



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



NOVEMBER WORK PARTY NEWS

The November Work Party was held on the 17th, on the lower Hummingbird Trail. Trail sections were repaired and several barriers were constructed to block trail cutting, primarily by bicyclists. Thanks to Al Bandel, Bill Cespedes, Allen Cueba, Mike Kuhn and John Sabol for their efforts.

It would be great to have more people join us for the work parties. The work is quite rewarding.

TRAILS OF THE SIMI HILLS MAP

A new map has been recently published that will be of special interest to Simi Valley hikers.

A comprehensive trail map covering the Simi Hills, it shows the region bounded on the north by the 118 Freeway, south by the 101 Freeway, west by the 23 Freeway and on the east by Valley Circle Blvd. in the San Fernando Valley.

It is a full color, waterproof map that shows trail elevations and trail mileages between junctions and contains latitude-longitude as well as UTM coordinates. More detailed maps of Oak Park, Challenger Park and Oak Canyon Community Park are on the reverse side.

“Trails of the Simi Hills Recreation Map”, ISBN 0-89997-457-0, Wilderness Press \$9.95.

Many thanks to the author Gary Liss for his great work.

John Sabol 11/16/07

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
December 19th , 2007



HOLIDAY POTLUCK

The **Rancho Simi Trailblazers Holiday Potluck** will be held on **Thursday, December 13th, starting at 6:30 PM**, at Al and Marty Richards’ home, at 2086 Elmdale Avenue, in Simi Valley.

(Elmdale is about one half mile west of Sycamore Drive, south of Cochran Street, just past the dip on Cochran and one block east of Justin Avenue).

Please call Marty at (805)-526-4414 to discuss what you should bring. We look forward to seeing everyone. Our thanks go out to Al and Marty for, again, opening their home to us.



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.



UPCOMING EVENTS

December 1st, 2007:
Devil’s Punchbowl/Devil’s Chair
 Please see the website for more info.

December 8th, 2007:
Lower Arroyo Seco
 Please see the website for more info.

December 13th, 2007:
Holiday Potluck & Party

December 15th, 2007: 8AM-Noon Work Party: Hummingbird Trail
 Please see the web site for more info.

December 19th, 2007
Club Meeting

December 22nd, 2007:
Cheseboro Canyon/Palo Comado Canyon Loop
 Please see the website for more info.

December 29th, 2007:
Malibu Creek State Park
 Please see the website for more info.

More information on these events can be found at
<http://simitrailblazers.com>

To make reservations, please email Mark Gilmore at
markinthepark@sbcglobal.net



STATUS OF CALIFORNIA CONDORS

(adapted from Anna Lena Phillips, "Junk Food," *American Scientist*, Vol. 95 (September-October 2007), pp. 402-403)

The California condor is a valuable scavenger species – cleaning up after us by eating flesh and even bones from carrion. Since their near extinction 30 years ago, largely from eating lead bullet fragments in the meat they consumed, they have recovered from a low of 22 individuals in the 1980s to a current population of about 285. In order to prevent lead ingestion, the 22 birds were convinced to enter captive breeding programs in California zoos. Now there are 69 birds in the wild in California and many in Arizona. Those in the wild have started producing nestlings; however, their survival is threatened by a new, unanticipated problem – consumption of junk!

In order to reduce the ingestion of lead bullet fragments from carcasses, wildlife managers put out food for the adults every third day. In Southern California the feeding station is as close as two miles to the nearest condor nest. The condors, it seems, now have a lot of free time, are getting into mischief – that is they are attracted to the abundant brightly colored trash that is left in the wild and around oil fields. They have been bringing back to their nestlings a prodigious amount of that trash. Adult condors regurgitate their meals to feed to nestlings, so adult condors are able to relieve themselves of the trash, which they collect. However, their nestlings do not have that ability. The results are that the junk they eat lodges in their crops and gizzards severely limiting the absorption of nutrients and, in some cases, life-threatening metal toxicity. One x-ray of a dead nestling included in the above-noted article exhibits nine metal bottle caps, one flip-top opener, a spring and other unidentifiable items.

The body of another nestling contained 30 metal items, 54 of glass, 28 pieces of plastic and two miscellaneous items – a total of 200.5 grams of junk. Another contained 193.5 grams. Two of the nine Los Padres chicks that hatched between 2001 and 2005 died as a direct result of junk ingestion, while several others died of junk-related complications.

The reintroduced population in Arizona has had much less trouble with trash ingestion. Most of the nesting locations in the Grand Canyon are far from feeding stations – up to 50 miles. The birds have far less time on their wings and their territory contains far less trash because of its isolation. Condors in Arizona also have a far more diverse natural food supply than their California brethren.

It is clear that hunting with bullets that contain lead must be abandoned within condor territory. Copper bullets are available that can meet the needs of hunters. Aversion therapy for trash-eating California condors or retraining junk-tossing humans may be the best bets for the survival of the California condor.

Mike Kuhn 11-14-07



YELLOWSTONE, ASPEN AND WOLVES

As reported in *Science*, Vol. 317 (July 27, 2007), pp. 438-439, to grow a healthy stand of quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) in Yellowstone National Park, you need a pack of wolves. Aspens are long-lived clones, which live for centuries and possibly for millennia. They sprout from roots, forming nearly pure stands. However, they have not been reproducing in Yellowstone for more than the last half century. Indeed, valley bottoms have become relative shrub and tree free, with severe soil erosion. With the reintroduction of the wolf (*Canis lupis*) in 1995, dense stands of aspen, willows, cottonwoods and shrubbery are again thriving in canyon bottoms. The demise of the aspen seems to have occurred because the population of elk (*Cervus elaphus*) in the park rose with the purposeful extermination of the wolf in the park by the U.S. Government. Elk feed heavily on the new growth of the aspen and other trees - eliminating reproduction. The introduction of the wolf (wolves take an elk every few days) along with the elks' fear of being caught with dense stands of aspen by wolves, which can maneuver more readily in dense cover, has resulted in the rapid re-growth of aspen stands and other trees in the bottomlands. The higher stands of aspen on the sides of canyons have not yet seemed to have benefited from the return of wolves to their former habitat. Since the wolf was absent in the park for more than 70 years, the return of the high stands may be just a matter of time.

These events lend credence to the notion that a cascade effect can occur when a top predator is removed from an ecosystem. The return of the wolf is leading to a more biologically diverse and healthier ecosystem.

Mike Kuhn 8-6-07



SUCCESS OF EXOTIC ANNUAL GRASSES

Prior to the coming of the Spanish, all grasses in California were perennial bunch grasses. The Spanish affected the spread of Mediterranean annual grass species into California. The effect was to displace the perennial grasses with annual grasses.

In our area the dominant annual grasses include, but are not limited to, red brome (*Bromus rubens*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), slender oat (*Avena barbata*), and soft chess (*Bromus mollis*). Why this occurred is poorly understood. Common explanations include frequent fires, grazing pressure on perennial grasses and the high rate of seed production among the annuals. It is now suggested that the success of the annuals is due to the viral diseases, specifically barley and cereal yellow dwarf viruses, which are major pathogens in crops, including wheat, barley, and oats – all crops that were imported by the Spanish and American settlers.

“...the key to the success of the annual grasses is that the virus is horizontally transmitted by aphids rather than vertically via seeds; hence seed survival is unaffected, and each generation is infected anew. In contrast, perennial grasses serve as long-term reservoirs for the virus and experience deleterious effects on survival and on lifetime seed production, thus facilitating the invasion by annuals.”

(from *Science*, Vol.316 [April 6, 2007], p. 19, citing *Proc. Natl Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 104, 5473 [2007].

Mike Kuhn 4-15-07

November 10th 2007 - Montgomery Canyon

Fourteen of us hiked Montgomery Canyon today! Four of us completed the 4.1 mile loop. The remainder continued on into Long Canyon, and then back to our cars waiting at Old Windmill Park, for a total of 6.5 miles. The weather forecast called for rain, but instead we were treated to a clear and beautiful day.





RSTB Calendar December 2007



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | 1 Devil's Punchbowl- Devil's Chair See Schedule |
| 2 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 3 | 4 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Linda Travis</i> | 5 | 6 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule | 7 | 8 Lower Arroyo Seco See Schedule |
| 9 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 10 <i>Happy Birthday Robert D. Galletly</i> | 11 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Rae Knapp</i> | 12 | 13 Holiday Party (No Hike) <i>Happy Birthday Sven Michaelson Richard Carroll Gary Valle Bill Cespedes</i> | 14 <i>Happy Birthday Randy Shoemaker</i> | 15 Work Party: TBD See Schedule |
| 16 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 17 | 18 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule | 19 RSTB Meeting See Page 1 <i>Happy Birthday Tom Travis</i> | 20 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule | 21 | 22 Chesboro Canyon/Palo Comado Canyon Loop See Schedule |
| 23 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Linda O'Connor</i> | 24 | 25 Merry Christmas! (No Hike) | 26 | 27 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule | 28 | 29 Malibu Creek State Park See Schedule |
| 30 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 31 | | | | | |



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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 4 pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 4.8 MRT)
(Meet at 5pm during daylight savings time)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

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, 3.0 MRT)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

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, 5.2 MRT)

DECEMBER HIKES

December 1st

*Devils Punchbowl - Devil's Chair**

7 MRT - Moderate (1,000' elevation gain)

The Devil's Punchbowl is a point where two earthquake faults collide, creating upwards vertical walls as high as 300 feet. It is a spectacular setting, with the high desert spreading out on one side, and the pine covered Angeles National forest on the other. Meet at Stearns St. Park & Ride at 8 AM. All day event. Wear boots; bring a snack and 2-3 quarts of water.

December 8th

*Lower Arroyo Seco**

10 MRT - Moderate (900' elevation gain)

Hike a wooded streamside trail, with inviting picnic sites and small cascades in the San Gabriel Mountains above Flintridge. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots and be prepared for some possible stream crossings. Meet at Stearns St. Park & Ride at 8 AM. Bring a snack and 2 to 3 quarts of water.

December 15th: *Work Party - TBD*

December 22nd

*Chesboro Canyon / Palo Comado Canyon Loop**

10.3 MRT - Easy to Moderate (1200' elevation gain)

Walk among the oaks, follow a stream to Sulfur Springs and on to Sheep Corral, returning via Palo Comado Canyon. Meet 8 AM near Donut Delite (corner of Madera and Royal) Bring 2-3 quarts of water, lunch and sunscreen. Wear boots.

December 29th

*Malibu Creek State Park**

Moderate 6-8 MRT (600' elevation gain)

Hike to the old M*A*S*H site. Countless movies have been filmed in this park. Several options on the way, depending on the desires of the group. We'll see Century Lake and the Rock Pool. Meet 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

** Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

 No dogs allowed on trail(s).

For 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.

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Executive Chair: | Mike Kuhn | HM (805) 583-2345 | hannahmike@roadrunner.com |
| Treasurer: | Peter Ely | | |
| Park District Liaison: | Colleen Janssen | WK (805) 584-4453 | volunteers@rsrpd.us |
| Work Parties Chair: | | *** OPEN *** | |
| Hiking Chair: | Mark Gilmore | HM (805) 529-5581 | markinthepark@sbcglobal.net |
| Vice Hiking Chair: | John Sabol | HM (805) 583-2541 | jtsabol@sbcglobal.net |
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| Ways & Means Chair: | Marty Richards | HM (805) 526-4414 | |
| Publicity Chair: | Carrie McCline | | |
| Newsletter Editor: | Linda Travis | | lindactravis@sbcglobal.net |

-----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 93063-0399

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

Would you like to receive periodic email announcements about club activities? Yes () No ()



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 630445
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399