



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



ON THE EDGE

Do you want to get up close to a mountain lion and other wild animals you might encounter on the rural/urban fringe?

On **Saturday March 11, 2006 at 1:30 pm**, in the Multipurpose Room of the Rancho Santa Susana Community Center at 5005-C Los Angeles Avenue in Simi Valley, **The Mountain Lion Foundation** will present a program entitled:

"On the Edge"



Mountain Lion Cub
Photo is courtesy of the Mountain Lion Foundation

This program is a **live animal** presentation on wildlife/human conflict occurring on the urban edges, i.e., urban areas abutting natural areas, involving a variety of solutions to these encounters. The program will detail the specifics on each animal's biology and needs, resulting in an action/reaction resolution to the conflicts in urban backyards.

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.



**JOHN R. SABOL
SHEILA KUNTZ**

APRIL 1ST WORK PARTY

Trail Blazer volunteers are needed to supervise work in Corriganville Park and on the Lower Stagecoach Trail for Saturday, April 1, 8:00 a.m. to Noon. The Simi Valley Presbyterian Church hopes to provide more than 100 volunteers.

Tasks to be accomplished will be the watering of young oak trees (children), the removal of castor beans, tree of heaven shoots and arundo grass (a bamboo-like plant) and rehabilitation of the Lower Stagecoach Trail.

Volunteers are needed to supervise the work efforts to ensure safety and, in the case of the trail work, that the trail is repaired properly. It is critical that we have enough people to supervise. If you have any questions, please call Mike Kuhn (805) 583-2345.



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
March 15, 2006

UPCOMING EVENTS


MARCH 11th
Live Animal Presentation
"On the Edge" at 1:30pm
- see article in column 1.

APRIL 1ST
Trail Blazer volunteers are needed to help supervise trail work. See article in column 2.

APRIL 8TH
Wildflower Walk – Antelope Valley
– It's flower season again! This will be an ALL DAY event.

MAY 24TH - MAY 29TH
Yosemite Hiking/Camping Trip 
This very special event is limited to **Trailblazer members only**. Space is limited, so **RSVP as soon as possible**. We will be camping at the Upper Pines Campground. There will be a campground fee, and a \$20 per car park entry fee.

JUNE 9th, 10th & 11th
Deer Group Camp Backpack Trip
– **Big Bear Lake**
Space is limited. Please **RSVP before May 19th**.

JUNE 24th
Santa Cruz Island 
Space is limited and fills up quickly; please **RSVP before May 12th**. The cost is \$46 per person. We must be at the Island Packers dock no later than 7:30.

More information on these events can be found at

<http://simitrailblazers.com>

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

1834 DESCRIPTION OF TRAILS OVER SANTA SUSANA PASS

A report, dated July 25, 1834, was prepared by the Mayor of the Port of Santa Barbara, Counsel Jose' Maria Garcia, for transmittal to Mexico City on the Santa Barbara Presidio District. The report describes three routes from the San Fernando Valley over Santa Susana Pass.

"The middle road is the most frequently used, its starting point being beautified by a leafy grove of coast live oaks and sycamore trees. Starting the ascent, there is a spring of excellent but limited water. The ascent is rocky and difficult to the top, and the descent, although rough, is made pleasurable by a leafy grove and, halfway, a stream of delicious but intermittently flowing water. At the foot of the descent is a grove of the same species of trees and an abundance of pasturage. At the right of this road, there is another less steep climb, initially through rough vegetation. At a short distance, there is a running spring among native trees. This road merges with the first.

The third road is to the left (?). At its base there is a small grove of valley oaks. Ascending over waste land, there is another small flowing spring halfway up among a few trees. The climb becomes increasingly difficult, hampered by rugged growth and boulders. This road continues until it joins with the other two to form a single route which descends to a small plain. ..Nearby is a fine spring known as Las Lajas which provides water for the plantings of corn, beans, etc."

From this description it is clear that three tracks extended from the San Fernando Valley side to the top of the pass. The Simi Valley side seems to have had only one route. One of the three routes must have been what later was referred to as the Stagecoach Road. My guess is that the Devil's Slide route was the last one described. Trying to identify the other two routes would be interesting. It may be possible after a brush fire. Thrown in at the end is the comment about the agriculture associated with Las Lajas Canyon. The canyon still carries water year round.

Mike Kuhn



A CHUMASH CAVE

Following the Chatsworth Fire of October 2005 I was taken to a cave, on private property, in the hills around Simi Valley. The entrance to the cave had previously been obscured by dense vegetation, including a dense stand of poison oak at the entrance. Most of the vegetation was destroyed by the fire, although we still had to push our way through some poison oak in order to get into the cave. The entrance to the cave is partially blocked by rock fall, but the cave itself appears to have a stable ceiling. It is quite large – large enough to seat 30 or 40 people comfortably.

My host had been directed to the cave by the son of an employee of the owners of the ranch. The young man said that he had played in the cave when he was growing up. Evidence of historical use is still present in the cave. Some beer and soda cans litter a portion of the cave floor. (The beer cans were dated 1986.) A part of the frame of an external frame backpack is present on the floor, along with some other debris. Some graffiti has been carved into the walls of the cave. The only date that I noticed is consistent with the date of the beer cans. It is also clear that the cave was used by Chumash Indians during the late period (500-1800 C.E.). A substantial midden is present outside of the cave entrance, and a midden may be present inside the cave.

One artifact in the cave, a basket hopper, is especially well preserved. The bottoms of worn baskets were cut out and the remainder of the basket was adhered either to a flat slab of stone, which was much larger than the bottom of the basket, or to a concave stone, which was only slightly larger in diameter than the bottom of the basket. Food material, such as the pits of acorns or hollyleaf cherries (*Prunus ilicifolia*) were pounded in the bottom. The basket portion of the hopper served to keep the crushed debris corralled. The type of basket hopper in our cave is the large-based type, which was intended to remain in camp. The small based basket hopper would be taken by women when they went out to gather vegetable products and was used to process foodstuffs in the field. The basket hopper was light enough to be portable, whereas the first type needed to remain in camp because it was too heavy to be portable for any great distance. Several examples of the portable type of stone bases with asphaltum are on display at the Strathearn Historical Park Museum. The state of preservation of our basket hopper base is so good that some of the base of the basket portion is still present in the asphaltum – a relatively unusual find.

As for the near future, the site will be recorded with the State of California. Hopefully, the poison oak barrier will return and preserve this unusual remnant of those who came before.

Mike Kuhn

Rancho Simi Community Park, left to right: Jim Achenbach, Sandra Fernandez-Achenbach, Mike Kuhn, Arlene Altshuler, Phil Ankrom, and Jodene Downey.

Photo by Colleen Janssen

VENTUREÑO NAMES RELATING TO SYCAMORES

Applegate (1974) indicates that the Ventureño Chumash word for “sycamore” was *xšo*. “Place of the sycamore” was *mixšo*. Big Sycamore Canyon, i.e., now in Mugu State Park, was *šuwá-laxšo*. The Chumash names for Sycamore Canyon on the old Wood Ranch, Alamos Canyon, and Meier Canyon presumably would have been some variation of these names.

Mike Kuhn

GEOLOGY OF THE CANYON VIEW TRAIL

The Canyon View Trail extends along the top of the ridge south of Long Canyon Village in Wood Ranch. The trail head is located on the northern side of Long Canyon road a few hundred feet east of Wood Ranch Parkway. The entire trail is underlain by the Las Lajas Formation, an Eocene Epoch marine formation that was deposited between 54 and 50 million years ago in a warm ocean. At the time, the earth was going through the last true greenhouse event. The polar areas were ice free and warm currents bathed the continental margins.

Where the trail begins east of the intersection of Wood Ranch Parkway and Long Canyon Road, a low pass into Long Canyon is formed by the presence of gray silty claystone and siltstone. This material weathers into high clay soils - so don't go hiking after a rain or when the ground is very wet. The mud- and siltstone abruptly transitions into a tan sandstone, which was deposited in shallow water as storm-influenced sands. The sandstone forms picturesque outcroppings. The sandstone is bounded on the north by mud- and siltstone that was deposited in deep water. The top of the ridge directly north of Long Canyon is defined by another stratum of shallow marine sandstone. This sandstone is well drained and easy to walk on even when wet. The sandstone is more resistant to weathering and erosion than the siltstone. As a result, it is responsible for the presence of the high ridge between Long Canyon and Simi Valley.

All of the bedrock units dip by 35-42 degrees to the north northwest. Because the siltstone and mudstone are structurally weak and poorly drained, the north side of the ridge is given to some instability. Approximately 1,000 feet west of where First Street enters Long Canyon, there is a large old, perhaps tens of thousands of years old, landslide that can be seen if you know what to look for.

As the Simi Hills are uplifted by compressional forces associated with the collision of the North American and the North Pacific plates, Oak Creek has maintained a water gap through the high ridge by the process of water erosion that has kept up with the effects of uplift. The result is a “water gap” similar to that formed where Malibu Creek cuts completely through the Santa Monica Mountains.

The Canyon View Trail awaits you.

Mike Kuhn

FEBRUARY WORK PARTY

Four Rancho Simi Trail Blazers turned out to work on the Hummingbird Trail for the February 18 work Party. We worked on the original entry section of the trail that starts just below the remains of the old historic Simi Hotel dam and then drops down and follows the Hummingbird Creek.

The trail was overgrown and in 2 spots Laurel Sumac bushes completely blocked the trail. It was cloudy and we weren't paying much attention to the sky when all of a sudden at 10:30AM we get a very sharp thunderclap. A few seconds later it starts to sprinkle. We quickly clean up the debris on the trail, pack up and head for the cars. Too late! We walked the whole time with a horizontal driving rain in our faces. By the time we made it back to the cars we were soaked.

To add insult to injury, as I drive up the 118 Freeway Kuehner on-ramp heading west, I am greeted by blue skies. Before I travel a half-mile, the rain has stopped and the sun is shining full force. We could have gone back to work, but not soaked like we were. It reminded me of squalls in the tropics when I was in the Navy.

Many thanks to the following workers:

Arlene Altshuler, Bill Cespedes, Alan Cueba and John Sabol.

The next work party will be held Saturday March 18, 2006, on the Hummingbird Trail. We hope to finish the work interrupted by rain on the February work party. We will meet on Kuehner Drive just north of the 118 freeway at 8:00 AM and work to 12:00 PM. Tools will be provided. Hope to see you there.

John Sabol



*Hiking in
Wildwood Park,
left to right:*

*Rafael Zepeda,
Carol Tucker,
John Sabol,
Mark Gilmore,
Alan Cueba,
and Bill Cespedes.*

*Photo by
Mike Kuhn.*



RSTB Calendar

March 2006



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Death Valley Hiking/Camping Trip <i>Happy Birthday Martin DeGoey</i>	3 Death Valley Hiking/Camping Trip	4 Death Valley Hiking/Camping Trip
5 Death Valley Hiking/Camping Trip	6	7 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	8 <i>Happy Birthday Colleen Janssen</i>	9 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	10	11 Cold Creek Canyon See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	13	14 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	15 RSTB Meeting See Page 1	16 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	17	18 Hummingbird Creek Trail Work Party See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday John R. Sabol</i>
19 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	20 <i>Happy Birthday Julie Jansen</i>	21 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	22	23 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	24	25 Eagle Spring Loop See Schedule
25 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	26	27 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	28			



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

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

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)

MARCH HIKES

March 2nd - 5th - Death Valley Hiking & Camping Trip **  (Reservations are closed for this trip)

March 11th - Cold Creek Canyon **

5.5 MRT - Moderate (800' elevation gain and loss)

This is an incredibly rich loop hike on **Mountains Restoration Trust** land. "The Cold Creek Watershed is best described as a bowl, albeit with one side missing, made up of steep slopes, high ridges, and incredible rock formations. Nestled steeply behind Saddle Peak (El. 2400'), its north-facing slopes are cool and shady. The headwaters of Cold Creek spring out of the ground year-round providing a reliable source of cool, fresh water for the animal populations." Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

March 18th - Hummingbird Trail Work Party


Help maintain one of Simi Valley's more scenic trails. Directions - 118 Fwy to Kuehner exit. Meet north of freeway on Kuehner. We will be working from 8am - noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

March 25th - Topanga Canyon State Park - Eagle Spring Loop **

6.3 MRT - Moderate (1000' elevation gain)

This loop begins in Topanga Canyon State Park. The highlight of the hike is a huge and impressive sandstone crag called Eagle Rock. We'll take a short side trip to Cathedral Rock and then return via the Musch Ranch Trail. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 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 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://www.simitrailblazers.com>

LANCHO 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	
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
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	
Publicity Chair:	Judi Sevcik	HM (805) 581-4340	judisevcik@earthlink.net
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 630445
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399