Bolsa Chica Nest Site Camera Update

By Jayson Ruth

It has been a little over a month since the nest site camera went live (March 11th) and as we anxiously await the arrival of our first plover nest (and terns too), we have spent a lot of time watching other wildlife in the area. We have already been able to film many different species of birds including western snowy plovers, killdeer, sandpipers, dowitchers, willets, semi-palmated plovers, American avocets, black-necked stilts, great blue herons, great egrets, snowy egrets and many different species of ducks. Hopefully you have been able to enjoy these moments with us! As we remotely control the camera and follow any animals in the environment, we are recording all footage and will eventually post highlight videos on the camera page of the Land Trust website.

On most evenings, we will switch to "sunset view" and watch the sunset over the Bolsa Chica. For you early risers, we are working towards a "sunrise view" as well. The Land Trust is proud to bring many aspects of the ecological reserve to anyone interested in seeing the real-time events of Bolsa Chica. As we continue to refine this revolutionary project, we hope you continue to check in and support our efforts to educate and inspire more to get involved with the preservation of ALL of Bolsa Chica.

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PRESIDENT’S REPORT

By Joe Shaw

A sincere ‘thank you!’ to all of our members who have renewed their membership for 2013!! The generous response from so many is a wonderful show of support for our mission to preserve all of Bolsa Chica. It is never too late to renew, just look at the mailing label on this newsletter for your renewal date. Your membership dues can be sent by either check or payment can be made online through our website, and it all goes to continue our work at Bolsa Chica. Also, many of our members have designated BCLT for matching funds through their employers; if your employer makes charitable contributions we will happily put those funds towards our goals here too. Your membership matters!

The Land Trust is committed to doing all we can to protect this precious open space for all. To help further our mission we are pleased to welcome Dan Kalmick and Mikel Hogan to the BCLT Board of Directors. Dan is a current Commissioner on the Huntington Beach Planning Commission and a small business owner. He has been a Reserve Firefighter/EMT with the Seal Beach Orange County Fire Authority and is also a member of the Citizens Advisory committee with the Orange County Transportation Authority and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of Huntington Beach Tomorrow. Dan is very engaged in our community and brings a wonderful enthusiasm to making BCLT the best it can be.

Mikel Hogan, Ph.D. is an Applied Anthropologist, Professor, author, and for 14 years, the Chair of the Human Services Department at CA State University, Fullerton. A well published educator, Mikel brings a deep understanding of the unique cultural and human history of the Native Americans of Bolsa Chica, and a desire to preserve it.

Together, our mission and message continue to get stronger and more successful. Approximately 30,000 visitors come to Bolsa Chica each year to see this special place that for many of us is just a few minutes away. And we know that the work we do to protect and preserve Bolsa Chica is seen by folks from around the globe. Earlier this year we spoke to a woman who was visiting Bolsa before heading back home to Iceland. In April thanks to the global outreach of Huntington Beach Rotary, a group from Finland toured Bolsa with Bill Kettler (Rotary and BCLT Docent) and Marinka Horack (BCLT Secretary, Docent and Steward).

Thousands of people have checked out our Nest Cam, and it is online for the world to enjoy. Each year our calendars are mailed not only all over the U.S., but to England as well. Bolsa Chica is our ‘little pocket’ and together we help bring it to people all around the world.

Bolsa Chica Nest Site Camera Update…continued

Western snowy plover nesting activity is really taking off at the reserve. As of April 20th, there were more than 20 active nest sites (3 on nest site 3 where the camera is located). Unfortunately, the nests are just out of view for our camera. We are approaching the prime of plover nesting, so we may have one anytime! We are certainly ready to broadcast all the action live as it unfolds! Meanwhile, the least terns are just beginning to arrive from their migration. So, it will likely be another month before we see some tern nesting activity.

This project has truly been a pleasure for me to lead. I have such a great team of people helping to make this happen. It is new territory for many of us and we are constantly striving to make the live nest site camera experience the best possible. A few quirks are still being addressed and I am learning a lot in the process. If you have any comments or questions, I would love to hear from you. Feel free to post any related discussion topics to the BCLT Facebook page.
The Bolsa Chica Land Trust is pleased to announce our next Town Hall Meeting

“An Evening of Raptors with Dr. Peter Bloom”

Tuesday, June 4th,
Huntington Beach Main Library,
Central Park, Room C/D
7:00PM – 9:00PM
Refreshments will be served

Our guest speaker for the evening is renowned raptor expert, Peter Bloom, Ph.D., of Bloom Biological, Inc. Dr. Bloom will be presenting a study of Southern California’s birds of prey - our fascinating raptors. Bolsa Chica has many species of these wonderful birds, some of which are listed as Endangered or Threatened. Dr. Bloom has studied and surveyed these birds here at Bolsa Chica and has been responsible for a wide variety of biological, ecological, and conservation studies in many countries around the world.

He has worked on avian research projects in the western United States, Alaska, Peru, Ecuador, and India, spending over 600 hours conducting helicopter and fixed-wing nest survey work and aerial radio-tracking of eagles, California condors, hawks, and herons.

No RSVP is required.
We hope you will join us for this amazing presentation!

As an extra added attraction, we will be showing historic film footage of the hunting and fishing trip to Bolsa Chica made by Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig in the late 1920s. The special showing of this rare footage will be introduced by Chris Epting.
Our Bolsa Chica Jr. Stewards rise to the challenge each time we give them the opportunity to speak to the public and share what they know about Bolsa Chica. Earth Day on April 13, 2013 was another opportunity for the Jr. Stewards to share their experience and knowledge, this time with their table display, “9000 Years of Human and Natural History at Bolsa Chica”.

The local native Tongva-Gabrieleño and Acjachemen-Juaneño people and their ancient ancestors have been living around Bolsa Chica for at least 9,000 years. They lived sustainably for thousands of years without metal tools, electricity, fossil fuels, cars, cell phones, and plastic bags. Our display table showed many of the tools and materials found in the archaeological record at Bolsa Chica and used by the local native Tongva-Gabrieleño and Acjachemen-Juaneño people and their ancient ancestors.

Our display featured functional tools and pieces: stone cutting tools and drill points, bone knives, bone awls, and bone fish hooks, beads made from shell and soapstone, a fish hook and a pendant made from abalone shell, and cordage made from nettle, yucca, agave, juncus grass, and tule reed. We also had a real brain-tanned deer hide and a coggd stone made from soapstone. These are real examples of actual artifacts found at Bolsa Chica and similar coastal wetland settlement sites at Upper Newport Bay and Seal Beach/Los Alamitos. All of these tools and materials are things I have personally made by hand without using metal or modern tools. I used the same or similar materials and techniques that the local native peoples and their ancestors used.

In addition, we borrowed a hand woven basket and stone arrow points from the Bower’s Museum Kidseum collection. We had to include a basket in our display because the local Tongva-Gabriellelino and Acjachemen-Juaneño people and their ancestors made baskets that could carry water!

In the weeks leading up to Earth Day, I provided two one-hour classes for the Jr. Stewards at our regular Stewardship Days to teach them about the tools and artifacts. I gave them details about how the tools were made and used, the materials I used, and where they have been found. I taught the Jr. Stewards how to make a simple, elegant soapstone bead using sandstone to shape the bead and stone or shell fragments to drill the center hole. A few of the Jr. Stewards took their beads home and finished them in time to include them in our Earth Day display.

On Earth Day the Jr. Stewards were able to share what they had learned about these materials and tools with the families and guests who visited our booth. I was there to support the Jr. Stewards and give more details if necessary. All the tools, materials, and pieces on display could be touched and closely studied by the Jr. Stewards and the guests at our booth, to more deeply connect everyone to the vast human history at Bolsa Chica.
Let’s Dig It!
Spring Has Sprung at Bolsa Chica

By Erin Chin, Stewards Coordinator

2013 has started with a great, big bang for the Bolsa Chica Stewards. We were registered in Washington DC as an official volunteer event for the Martin Luther King National Day of Service, and as a result, we had over 200 volunteers help weed, plant, water and tend the Mesa trail on January 19th. The volunteers came from all over California and as far away as South Dakota! We were able to plant five species of grasses and wildflowers totaling 800 plants along the Mesa trail. The weather was warm and beautiful, and because the tide was low many shorebirds were visible feeding on the Outer Bolsa Bay mud flats.

It was also noted that some of the previously planted Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) has started to bloom with lovely blue-violet flowers. To see a picture gallery of this successful event go to: http://www.ocregister.com/articles/chica-388136-bolsa-native.html?pic=2. We want to thank all the volunteers who attended and who continuously chose to spend their time working hard to restore the valuable Bolsa Chica to its native habitats!

This year we will continue to restore the native grasses and wildflowers to the Mesa. We have already seen some of the previously planted grasses starting to become established and hope more will flourish on the Mesa trail this year. Keep an eye out during the spring for the beautiful wildflowers blooming throughout the Mesa giving the bees opportunity to feed on and pollinate the native plants. The CPR for the Mesa project is moving forward and we hope to eventually start implementing this project to restore the Lower Bench to native habitats like our ever successful Mesa trail restoration.

2012 was our most successful year to date, with 2,079 volunteers who gave 6,691 hours of help to plant 4,014 native plants on the Mesa. We look forward to all the exciting work in this upcoming year and want to thank everyone for all the support you give the Bolsa Chica Stewards each year. Here’s to a successful 2013!

Erin Chin is the new Coordinator for the Bolsa Chica Stewards. She can be reached (949) 500-0946 or at erchin85@gmail.com
The Land Trust has been working with a coalition of conservation organizations across the state to encourage investments in natural resources as a key component of a comprehensive Auction Proceed Investment Plan being put forth in Sacramento by the California Air Resources Board (AB 32 Cap and Trade Auction Proceed Investment Plan). Investments in the protection and restoration of natural resources and working lands are among the most cost-effective actions that can be taken to reduce harmful carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, while also providing other critical public benefits for Californians including but not limited to climate resilience, non-exportable jobs, water and air quality protection.

We are very pleased that the draft Auction Proceed Investment Plan includes recommendations for investments in forest conservation and restoration, sustainable agriculture and farmland protection, wetland management and restoration, urban forestry and integrated land use and conservation strategies. The Land Trust is focused on securing some of this funding for acquisition and restoration here at Bolsa Chica.

The recommendations included in the draft Plan will play a key role in the state’s efforts to reduce Green House Gas emissions. The intrinsic value of our natural resources and working lands and their ability to meet the multiple goals and objectives of AB 32 and other state climate policies are worthy of such investments, and will return dividends immediately back to our economy, environment, and communities.

The next steps in the process for securing funds for natural resources through cap & trade include the passage of SB 511 a bill by Senator Ted Lieu. SB 511 (Lieu) is a measure that would dedicate a portion of auction revenue to the enhancement of natural resource protection projects which will maximize Green House Gas emission reductions.

As this bill moves through the legislative process we may ask our members to help with outreach for support. Please send your email address to us at bclandtrust@verizon.net and we will put you on our Constant Contact list. When the time is right, we will contact you via email with information as to where you can send your letters of support. With your help, cap and trade revenue will come to Bolsa Chica and be put to good use protecting and restoring this precious place for years to come.
Eleven years ago, the Land Trust started the Miracles of the Marsh tour program for elementary schools. It has been very popular with students and teachers of many Orange and Los Angeles County schools. The tours have increased in number each year and we have now hosted more than 17,000 elementary school children at Bolsa Chica. Many come from poor areas, and some of the boys and girls have never seen the ocean. It’s a pleasure to watch the excitement on the faces of these young children as they walk around the wetlands and mesa.

We owe the success of the program to our stalwart team of 25 docents. The docents volunteer their time and talents throughout the season which starts in January and continues through June. Topics which are covered include animals, native plants, water quality and the history of Bolsa Chica.

This year, the children have enjoyed many highlights on their visits to Bolsa Chica. They have seen numerous species of ducks and shorebirds: sting rays and sharks; mullets and sea hares; rabbits and squirrels; hummingbirds and hawks; lizards and snakes; osprey looking for fish in Bolsa Bay; and even some sea lions swimming in the bay. In April, as the ducks fly off to Alaska for the summer, terns arrive from Mexico and Central America to nest here at Bolsa Chica, and their wonderful calls of “kee-rick” fill the air. And by May, terns, Snowy Plovers, and Belding’s Savannah Sparrows will be nesting in protected areas around the reserve.

The biggest tour highlight for many students is viewing the Great Blue Heron nesting colony in the palm tree grove at Mesa Point. Every palm tree has large heron nests where heron parents care for their chicks. The heron nesting season begins in February and continues through June. Each student has the use of binoculars to view the herons up close. They can watch as the heron parents fly in with food to feed their hungry chicks. For all the adults present on the tour, Bolsa Chica is more exciting when they see it through the eyes of the children.

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust thanks all the volunteers who have made Miracles of the Marsh a success.
Membership Renewal/Application

☐ I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help preserve the whole Bolsa Chica Ecosystem.

☐ This is a renewal membership.

Annual dues are tax deductible
Members: Renewal date shown on your mailing label

___ $50.00 + Honor Roll  ___ $15.00 Individual

___ $20.00 Family  ___ $10.00 Senior/Student

Name ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _____ Zip ______

Telephone ____________________________

E-Mail _______________________________________

Mail Your Completed Membership Application to:
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
5200 Warner Avenue, #108
Huntington Beach, CA 92649