com or Jill Hays at jill@holbrooktravel.com
In what are now the countries of Belize and Guatemala, the ancient Maya civilization once flourished, leaving behind cities, temples, pyramids, and observatories still standing, enshrouded in tree cover. Amid rainforests and valleys, archaeological sites tell the story of this culturally rich region while also providing habitat for a diversity of flora and fauna, including hundreds of bird species. As you seek out resident and migratory avifauna across a variety of ecosystems, you’ll also gain a behind-the-scenes look at Audubon’s current bird-based tourism initiatives and flyway conservation efforts in partnership with local community-based organizations.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover both concentrated flocks and rare sightings of avifauna, such as the Jabiru, Yellow-headed Parrot, Yucatan Jay, and Yucatan Woodpecker, in the wetlands and pine savannas of Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Examine Maya history at the Tikal, Yaxha, and Cahal Pech archaeological sites, and go birding amid the ancient structures and surrounding forests.
- Meet with members of the Petén Birding Association, a local group dedicated to birding, environmental education, and conservation through ecotourism.
- Hike the trails at Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Refuge, a tropical moist forest sheltering some 300 avian species, including trogons, tanagers, flycatchers, and the Yellow-billed Cacique.
- Learn about a community-based conservation project in the village of Red Bank aimed at saving and creating habitat for the Scarlet Macaw.

WHAT’S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local birding expert
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit http://holbrook.travel/bvas-bg25 or contact Stan Walens at stanwalens@gmail.com or Jill Hays at jill@holbrooktravel.com