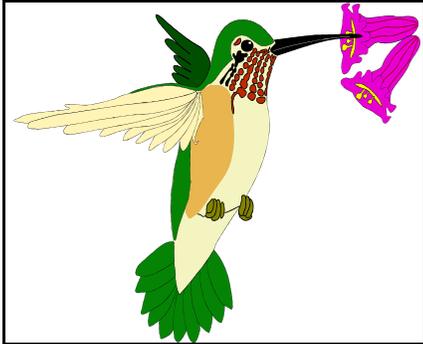




Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

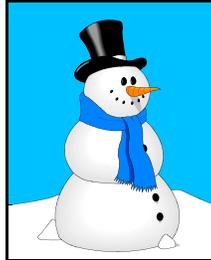


THE HUMMINGBIRD'S NEST RANCH

Nestled in the massive sandstone outcroppings above the northeastern corner of Simi Valley is a magical place. Isolated and unknown to most of the residents of the valley, the site of the Hummingbird's Nest Ranch has experienced several thousand years of human occupation. Each new generation, whether Amerindian, Spanish or Mexican settler, or Anglo-American rancher, discovers the site and is absorbed by the power of the place. Whatever one's belief structure, it is the same. One is awed by the beauty and the spirituality of place!

The site occupies a high natural shelf that has a year round water supply and is surrounded by massive sandstone outcroppings of the Chatsworth Formation and some outcroppings of the Simi Conglomerates. Water that surfaces on the ranch has worked its

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Holiday Potluck RSTB Christmas Party

Last Year we had a great time at our party. Many people came and we hope even more can make it this year. We brought delicious food and ate too much. The location will be at Al & Marty Richards home. 2086 Elmdale Ave. Simi Valley

**Date: Wednesday.
December 13th.
Time: 6:30 PM**

**Please call Marty at
805-526-4414 to receive
suggestions on what you could
bring and how to find her
Home location.**

See map on page 3 col. 3



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Terry Conrad
Jeane Haining**



NOVEMBER TRAIL WORK PARTY

Two carloads of trail workers drove up the Rocky Peak fire road to reach the upper Chumash trailhead for the November Trail Work Party. With the winds gusting, we thought it would be a cold morning. However, the trail was in a wind shadow and the morning turned out to be warm and pleasant. Everyone lopped brush to widen the trail paths and some worked on fixing the trail bed. We worked from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM and as usual met at Chuy's on our way home. Many thanks to the following workers:

Arlene Altshuler, John Downey, Tom Frye, Mike Kuhn, John Sabol and Don Steeley.

The turnout for the work parties in the last six months has averaged just 6 Trailblazers. With 2 new trails having been cut this year, we are now maintaining 9 trails: The Chumash, Hummingbird, Mount McCoy, Upper Stagecoach, Lower Stagecoach, Wild Life Corridor, North Ridge,

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Cont. from page 1 col 3

way down through joints in the sandstone and bubbles up in the central valley (or flat). That water was the critical resource to support all but the current use of the site.

Originally occupied by Chumash Indians and perhaps at times during the last 3,500 years by numic speaking peoples out of the desert, the area was apparently considered a sacred site - probably because of the caves and cracks in the rocks, which were thought to give access to and from the spirit world. The name for this place that comes down to us, I believe, from the Chumash Indians, was "*El Nido de la Chupa Rosa*" - Spanish for "the nest of the sucking bird" - or "the hummingbird's nest." In the belief structure of the Chumash, birds had access to the spirit world, for they could fly to and from that world. When the name of a bird was used in conjunction with its nest as a place name in the Chumash realm, it referred to a sacred place.

A Mexican adobe was built on the site sometime during the early or mid-1800s. That adobe was occupied by Juan Pucillo and his mother when Charles Emerson Hoar established his residence on the site in 1872 or 1873. The Pucillos remained on the ranch and worked for Mr. Hoar. Mr. Hoar purchased the 160 acres in 1884/1885 as three separate parcels and retained ownership until his death in 1912.

When Charles Hoar leased the eastern half of Simi Valley, some 13,000 acres, including the Hum-

mingbird, in 1872 or 1873, he named the ranch after the "old name," i.e., "the Hummingbird's Nest." Later the place was often referred to simply as "the Hummingbird," and still later as the Hummingbird Ranch. Mr. Hoar had a sense of place and a respect for history. His spirit was bonded to the Hummingbird.

Subsequent owners maintained the name "Hummingbird Ranch" until the ranch was acquired by cosmetic mogul Paula Meehan-Kent. Mrs. Kent named the ranch the Ballymeehan Farm.

The ranch was recently sold. The new owners have revived the name "the Hummingbird's Nest." The name, of course, honors history and the place. May they be as happy there as those who came before.

Long Canyon and China Flat trails. For the Chumash and Hummingbird trails, we are taking 4 work parties to do just the most basic trail maintenance. Needed major repairs and rerouting are put on hold. You can see that without some additional help, we will fall hopelessly behind. Come out and join us. Tools are provided and you can choose a task you are comfortable with and the amount of time you wish to contribute.

The next work party will be held December 16, on the China Flat Trail in Oak Park. We will meet at the trailhead on Lindero Canyon just east of King James Court at 8:00 AM and work to 12:00 PM. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair
John Sabol



Lower Zuma trailhead. Left to right: Terry Conrad, Carol Tucker, Mary Falkenstein, Arlene Altshuler, John Downey, Margarita Marsh.

CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE

The California, or western, sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) is a 40-70 foot tall deciduous tree, which grows near creek beds. Its smooth, thin bark peels in whitish and greenish patches, giving it a mottled look. The leaves turn yellow in the fall before falling off. The bristly fruit is called a "button ball." Sycamores are a true humid land tree which have survived in the semi-arid west because they always have their roots in the water table. The largest sycamore tree in Simi Valley is in the southern median of Wood Ranch Parkway.

The California sycamore is used in landscaping in our area, however, the London Plain (European sycamore) is more commonly used. In recent years the Mexican sycamore is becoming more popular because it is resistant to mildew problems.



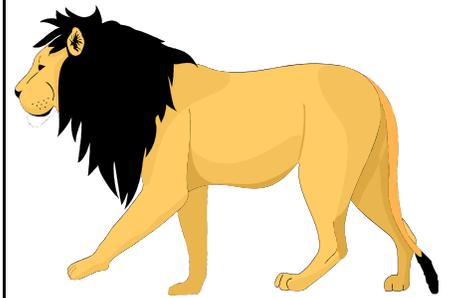
CALIFORNIA BUCKWHEAT

California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) is one the most common plants of the Venturan coastal sage scrub vegetation association. It has "fascicled" (bunched together) gray-green leaves. Flowers are small and lack petals, but there are six showy sepals. Color of the flowers varies from white to pinkish.

SCRUB OAK

Scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*) is the smallest of our native oak trees in the Simi Valley area. This shrub or small tree has thick leathery leaves with spiny margins. It has stout rigid branches and is usually found on north facing slopes in the chaparral vegetation association. It provides shelter and food, in the form of acorns, to animals. Scrub oaks sprout quickly after a fire, and the soft new growth is browsed by deer. There is a substantial stand of scrub oaks along the Chumash Trail just beyond the first rock outcroppings next to the trail.

Al & Marty Richards Home



The Santa Susana Lion's Club collects used eyeglasses and eyeglass cases for use in Third World countries. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District has a collection box in the main lobby at the Sycamore Drive Community Center, located at 1692 Sycamore Drive. If you have any used eyeglasses and/or cases that you would like to contribute, please drop them off in the collection box. Thank you for your help in giving the gift of sight.

ALL RSTB MEMBERS
 Check your mailing label on your RSTB Newsletter for **renewing** your **Yearly Membership**
 Renewal Month and Year is found after your name on the Newsletter Address Label



DECEMBER



2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 China Flat And Simi Peak Hike Read Schedule
3 Rocky Peak Hike at 4 pm, Read Schedule	4	5	6	7 Chumash Trail Hike At 6 pm Read schedule	8	9 Sisar Canyon Hike Read Schedule
10 Happy Birthday Robert Galletly Rocky Peak Hike at 4 pm, Read Schedule	11 Happy Birthday Karia Johnson- Majedi	12	13 Happy Birthday Bill Cespedes RSTB Christmas Party 6:30 PM at Al and Marty's	14 Chumash Trail Hike At 6 pm Read schedule	15	16 China Flats Trail Work Party 8am to noon Read schedule
17 Rocky Peak- Hike at 4 pm, Read Schedule	18	19	20 Happy Birthday Rudy Saling	21 Happy Birthday George Hebner Chumash Trail Hike At 6 pm Read schedule	22 CHANUKAH	23 Solstice Canyon Hike Meet at 8am read schedule
24 Rocky Peak Hike at 4 pm, Read Schedule	25 Happy Birthday Rush Young 	26	27	28 Happy Birthday Norma Martinez Chumash Trail Hike At 6 pm Read schedule	29	30 Circle X Mishe Mokwa Hike. Meet at 8 am. Read Schedule
31 Rocky Peak Hike at 4 pm, Read Schedule						

