



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



HUMMINGBIRDS*

Hummingbirds are the smallest of the world's birds and are native to the western hemisphere. *Trochilidae* is the family name, which is taken from Greek mythology and describes a bird that was fast enough to fly in and out of the mouth of a crocodile without being eaten.

Hummingbirds are famous for the iridescent feathers they have on their backs and on their throats, i.e., gorget. The ability of the males to flash these colors is used to attract females and to defend their territories. The greatest number of hummingbird species can be found near the equator – there are 325 different species. Only 16 species are found in the United States, seven of which are regularly seen in California.

The most common species in California is the Anna's Hummingbird, a year-round resident. The male has a deep rose-red head and neck gorget, with a green back and gray upper parts. The other hummingbird species are migratory, coming to California for the breeding season from about February through September. The Rufous Hummingbird has an attitude and a feisty nature. The Calliope Hummingbird is the smallest breeding bird in North America. One weighs one-tenth of an ounce, i.e., less than a penny. They also are the smallest long-distance migratory bird in the world, often traveling 5,600 miles on their round trips.

Hummingbirds are amazing fliers. They can fly up, down, backwards, forwards, upside down, and sideways. They can hover, but never soar. Unlike other birds that generate power only from the down stroke, they also generate power from the up stroke.

To provide their prodigious energy requirement, they typically have to feed on nectar and insects every 15 to 20 minutes throughout the day. The nectar from deep-throated flowers is almost pure sugar. It is needed for them to fly and hunt insects, and to provide their protein. There is no danger in providing sugar filled feeders for them; they need the energy. Insects are nabbed during flight, from spider webs, while drinking nectar, and from leaves. Hummingbirds will sip from flowers of any color as long as a nectar supply is present. Red flowers have the highest nectar supply. Hummingbirds are important pollinators for deep-throated flowers. Pollen is caught up on their heads, throats, and beaks and transferred from one flower to the next.

*Adapted from an article by Bobbie Winn, "Hooray for Hummingbirds," *Outdoor California*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (May-June 2004), p. 36.

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be held at the Community Center
 Room B-1
 1692 Sycamore Drive
 at 7:00 PM
 on
Wednesday October 20, 2004

OCTOBER 9TH WORK PARTY Corriganville Park Oak Seedling Planting

This month RSTB will be working with the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) to help plant additional oak seedlings in Corriganville. Volunteers are needed **from 8-11 a.m., Saturday, October 9**, to assist with planting oak seedlings in the areas burned in Corriganville Park.

Seedlings were planted in April, but not all of the small trees survived the summer heat. New seedlings have been donated and need to be planted.

Directions – take 118 Fwy to Keuhner. Go south on Keuhner, to Smith Rd. Turn left onto Smith Road. The parking lot is at the end of the road.



RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out? We still have short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweat shirts in assorted sizes and colors. Prices are:

- short sleeve \$12
- long sleeve \$14
- sweat shirt \$18

Please call Marty if you'd like to place an order: 805-526-4414.



THE 2004 FREEZING WINDY COTTONWOOD LAKES BACKPACK

Ten people joined together for the 3 day Sierra Backpack trip in the Cottonwood Lakes area of the Golden Trout Wilderness on Sept. 17-19 2004. Participants included Bill Cespedes, Ursula Christie, Martin DeGoey, Jodene Downey, Mark Gilmore, Bayla Irwin, David Kuhn, Mike Kuhn, Louise Pomes and John Sabol.

Our backpack did not turn out as well as we would have liked. Prior to leaving, the weather forecast looked a little iffy with winds, T-storms and snow predicted for Sunday. Everyone was warned of the possible bad weather but our choices were limited to cancel the trip or hope the storm would be delayed.

Eight of us started out at 9:00 AM Friday morning in 2 vehicles and headed north for the Sierras. We stopped in the Inyo Ranger Station in Lone Pine for our Wilderness permit, then headed west on Whitney Portal Road, turned south on Horseshoe Meadows Road and a 19 mile climb to Horseshoe Meadows Campground at an altitude of 10,000 feet.

The winds were already blowing when we arrived. Dave Kuhn and his friend Bayla arrived shortly thereafter. We set up our tents and later ate an early dinner. We put all remaining food in the campground bear-proof lockers. As the evening progressed the winds increased and the temperature dropped, so most of us retired to our tents early.

Friday night was not restful; very noisy wind gusts and near freezing temperatures kept everyone from a good night's sleep. After breakfast we packed up and loaded our backpacks in the vehicles and moved our cars to the Cottonwood Lakes Trailhead area. We then headed up the trail to our planned camp at Cottonwood Lake #3 about 5 miles distant. About 1 1/2 miles in, Ursula tripped on a rock in the trail and fell, hitting the back of her hand on another rock as she landed. I was concerned that her hand was badly sprained as it was already starting to swell. But she said she wasn't otherwise hurt and wanted to continue so we went on.

As we headed up the trail we met other hikers and backpackers heading back down to the parking lot. Most warned us of high winds. They weren't joking. The winds were howling as we reached the flat lake area, and it was a cold wind.

After a short distance we selected a camp site in a slightly sheltered area. Setting up camp became a chore... one person was needed to hold down the tent while another staked it down. My dome tent was in a less sheltered area. After staking it down I watched the wind flatten it several times, and in the process bent the aluminum stays. Finally I used nylon cord, tied to tabs near the top of the tent as guy wires, to hold the tent in place. Storm clouds started to come in and Dave and

Bayla decided they didn't want to stay the night. They ate a snack and then hiked back down before dark. The storm clouds became heavier, and light snow flurries were falling as we attempted to cook dinner. Everyone had on a parka or 3 layers of clothing. Ursula said the wind kept blowing out the flame of her stove.

We decided at this point that we would stay the night but leave in the morning, one day earlier than planned. The storm clouds tapered off and we took a short walk up to the end of lake #3. Again the temperature was dropping fast, so we entered our tents earlier than the previous evening.

We spent another miserable night on Saturday. This time the wind howled in gusts that shook the tents violently. The temperature dropped to 18 degrees by morning. Those who left their water bottles outside the tent found them frozen at dawn. One water filter pump was also frozen solid. Mark was fixing breakfast and spilled some water on a rock. He looked back a moment later to find the spill had frozen solid.

After breakfast and packing up, we headed back down the trail. Once we got off of the top and started down the trail the winds tapered off and we had a pleasant hike out. The sun was out and several people saw two deer, a large buck and a doe.

After we returned Ursula found out that she had broken a bone in the back of her hand and had to have it put in a cast. She endured the pain and discomfort of her hand and was always cheerful and made the most of the trip under very difficult circumstances. She is a remarkable lady.

John Sabol



Charter members of the Freezing High Winds Sierra Backpack.
From left to right: Louise Pomes, Mark Gilmore, Martin DeGoey, Bill Cespedes, Jodene Downey, Ursula Christie, Bayla Irwin, David Kuhn and Mike Kuhn. Picture taken by John Sabol.

GLOBAL WARMING AND ALPINE FLORA AND FAUNA

(adapted from *Science*, March 12, 2004, pp. 1600-1602)

Global warming is with us. Some of that warming may result from a natural fluctuation; however, it is clear that the accumulation of greenhouse gases, largely carbon dioxide, resulting from the burning of fossil fuels and forest clearing, is primarily responsible. The global average temperature has increased by more than one degree Fahrenheit over the last 100 years. Forecasts for the next 100 years vary from an increase of 2.5 to 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit. This rate of change far exceeds that experienced at the end of the last ice age – some 10,000 to 11,000 years ago. The effect will be rising levels of the oceans as glacial ice melts, and the upslope migration of plant associations and animal life. The first dramatic effects will be seen in alpine environments – those areas above the treeline. Here in California alpine environments occur only at very high elevations. In the mid-Sierra Nevada the alpine environment generally starts at about 10,500 feet.

Alpine environments are particularly vulnerable. The area of alpine habitat in California is very limited. Since 1970, the treeline boundary around the world has risen in elevation from tens to hundreds of feet. The changes have been precisely mapped in many areas of the world. The change has been so dramatic in some places that researchers can detect a dramatic change in treeline, in slides they have taken over the years. While it is sometimes hard to attribute cause and effect when other factors such as fire suppression and livestock grazing are considered, the preponderance of evidence still squats squarely in the lap of global warming. In other words, forests are expanding in their upper limits. The alpine habitat islands on the tops of the mountains are shrinking and can be expected to do so until they are no more.

Plants are slow to respond to climatic change. Some plant communities in Ventura County are relicts of the last ice age. Some north-facing slopes still contain stands of big cone spruce. These are remnants of a close relative of the Douglas fir. The big cone spruce formed fairly widespread forests in the hills of southern California during the Pleistocene Epoch. Very sparse Jeffrey pine forests are present down to 5,000 feet elevation south of Mt. Pinos. Once destroyed by fire or lost to old age, they will not likely regenerate. In other words, they too are vestiges of a cooler and perhaps wetter time with more frequent snow falls. Plant communities may often take 40 or 50 years before the effects of global warming are detectable. Even if global warming were to stop, the effects of past warming on plant communities may continue for some decades.

Animals sometimes react directly to climatic change as it happens. The pikas, diminutive cousins of rabbits, occupy the harshest of alpine environments, dwelling beneath boulder piles on high, treeless peaks where winters are long - too harsh to attract lowland competitors. Pikas are particularly vulnerable to climatic warming. Their very high body

temperature helps them survive the bitter cold. However, they are not able to adjust their thermostats downward. One study shows that Pikas in the U.S. are now extinct in nine of the 25 habitats they occupied until recently. The author of that study feels that the pikas were forced to remain underground for long periods of time in order to avoid the heat and therefore could not get enough to eat. The pikas may be gone from the high passes in the Sierra Nevada during our or our children's lifetimes.

As a species, we and the rest of the planet are doomed to become victims of our own success.

Mike Kuhn



AN EARLY VINEYARD



The 1858 federal survey of the Simi Valley area exhibits a vineyard at the present day intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive. The presence of a vineyard at that location in 1858 without irrigation seems unlikely. One is left with the conclusion that the vineyard was irrigated as part of the De la Guerra farm operation - probably an extension of the plantings in Tapo Canyon.

The Arroyo del Tapo has running surface water year around, and it can be assumed that those plantings of grapes were irrigated. Certainly, the depth to ground water made dryland grape production untenable. The depth to ground water at the intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive exceeds 90 feet, so one is forced to the conclusion that the De la Guerras were conveying water for irrigation from well up Gillibrand Canyon or Tapo Canyon. Evidence of what may be that ditch can still be seen in places on the western side of Gillibrand Canyon. However, that ditch may well have been limited to irrigating crops in Gillibrand Canyon in the vicinity of the De la Guerra adobe. Water diversion from Tapo Canyon is the most likely source of that water.

Mike Kuhn

STINK BEETLES

Eleodes sp.

Stink beetles, a type of Darkling beetle, are one of the most common forms of wildlife we see on the trail – literally “on the trail”. They are the smooth shiny black beetles, sometimes with their rumps in the air, that forever seem to risk being stepped on. They are from one to one and one quarter inches in length. Their wing covers are fused, which renders it impossible for them to fly. They are general feeders. They lay their eggs in the soil. Stink beetles will emit a disagreeable odor when handled or disturbed. Their “stand on their head” behavior occurs when threatened. That is one of the times they may emit an odor. They are harmless to human beings.

Mike Kuhn



RSTB Calendar October 2004



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Danielson Memorial 8am hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Mark Janowicz</i>
3 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	4 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Marty Richards</i>	5 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	6	7 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Kathy Brody</i>	8 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Mitchell Law</i>	9 8am Work Party Corriganville See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	11	12 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	13 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Bev Frye</i>	14 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	15	16 China Flat Trail to Simi Peak 8am hike See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	18	19 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	20 RSTB Meeting See Page 1	21 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Brian McKee</i>	22 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Margarita Marsh</i>	23 Sulfur Mountain 8am hike See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	25	26 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Lisa Klockenteger</i>	27	28 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Mark Gilmore</i>	29 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Tracy Frank</i>	30 Long Canyon to Simi Peak 8am hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Ronald Eselin</i>
31 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Halloween!</i>						



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Hiking Schedule



- October 2 Danielson Memorial**
 Moderate 6 MRT hike with approx. 1000' elevation gain/loss. Visit a waterfall and the Danielson Memorial, view the Oxnard Plain and Channel Islands from Old Boney Road. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 qts. water and snack. Wear boots.
- October 3 Sunday Evening Hike**
 Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 5 Tuesday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. **(Moderate 3 MRT)**
- October 7 Thursday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 9 Work Party - Corriganville**
 Help plant additional oak seedlings in Corriganville. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Keuhner. Go south on Keuhner, to Smith Rd. Turn left onto Smith Road. The parking lot is at the end of the road. Meet 8am in the parking lot. We will be working from 8am - 11am. Bring large containers to help water plants, wear boots.
- October 10 Sunday Evening Hike**
 Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 12 Tuesday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. **(Moderate 3 MRT)**
- October 14 Thursday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 16 China Flat to Simi Peak**
 Strenuous, approx. 6 MRT with 1000' elevation gain. Bring two quarts of water and a snack, wear boots. Directions: take 101 Fwy to Lindero Canyon. Follow Lindero Canyon to King James Court. Park on the north side of the street, near the arroyo. Meet at 8am near the arroyo/trailhead.
- October 17 Sunday Evening Hike**
 Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 19 Tuesday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. **(Moderate 3 MRT)**
- October 21 Thursday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 23 Sulfur Mountain**
 Moderate to strenuous 6 - 10 MRT hike. This is a beautiful area in the mountains between Ventura and Ojai. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Wear boots, bring bug juice, snack, and 2 - 3 quarts of water.
- October 24 Sunday Evening Hike**
 Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 26 Tuesday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. **(Moderate 3 MRT)**
- October 28 Thursday Evening Hike**
 Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- October 30 Long Canyon to Simi Peak**
 Strenuous 9 MRT with 1300' elevation gain/loss. Directions: take 118 Fwy to First Street exit. Take First Street south (it becomes Long Canyon Rd) approx. 4 miles, until it intersects Wood Ranch Pkwy. Meet at 8am at the intersection of Long Canyon Rd and Wood Ranch Pkwy. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.
- October 31 Sunday Evening Hike**
 Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**

For more information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.

Special Note: - On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains. <http://rstb.topcities.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@adelphia.net
Treasurer:	Peter Ely	HM (805) 523-1409	
Secretary:	David Wagner	HM (805) 577-5931	centmfgdavid@sbcglobal.net
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:			
Hiking Chair & Website:	Arlene Altshuler	HM (805) 581-9735	arlene.altshuler@mindbox.com
Vice Hiking Chair:	John Sabol	HM (805) 583-2541	jtsabol@juno.com
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	
Publicity Chair:	Ursula Christie	HM (805) 527-5338	ursulachristie@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor:	Arlene Altshuler	HM (805) 581-9735	arlene.altshuler@mindbox.com

cut out and return with your payment

MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a New () or Renewing () member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of:

Single.....\$10

Family..... \$15

Name(s) _____ Birth Mo. ____ Day ____

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone wk/hm _____

How did you find out about the RSTB _____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:

“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, Ca 93063

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 630399
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399