



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Evolution May Be the Key to the Success Of Some Exotic Plants

Some exotic plants become weedy pests when they arrive in North America and result in enormous economic loss and damage to native ecosystems. At the same time, in their native homeland they do not spread aggressively, and their presence does not overwhelm the ecosystem in which they occur. In Canada and the northeastern U.S., the white campion (*Silene latifolia*) is interfering with alfalfa and grain crops, causing great economic loss. In a recent experiment, seeds were collected from 40 sites in Europe and North America. After being germinated in a greenhouse environment, 400 plants were transplanted to field plots in Virginia and closely monitored. The seeds from Canada and the U.S. took off. A greater proportion of those seeds sprouted, the plants emerged earlier, became bigger, had more leaves and flowered earlier. The plants from North America had evolved more weediness and invasiveness characteristics than those from Europe. At this time, researchers are uncertain why this evolutionary shift occurs.

Mike Kuhn
7-29-03



Happy Holidays!

Come and enjoy our casual and social holiday potluck!

Date: Friday, December 10
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Host: Ursula Christie
Place: 576 Pinecliff Place
Simi Valley, CA

Directions: south on First St., right on Mellow Lane, right on Pinecliff Place to the end

Please call Ursula to let her know what you're bringing:
527-5338



Welcome, New Member!

Kurt Godden

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be at:
Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1
7:00PM – December 15, 2010

Upcoming Events

December 4th

*Upper Zuma**
5 MRT - Moderate

December 10th

Holiday Party

December 11th

*Mt. Hollywood Trail**
5 to 8 MRT - Moderate (1,026' elevation gain/loss)

December 15th

Club Meeting

December 18th

Work Party
Upper End of the Lower Stagecoach Trail

December 25th

Christmas Day – No hike

More information about these events can be found on Page 5 and on the Activities page at <http://simitrailblazers.com>

RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Sporting the beautiful RSTB logo, these are great shirts! Call Marty if you'd like to order at 805-526-4414.

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



Exotic Grasses In California

Exotic species have spread rapidly throughout the world with modern civilization and advanced forms of transportation. In California, exotic annual grasses and forbs have supplanted native perennial grasses over nearly a quarter of the state. At an August meeting of the Ecological Society of America a team of scholars from Santa Barbara and one from Minnesota reported on what they have found out about why these exotic grasses have been so successful.

Three hypotheses were investigated. First, the exotics might dominate resources such as sunlight and water; second, they might be winning out because the sparse natives produce too few seeds to retake the fields; and third, grasses, whether exotic or native, are not easily dislodged once they have become established. Field experiments were done near the coast in southern California. They found that mixtures of exotics, including black mustard, ripgut brome and soft chess, used less water, nitrogen and sunlight than a mixture of five native grasses, including California brome and purple needlegrass. They also found that the natives were able to retake patches of exotic grasses if the researchers planted more native seeds. Seed abundance was the key. Trying to re-establish native grasslands won't be easy, and more research is certainly needed. After all, areas of exotic annual grasses usually contain a seed bank of tens of thousands of seeds per square meter – a formidable impediment to native perennial grasses. [excerpted from Science (September 6, 2002), pp. 1635 and 1637]

Mike Kuhn
9-11-02

Feathers

We are familiar with the idea that American Indians used feathers. The

image contained on one of the Tapo Citrus orange crate labels was of an Indian in a full, Plains Indian feathered headdress. The most widely known photograph of a full-blooded Chumash Indian is of Rafael Solares. He was photographed during the 1870s in the regalia of a solar shaman. (He was the last of the solar shaman among the Chumash.) That picture shows him in a feathered headdress. Drawings of Indians performing dances usually include feathers in a headdress and often with feathered capes, i.e., a Chumash eagle dancer, feathered items in the hands, and etc. An examination of California Indian baskets in the Hermitage, a museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, suggests that baskets were normally made with feathers incorporated in the full bodies of the baskets. So, what's with the feathers?

Feathers were used by some American Indians to denote status and achievement in battle. That Great Plains war bonnet that is shown on the Tapo Citrus orange crate label is not of a chief. On the Great Plains, Indians won the right to wear a feather after taking "coup," i.e., touching an enemy in battle. Sometimes a Plains Indian would also receive from other Indians feathers they had received for their own acts in battle as recognition and esteem. Those feathers were intimately related to acquisition of power, which is related to their religious beliefs.

For the Chumash and for most other Indians, feathers were used for religious purposes. Their dances were religious rights. Rafael's headdress was used in ceremonies relating to the sun. The eagle dancers' feathered capes and headdresses were used during the eagle dance. I have written elsewhere that birds were thought to have access to the spirit world, i.e., they could fly to it.

"The Hummingbird's Nest" (as in the ranch at the northern end of Kuehner Drive) was a sacred place. The shaman was widely thought to be transformed into a bird during a vision quest. Pictographs and petroglyphs of shaman often show them with three digits on each hand and each foot and sometime with bird heads – in other words, in a state of transformation into birds. The acquisition of feathers was not always something that everyone was allowed to do, and the use of feathers was not simply symbolic.

So the use of feathers in American Indian culture should not be taken lightly.

Mike Kuhn
12-8-04

Toloache Makes You Loco

John Peabody Harrington, who worked for the American Bureau of Ethnology collecting information about North American Indians, cites a Ventura informant for the following information about Jimson weed (*Datura wrightii*):

"ts'ukilamuwit lokamomoj - The toloache is going to make me crazy. Informant saw Huinay after he had drunk toloache. He was like a crazy, seeing visions, talking to himself like a loco."

Toloache, while used by the Indians for religious purposes and as medicine, is an extremely toxic substance, the ingestion of which, even among the Indians in prehistoric times, led to many deaths.

Mike Kuhn
2-6-04

November 13th 2010 - Ahmanson Ranch - Lasky Mesa



Seventeen hikers completed the dual loop 10 mile hike today. The weather was clear and warm, just perfect for hiking. The hills were just starting to turn green, thanks to our recent rains. Despite the multitude of possible routes, we only took a wrong turn once, and we easily recovered, adding only quarter mile to our trip. The first loop included great views, especially at the Victory Boulevard end of the loop. The second loop was far more tranquil and bucolic, following a creek in a riparian area. The hike was just long enough to let your legs know they had a good workout. It's a blessing that Ahmanson Ranch was dedicated to open space.

November 7th 2010 - Devils Punchbowl - Devil's Chair

Thirteen of us completed the 8 mile hike, with 1,300' of elevation gain. The Devil's Punchbowl area is set on the intersection of two faults. The Punchbowl Fault is to the south of the rock formation, while the Pinyon and San Andreas Faults are to the north. While on the hike, we saw many different colors and unusual formations within between the



sedimentary and igneous rocks. Everyone enjoyed the expansive view from The Devil's Chair. We even walked through a tranquil pine forest.



The weatherman cooperated with us today. The original forecast called for another early season rainstorm. The weather system was moving slower than expected, so we enjoyed almost perfect hiking weather. Aside from some ominous looking clouds to the

south, and some strong wind gusts on the exposed ridges, all was well.

It was three years since we last hiked the Devil's Punchbowl. There are even more trails yet to explore in the area. We'll be back.

October 16th 2010 - Work Party - Challenger Park





RSTB Calendar December 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 	2 Chumash Trail <i>Happy Birthday</i> Aida Reyes	3	4 Upper Zuma* 8:00AM See Schedule
5 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4:00PM See Schedule	6	7 Long Canyon 6:30PM See Schedule	8	9 Chumash Trail 6:00PM See Schedule	10 Holiday Party Time: 6:30PM  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Robert D. Galletly	11 Mt. Hollywood Trail* 8:00AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Rae Knapp
12 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4:00PM See Schedule	13 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bill Cespedes Richard Carroll Gary Valle	14 Long Canyon 6:30PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Randy Shoemaker	15 Club Meeting 7:00PM See Schedule	16 Chumash Trail 6:00PM See Schedule	17	18 Work Party Upper End of Lower Stagecoach Trail See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Chris Quinn
19 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4:00 PM See Schedule	20	21 Long Canyon 6:30PM See Schedule	22	23 Chumash Trail 6:00PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jhoanne Kuhnly	24	25 
26 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4:00 PM See Schedule	27	28 Long Canyon 6:30PM See Schedule	29	30 Chumash Trail 6:00PM See Schedule	31 New Years Eve 	



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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **4 PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead. Take the Rocky Peak exit from the 118 Fwy. Meet at the north end of the bridge; don't park on the bridge. (Moderate to strenuous, depending on distance hiked. 4.8 MRT)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon & Oak Canyon Loop

Meet at **6:30 PM** in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street heading 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 **6 PM** 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. (Moderate to strenuous, depending on distance hiked. 5.2 MRT)

DECEMBER HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

December 4th

Upper Zuma*

5 MRT - Moderate

Hike down into Upper Zuma Canyon. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots. Optional: Meet at Baja Fresh after the hike for lunch.

December 10th

Holiday Party

Come and enjoy our casual and social holiday potluck!

Time: 6:30PM

Place: Ursula Christie's Home, 576 Pinecliff Place, Simi Valley. Please call Ursula to RSVP: 527-5338 Directions: south on First Street, right on Mellow Lane, right on Pinecliff Place to end

December 11th

Mt. Hollywood Trail*

5 to 8 MRT - Moderate (1,026' elevation gain/loss)

Mt Hollywood is by far the most popular hiking trail in all of Griffith Park. One of the reasons for its popularity is access and a million dollar view of Los Angeles, including the Pacific Ocean and eastern San Fernando Valley. Please click [here](#) for more information about this hike. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

December 15th

Club Meeting

7PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

December 18th

Work Party – Upper end of the lower Stagecoach Trail

Meet in Corriganville Park at the east end of the parking lot. Bring gloves, a snack, and sunglasses. Wear long pants and shoes or boots with good soles.

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



No dogs allowed on trail(s).

For additional 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@me.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:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@roadrunner.com
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	mlrrdh@yahoo.com
Publicity Chair:	Carrie McCline		
Newsletter Editor:	Kelli Ham		simitrailrunner@gmail.com
Newsletter Co-Editor:	Linda Martins-Mann		

-----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 _____ Birth Month _____ Day _____

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell _____

How do you want to receive the Newsletter? Check all that apply.

Mail Mailing address _____

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How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

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

Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



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